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PART III**

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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA : SECTION II : BHŪMIKHAṆḌA

1. The Story of Śivaśarman	897
2. Life is Restored to Vedaśarman	902
3. The Heroic Deed of Viṣṇuśarman	904
4. Somaśarman's Devotion Put to Severe Test	909
5. The Consecration of Indra	913
6. Diti's Wailing	920
7. Account of the Body	923
8. Account of the Soul	930
9. Instructions to Diti	938
10. The Practice of Penance by Demons	939
11. The Story of Suvrata	943
12. Dialogue between Somaśarman and Sumanā	946
13. Sumanā Explains Ten Basic Virtues	955
14. Sumanā Describes the Death of the Virtuous	958
15. The Death of Sinners	962
16. The Death and Post-mortem State of Sinners	963
17. The Story of Somaśarman's Previous Birth	965
18. The Account of Somaśarman's Birth in a Brāhmaṇa Family	969
19. Somaśarman's Eulogy of Viṣṇu	972
20. The Birth of Suvrata	977
21. Suvrata's Devotion to Viṣṇu	981
22. Dharmāṅgada Born as Suvrata	984
23. The Slaying of the Demon Bala	988
24. Vṛtra Duped	991
25. The Killing of Demon Vṛtra	995
26. The Origin of Maruts	997
27. Coronation of the Kings	999
28. The Story of Pṛthu	1001

Contents

29. The Story of Pṛthu (Contd.)	1009
30. Sulobha and Śapharahā; Suśaṅkha and Sunīthā	1014
31. The Account of Suvrata	1019
32. Aṅga Gets a Boon from Vāsudeva	1021
33. Sunīthā's Story	1026
34. Sunīthā's Problem	1029
35. Rambhā Helps by a Suggestion	1032
36. Sunīthā Gets Married and Vena is Born	1033
37. A Heretic Meets Vena	1037
38. The End of Vena's Reign	1042
39. On Gifts and Worthy Recipients of Gifts	1045
40. The Fruit of Occasional Charity	1053
41. The Story of Sukalā	1056
42. Ikṣvāku Goes Ahunting	1062
43. The Boar Gives a Tough Fight to Ikṣvāku	1067
44. The Boar Dies Fighting	1073
45. The Female Hog Fights Back	1074
46. The Story of Raṅgavidyādhara	1076
47. The Story of Vasudatta and His Daughter Sudevā	1081
48. The Story of Padmāvatī	1085
49. Padmāvatī Succumbs to Gobhila's Fraudulent Approach	1087
50. Padmāvatī Is Grief-stricken	1090
51. Padmāvatī Returns to Her Husband's Place	1095
52. Sudevā Goes to Heaven	1098
53. Sukalā's Sickning Description of the Body	1101
54. Sukalā Gets Prepared For the Showdown	1108
55. Indra Tries to Dissuade Kāma	1110
56. Satya & Dharma Come to Sukalā's Help	1112
57. The Trap Is Laid For Sukalā	1115
58. Sukalā Wins	1117
59. Religious Observances Without One's Wife Are Fruitless	1121
60. Sukalā's Story Ends	1123
61. Pippala's Penance	1125
62. Parents As Sacred Places of Pilgrimage	1129
63. Merit Resulting from Service of Parents	1135

Contents

64. Mātali's Discourse on Old Age	1137
65. Mātali on Why the Body Is Left Behind	1144
66. Mātali on the Universality of Suffering	1144
67. Mātali on Three Kinds of Sin	1159
68. The Fruit of Righteous Deeds	1167
69. Righteous Acts Enjoined by Śiva (Śivadharmas)	1169
70. Sinners in Hell	1171
71. Identity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva	1172
72. Yayāti's Reluctance to Part With the Body	1174
73. The Efficacy of Viṣṇu's Name	1177
74. Popularity of Viṣṇu Cult during Yayāti's Rule	1178
75. Yayāti's Subjects became Deathless by the Grace of Viṣṇu	1180
76. Dharmarāja Rendered Jobless	1183
77. Yayāti Yields to Passion	1185
78. Pūru Gives His Youth to Yayāti	1193
79. Youthful Yayāti Enjoys with Aśrubindumatī	1198
80. Yadu Refuses to Kill His Mothers	1201
81. Destiny is Irresistible	1202
82. Yayāti Takes Back His Old Age	1207
83. Yayāti Visits the Divine Worlds	1209
84. Glorification of Devotion to Parents	1214
85. The Story of Cyavana : Kuñjala : Divyādevī	1216
86. Divyādevī As Citrā in Her Former Birth	1220
87. 'A Hundred Names of Viṣṇu'	1227
88. Divyādevī Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven	1230
89. The Miraculous Bath in the Water of Mānasa Lake	1233
90. The Powers of the Holy Places	1237

II BHŪMIKHAṆḌA (Section on the Earth)

CHAPTER ONE

The Story of Śivaśarman

Om, salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

The sages said:

1-2. O glorious Sūta, O you who know the significance of the essence of everything, (please) listen to the terrible doubt, destroying understanding, that has occurred to us. Some describe in the Purāṇas that when Prahlāda was five years old he pleased Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

3. How did (the war) between gods and demons come about? How did the demon fight with Viṣṇu? He, killed by Viṣṇu, entered his body.

Sūta said:

4. This was formerly known (i.e. conceived) by Kaśyapa and was composed by the intelligent Vyāsa. It was formerly narrated by Brahmā himself before (i.e. to) the lord Vyāsa.

5. I shall, O brāhmaṇas, describe the same before (i.e. to) you. The cause of the doubt that arose was removed by Brahmā.

Vyāsa said:

6. O Sūta, O glorious one, listen to (the account) of the birth of Prahlāda as told in the Purāṇas and as heard (i.e. learnt) from other (sources).

7. As soon as Prahlāda, the greatest among the devotees of Viṣṇu and honoured by gods, was born, he resorted to the path of Viṣṇu, giving all happiness.

8. With his sons he went to the battle-field to fight with Viṣṇu. Being killed by Viṣṇu, he entered Viṣṇu's body.

9-10a. Listen to the birth of just this magnanimous one. The brave one, going with his sons to fight with Viṣṇu, entered Viṣṇu's lustre, which he obtained through his own lustre.

10b-11a. O glorious one, I shall narrate in brief the account of that hero—how that powerful one was born in the former Kalpa.

11b-12a. At the extreme point in the west of the ocean, there was a city by name Dvārakā. It was full of all magnificence and all prosperity.

12b-13a. There perpetually lived a divine (man) knowing abstract meditation, and the best among those who knew abstract meditation, known as Śivaśarman, who was well-versed in all Vedas and sacred texts.

13b. He had five sons who were well-versed in (all) branches of knowledge.

14. (They were:) Yajñaśarman, Vedaśarman, Dharmaśarman, the glorious Viṣṇuśarman, who knew their own duties.

15a. The fifth one was Somaśarman, who was greatly devoted to his father.

15b. The best brāhmaṇas knew no other duty than devotion to their father.

16a. The magnanimous ones (always) had thoughts about him (only).

16b-17a. Seeing their devotion, the intelligent, best brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, thought: 'I shall extort (these) learned men.

17b-18a. They do not have that feeling in their mind which is found in the devotees of Viṣṇu. I shall, therefore, find it, and will do so thoughtfully.'

18b. Due to the favour of Viṣṇu, he had all superhuman faculties.

19-20a. O best of Brāhmaṇas, he conceived a fine idea to suggest to them (what their duty was). The best brāhmaṇa, the best among those who knew Brahman, knowing a remedy due to the lustre of his penance, adopted it.

20b-21a. Then Śivaśarman presented before them a trick. He showed their mother to be dead of a great fever.

21b-24a. They saw their dead mother, and said (these) words to their father: "O glorious one, she, who nourished us in her womb, has, casting her body, been dead. Having left (us), she has gone to heaven. O father, what can be said (by us)?" Śivaśarman, the excellent brāhmaṇa, called his eldest, most devoted son, Yajñaśarman and said to him.

Śivaśarman said:

24b-25a. With this very sharp and whetted weapon cut off her limbs and throw them here and there.

25b-27. The son did it as he had heard (i.e. received) his father's order. He came back, and again said (these) words to his father: "O father, I have done everything as I was ordered. Today (i.e. now) entrust to me some other work. O father, I shall do it all, (even though) it (enemy/thing) be difficult to subdue or procure".

28-30. Having ordered the glorious one, devoted to his father, the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Śivaśarman), thinking of the second son, called (him viz.) Vedaśarman (and said to him): "Go by my order; being stupefied by passion of love (i.e. sex) I cannot stand without a woman (by my side)." He presented, by means of his magical power, a woman full of all charm (before Vedaśarman). (He told him:) "O boy, determined for me, bring this woman to me."

31a. Thus told, he said: "I shall do what is very dear to you."

31b-33a. Having saluted his father, and having gone from there, he said to her: "O respectable lady, my father tormented by the arrow of love, seeks you. So be favourable to him who is old. O you beautiful lady, O you one whose all limbs are charming, resort to my father."

33b. Thus (i.e. these words) spoken by Vedaśarman were heard by the woman created by magic. The woman said:

34-35a. "I do not at all long for the company of your father who is afflicted with old age, whose mouth has malady due to phlegm, and who is now afflicted with diseases, who is feeble, who is sick and old.

35b-36. I desire to dally with you, I shall do what is very dear to you. (I desire to dally with you) who are adorned with good fortune like a (handsome) form, and with gems of virtues, who are endowed with divine characteristics, who possess a divine form and great prowess.

37. What will you do with (your) old father? O you who destroy the pride (of others), by enjoying my body you will obtain all things difficult to obtain.

38a. O brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire.”

38b-41. Hearing these disagreeable and evil words,

Vedaśarman spoke:

O respectable lady, your words are unjust, improper and mixed with sin. Do not talk like this to me who am devoted to my father and who am innocent. O auspicious one, I have come to you and am soliciting you for my father. Do not talk something else; (please) resort to my father. O you respectable lady, O you beautiful one, there is no doubt that I shall give you everything in the three worlds, with the mobile and the immobile—even more than the kingdom of gods.

The woman said:

42. If, for the sake of your father, you are thus capable of giving me (anything), then show me, today only, the great gods with Indra.

43. Indeed you are able to give me now what is difficult to be obtained. O glorious one, show me what power you possess.

Vedaśarman said:

44. O respectable lady, see the power of my penance. The best gods, Indra and others, being invited by me, have come.

They said to Vedaśarman:

45. O best brāhmaṇa, what should we do?. O brāhmaṇa, we shall give you, whatever you ask for. There is no doubt about it.

Vedaśarman said:

46. If the gods are pleased with me and are inclined to favour me, then they should give (i.e. produce in) me pure devotion to the feet of my father only.

47. (Saying) “Let it be so”, the gods left as they had come. (The woman) seeing (the gods had come) like that said to him: “I have seen the power of your penance.

48-49a. I have nothing to do with the gods; if you want to give me (what I want) and if you are taking me for your father,

then do that (which is) dear to me; O brāhmaṇa, cutting off your head with your own hand, give it to me.”

Vedaśarman said:

49b-50a. Today I have become blessed; I have been free from the three debts.¹ O respectable lady, I shall give my head; O beautiful one, do take it.

50b-51a. Having cut off his own head with a whetted and sharp weapon, the best brāhmaṇa, gave it to her and laughed.

51b. She took it, covered with blood, and went to the sage.

The woman said:

52-53. O brāhmaṇa, your son, Vedaśarman, has sent this head; take it; he had himself cut off his own head. For you, he, devoted to his father, gave me his head. O best brāhmaṇa, enjoy me.

54-56a. The brothers (of Vedaśarman) saw the daring act of Vedaśarman. Their bodies trembled (and they said to) one another: “Our virtuous mother died with real intentness. This glorious, virtuous one died for the sake of (our) father. He is blessed, he has become fortunate (as) he has done an auspicious (deed) for (our) father.”

56b-58. Thus the virtuous brothers talked (to one another). The brāhmaṇa heard these words full of devotion, and knowing that his son, Vedaśarman, had cut off his (own) head, said to Dharmaśarman: “Take this head”.

1. *Ṛṇatraya*—Everyone that is born has three debts to pay off, viz. *Devarṇa*, *Ṛṣiṇa*, and *Pitṛṇa*. The first is paid off by performing sacrifices, the second by learning the Vedas and the third by begetting a son.

CHAPTER TWO

*Life is Restored to Vedaśarman**Sūta said:*

1-2a. Then taking it the virtuous one quickly left. By his devotion for his father, his austerities, and the power of his truthfulness and straightforwardness, Dharmaśarman attracted Dharma (i.e. Yama).

2b-3a. Attracted by the penance of that intelligent (Dharmaśarman), Dharma, who had come (there), said these words to Dharmaśarman:

3b-4a. “O Dharmaśarman, why did you invite me? I have come. Then tell me about your work. I (shall) do it. There is no doubt about it.”

Dharmaśarman said:

4b-5a. If I have (properly) served the elders, if I have devotion and steady penance, then, O Dharma, let Vedaśarman be alive, due to that (and) due to my truthfulness.

Dharma said:

5b-6. O you of a good vow, as a result of your purity with restraint, truthfulness and penance, and due to your devotion to your father, your great-souled brother Vedaśarman, of mighty arms, will again obtain (i.e. come to) life.

7. O you highly intelligent one, I am pleased with this your penance and devotion to your father. Well-being to you; ask for a boon difficult to be obtained by those who know righteousness.

8. That Dharmaśarman thus heard those good words. He, of a great glory, said to the magnanimous Vaivasvata (i.e. Dharma or Yama):

9. “Give me steady devotion to the worship of my father’s feet, and also liking for piousness and salvation, if you are well-pleased with me.”

10a. Then Dharma said : “This will take place by my favour.”

10b-11a. When these very significant words were uttered, the very wise Vedaśarman got up, as if he had slept; he said to Dharmaśarman:

11b. "O brother, where has that respectable woman gone? Where would be the father?"

12. He told him in brief how the father had appointed him. Knowing that, Dharmaśarman, who was delighted, said to him:

13. "O glorious one, O brother, be favourable to me today only with (my having restored your) head and life. Who else is there like you to me on the earth?"

14. Saying so to his brother he was eager to go to his father. He (i.e. Vedaśarman) decided to go, with his brother Dharmaśarman, to their father.

15-17a. Both, delighted in their minds went to their father there (i.e. to the place where he was). Both stood close together. Then Dharmaśarman spoke to his father, the excellent and lustrous Śivaśarman: "O glorious one, due to my penance and life Vedaśarman has been brought (back). (Please) take him—your son."

17b-18a. Then Śivaśarman, knowing his devotion, was delighted; (but) he did not say anything to him, and thought.

18b-23. He (then) spoke to the very intelligent Viṣṇuśarman, who politely remained before him: "Child, do as I say. Today go to Indra's heaven and fetch nectar from there—the nectar that came up from the ocean and that destroys diseases. Now I desire to stay with this wife (of me). With good (intention) she desires me. Do that quickly so that I obtain her; otherwise she may go to other (man). Knowing me to be old this young beautiful woman might think lightly of me. O son, if you are devoted to me, do that by which I shall, in the company of this one dear to me, be faultless and free from disease."

24-25a. Hearing these words of his magnanimous father, Viṣṇuśarman then said to his father of a blazing lustre: "I shall do all this that pleases you most."

25b-27. Speaking thus, that pious, very intelligent Viṣṇuśarman saluted his father and went round him keeping him to his right, and due to great power, penance and restraint, went into the intermediate region between heaven and earth.

When the intelligent one was (thus) going, he went to Indra with the speed of a violent wind.

CHAPTER THREE

The Heroic Deed of Viṣṇuśarman

Sūta said:

1. Proceeding along that path, he entered the heaven. He was seen by the intelligent Indra, the lord of gods.

2-4a. Knowing his exertion, the king of gods put in an obstacle. He said to that (nymph) Menikā: "Go by my order; O you of beautiful waist, going quickly create an obstacle (in) his (way). Well-being to you. Do that to the son of that excellent brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman by which he would not come to my house." Hearing these words of him, Menikā started quickly.

Sūta said:

4b-6. She, who was endowed with beauty, and virtues like generosity, and adorned with all ornaments, sat on a swing in Indra's garden. That clever one with large and charming eyes, singing, in a sweet voice, like the notes of a lute, a song (was seated on the swing).

7-8. Knowing her intention of causing a great obstacle, and realising that, she, being sent by Indra, would not be favourable, the best brāhmaṇa went quickly. She saw him and asked him: "O you highly intelligent one, where are you going?"

9. Then Viṣṇuśarman spoke to that Menikā, who moved according to her will: "I am hurriedly going to Indra's heaven for my father".

10-11a. Menikā again spoke pleasing (words) to Viṣṇuśarman.

11b-12. "Being pierced with Cupid's arrows, I have today sought your shelter. O best brāhmaṇa, if you desire to protect piety, (please) protect me. When I, with my mind affected by passion of love, saw you, then only I was burnt by fire of Cupid.

I am bewildered, I am tormented by love. Please be disposed to favour me."

Viṣṇuśarman said:

13-15. O you of a beautiful face, the character of the lord of gods is known to me. I also know your character. O you auspicious one, I am not like this. O you lovely lady, other men like Viśvāmitra are deluded by your lustre and beauty; O you respectable lady, I am the son of Śivaśarman who has attained divine faculties through abstract meditation and is accomplished in penance. I have avoided the great blemishes like desire for sensual enjoyments right from the beginning.

16a. O you of large eyes, choose someone else; I am going to Indra's world.

16b-17. Saying so, the best brāhmaṇa went hurriedly. Menakā was unsuccessful. Being asked by god Indra she repeatedly scared him in many ways.

18. (All) those scares (put forward by her) were burnt as the heaps of hay are burnt by fire.

19. O excellent brāhmaṇas, all those terrible scares perished due to the lustre of that brāhmaṇa, devoted to his father.

20. That Indra again and again presented obstacles; the brāhmaṇa of great glory destroyed them by his lustre.

21. Thus by means of the lustre of his penance, the intelligent one destroyed all the obstacles created by even that magnanimous Indra.

22-25a. When those great, fearful obstacles disappeared, he, knowing that those obstacles (i.e. scares) which were fierce and of fearful forms, were brought about by Indra, the best brāhmaṇa Viṣṇuśarman of great lustre became angry. The glorious one, with his eyes red due to anger (said) about Indra: "Today I shall cause to fall down from his heaven Indra, who would create an obstacle to me engaged in my own duty. I shall punish him; he, who would strike, is struck.

25b. I shall thus make someone else as the guardian of gods."

26. Thus the best (brāhmaṇa) became ready to destroy Indra. Just then only Indra arrived there (and said:)

27-28. "O brāhmaṇa, O you very wise one, there is none else like you in penance, restraint, self-control, truth and purity. Due

to this your devotion to your father, I with (all other) deities have been won over (by you). O best one, (please) forgive all my fault.

29. Well-being to you, ask for a boon, I shall give it (even if) it is difficult." Then Viṣṇuśarman spoke to the king of gods who had come like that:

30. "O great Indra, the lustre of a brāhmaṇa is unbearable for gods and deities. O lord, it is (especially so) in the case of a brāhmaṇa who is devoted to his father.

31-32a. Destruction of the dignity of magnanimous brāhmaṇas should never be done. If the best brāhmaṇas are angered, they destroy Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara along with their sons and grandsons. There is no doubt about this.

32b-35. Had you not come today, then, I, with my eyes full of anger, would have given this best kingdom to some other person, magnanimous due to the prowess of his penance. Now that you have come, and desire to grant a boon, (then) O lord of gods, give me nectar and steady devotion to my father. O you killer of (your) enemies, if you are pleased, grant me such a boon." (Indra said:) "So I shall give you a pious boon with nectar."

36-38a. Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, Indra himself gave him nectar. He, with his heart pleased, gave it along with the pitcher. (He also said:) "O brāhmaṇa, may you always have unswerving devotion to your father." Speaking in this way, and having dismissed the brāhmaṇa, the thousand-eyed (Indra) became pleased on seeing the brāhmaṇa's lustre, very difficult to endure.

38b-42. Then Viṣṇuśarman, having gone to his father, said to him: "O father, I have brought from Indra, nectar, that destroys all maladies. O glorious one, with (i.e. by taking) it be healthy always. Today be greatly satisfied with (this) nectar." Hearing these great words of his son, Śivaśarman, with his mind full of love, having called all his sons, (said to them): "(My) sons, you are devoted to (me) your father, and you do what I tell you. Be pleased (my) sons, and ask for a boon difficult to be obtained on the earth." All listened to his words with approval.

43-45a. Having pondered, all of them said to their father: "Bring back to life that mother of us, who has gone to the dwelling

of Yama. May she, of a good vow, be healthy due to your favour. O father, may you be (our) father, and this one (our) mother, even in existence after existence, and may we be your meritorious sons.”

Śivaśarman said:

45b-46a. Even today, your dead mother, affectionate to her sons, will come alive; there is no doubt about it.

46b-47a. When these auspicious words were uttered by the sage Śivaśarman, their mother arrived (there) and being delighted said (these) words:

47b-50a. “A brave son is born from one’s womb for this purpose only. Men desire a good son, who would bring glory to his family and race. In the world, glorious, meritorious and pure and affectionate women everywhere desire a son of a pleasing body and bringing about merit. That woman, the very meritorious foetus after having gone into whose womb revolves there, and who would give birth to meritorious sons, is pleased.

50b-56a. How can a woman obtain, without merit, the best son, performing duties peculiar to his family, prop of the family and emancipating the father and the mother? I do not know due to which meritorious deeds (of mine) this very meritorious man, having piety as his power, righteous, and loving piety has become my husband, from whose semen I have obtained you as my sons, superior to him. This is the power of merit. You, my sons, are born as loving virtue and intensely devoted to your father. Oh, in the world even one good son is had by means of religious merit. (But see,) I got five great-hearted sons, who are sacrificers, who are righteous, and who have the prowess due to the lustre of penance.” When they were thus repeatedly congratulated by their mother, they, being full of great joy, saluted their mother.

The sons said:

56b-58a. Due to great religious merit (only) a mother—a good mother or a good father is obtained. You are a virtuous mother, who became so due to our good fortune, and having reached whose womb we were nourished as a result of our great

virtue. In existence after existence you two should be our mother and father.

The father said:

58b-59a. O my sons, listen to a good boon, causing religious merit. When I am pleased, may my sons enjoy inexhaustible pleasures.

The sons said:

59b-60a. O father, if you are pleased, and desire to give a boon now, then send us to Goloka, the heaven of Viṣṇu, which is free from tormentation.

The father said:

60b-61a. By my favour, your penance, and this your devotion to (me) your father, go, with your sins perished, to Viṣṇu's heaven.

61b-64a. When the sage said good words, then (Viṣṇu) having the conch, disc and mace in his hands and mounted upon Garuḍa, came there; and repeatedly said this to Śivaśarman with his sons: "O brāhmaṇa, today you with your sons, have won me over by your devotion. With your four virtuous sons and this virtuous and very loving wife come (to me)".

Śivaśarman said:

64b-65. May these (four) sons of me go to the excellent heaven of Viṣṇu. I shall pass some time on the earth with my wife and this last, excellent son, Somaśarman.

66-67a. When the sage, who (always) spoke the truth, uttered these auspicious words, the lord of gods said to those good sons of Śivaśarman: "May they go to the world causing salvation and free from tormentation and destruction."

67b-71. When this was said (by the Lord), all the four brāhmaṇas of truthful hearts, in a moment only took up Viṣṇu's form. In complexion they resembled sapphires; they had held conch, disc and mace; were charming on account of all ornaments; had great prowess; were endowed with the beauty of necklaces and bracelets; they looked charming due to jewelled

necklaces; they resembled the sun's lustre and were covered with bright flames. They entered Viṣṇu's body when Śivaśarman was looking on (i.e. in Śivaśarman's presence). As lights go to another light, they became absorbed in Viṣṇu's form. The best brāhmaṇas, due to their devotion to their father, went to Viṣṇu's abode. I shall tell accurately the prowess of Somaśarman.

CHAPTER FOUR

Somaśarman's Devotion Put to Severe Test

Sūta said:

1. When they had gone to the Goloka of Viṣṇu, beyond darkness, the very wise Śivaśarman said to his youngest (son):

The brāhmaṇa said :

2-3. O very wise Somaśarman, you are very much devoted to (me) your father. Now protect this pitcher of nectar given by me. With this wife I shall go on a pilgrimage.

“O glorious one, let it be so. I shall protect the auspicious (pitcher)”.

4. The intelligent one (i.e. Śivaśarman) having given the pitcher into the hands of the magnanimous one, continuously practised penance for ten years.

5. The righteous one (i.e. Somaśarman) carefully protected the pitcher day and night. Then that Śivaśarman of great fame again came back.

6. Using a trick the very wise one, becoming (i.e. turning himself into one) afflicted with leprosy, (making) his wife also like that, came, with his wife, to his son.

7-12a. The two had become lumps of flesh, as they were made so by his trick. They came near that violent (*ghora?*) brāhmaṇa Somaśarman. Somaśarman, of great glory, seeing them completely afflicted, was full of great compassion. With his neck bent through devotion, he saluted their feet (and said:) “I have never seen (persons) like you. (I have not seen anyone

else) endowed with penance, with hosts of virtues and great religious merit. What has happened to you? O best of brāhmaṇas, all deities, attracted by your lustre, getting your order, always behave like your servants. Tell me the cause, O best brāhmaṇa, by which this painful disease has appeared on your wretched body?

12b-15a. This my meritorious mother, who is a loyal wife and has great religious merit, desires (i.e. is capable) to create the three worlds due to her husband's favour. How does she suffer pain? Is there no fruit of penance? How is it that she, who is affectionate to the elders, and who serves her husband as a god, contracts an extremely painful disease like leprosy?"

Śivaśarman said:

15b-16a. O glorious one, do not be sorry; the fruit due to his deeds is enjoyed by a man who has (done) a good or a bad deed.

16b-17a. O glorious one, if you desire religious merit in this world, then clean both of us who are suffering from the disease, and nurse us.

17b-19a. Thus addressed with good words, Somaśarman of great glory (said:) "I shall nurse you both who are meritorious. O best of brāhmaṇas, what has one to do (i.e. what would one get) in this world, if one does not nurse one's elder today (i.e. at the present time) only?"

19b-28a. Speaking thus, he who was grieved due to their malady, cleansed the phlegm, urine and excrement of both of them. He washed their feet and shampooed their bodies. He himself bathed them and helped them to stand. The best and virtuous brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, of great glory, placing them on his shoulders took them to sacred places. The virtuous (Somaśarman), conversant with the Vedas, bathed them according to sacred precepts with his own hands, and with (the recitation of) auspicious, excellent, sacred hymns, and made both of them offer oblations to the manes and worship to the deities everyday. He himself offered ghee for gods into fire and cooked excellent food. He then called both the respectable elders, well-pleased with him (for food). The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Somaśarman) everyday put them to sleep on a bed. Daily he gave them garments, flowers etc. He offered very fragrant tām̐būla to both of

them. The glorious Somaśarman everyday gave them roots, water, good eatables etc. Somaśarman, of great glory, daily gave them whatever they desired.

28b-29a. In this way he always pleased them. The very pious Somaśarman (everyday) worshipped his parents.

29b-34. Calling Somaśarman, his cruel father (Śivaśarman) always abused him with censurable and harsh words; and in the presence of the sages he everyday beat his son who did his duty and did meritorious deeds. (He said to him:) "O you, disgrace to the family, you have not done well to me (i.e. have not served me properly)." He condemned him with many harsh and painful words. That Śivaśarman who was always sick, beat him with the strokes of a stick. Even though Śivaśarman did (i.e. treated him) like this, he (i.e. Somaśarman) who was pious, was never angry with him. Always happy in mind, speech and the three kinds of deeds Somaśarman propitiated his father; similarly he also daily propitiated his mother, knowing which Śivaśarman considered his own behaviour.

35-46. (He thought:) 'Viṣṇuśarman brought nectar for me. That righteous one has religious merit and is always devoted to (me) his father.' When thus many days which can be counted in hundreds, passed, Śivaśarman too, seeing his devotion, thought: 'Formerly I had told by son named Yajña (i.e. Yajñaśarman): O son, throw here and there the pieces (of the dead body) of your mother. He obeyed my words (i.e. order), and did not show compassion for his mother. This grief of one who desires to give strokes on an inanimate body is smaller; but that son Vedaśarman did a bold act; but I think that this one is superior since he does not swerve (from duty) even for a moment. He may also again do a rash act. Again he has the prowess, along with truth, due to penance. Even in everyday attendance he appears excelling (others). So at the right time I have tested his penance. (This my) son will never perish because of his devotion and truthfulness. I showed the disease of leprosy on my body through illusion; (but) he does not have disgust for phlegm, urine or excrement. He, of a great glory, cleanses the sores with his own hand. The very intelligent one shampoos (our) feet and cleanses us (i.e. our bodies). He always puts up with unbearable words (uttered by) me. (Even though I) reproached and beat (him), he always

talks pleasing words. Thus my very intelligent son is unhappy. I think that he, who is troubled with many afflictions, is the ocean of maladies. I shall remove his unhappiness by the favour of Viṣṇu.'

47-53a. Thinking (thus) in his mind (i.e. to himself), the very intelligent Śivaśarman, again created the illusion and took away the water (i.e. the nectar) from the pitcher. Then afterwards, having called that Somaśarman, he said to him: "I had given (i.e. placed) in your hand nectar, that removes maladies. Give it to me quickly, so that I shall drink it. By (drinking) that I shall today be free from the disease due to the favour of Viṣṇuśarman." When the sage Śivaśarman uttered these words, Somaśarman hurriedly got up (and rushed to) the pitcher. Seeing it empty (that is) without nectar (he thought:) 'Which sinful person has done this deed? Who has thus harmed me?' Somaśarman was thus worried and very unhappy. 'If I tell this account before (i.e. to) my father, he—my father—tormented by the disease, will be angry.'

53b-55. For a long time the very intelligent Somaśarman thought (to himself): 'If I have truth and have served the elders or have practised penance with a sincere mind, or have observed the proper code of conduct by means of restraint, purity etc. then this pitcher will have nectar in it. There is no doubt about it.'

56. When the glorious one thought (like this) and saw, the pitcher was again full of nectar.

57. Seeing it, Somaśarman of a great glory, became joyful, and going to his father, saluting him, quickly fetching the pitcher (said to him):

58. "O father, please take this pitcher of water (i.e. nectar) that has come (i.e. is brought by me). O magnanimous one, drink it, and quickly be free from the disease."

59-60. Hearing these greatly meritorious and truthful and righteous and sweet words of (i.e. uttered by) his son, Śivaśarman was full of great joy and said these words:

CHAPTER FIVE

The Consecration of Indra

Śivaśarman said:

1. O good son, today I am pleased with your penance, restraint, purity, and with your service to the elders and your devotion and resolution.

2. I (shall) abandon this deformed body; obtain happiness from me.

Saying so to the son, he showed him that (former) body.

3. He saw both the elders (i.e. his parents), who became as they were before, who were bright, who were magnanimous and who resembled the orb of the sun.

4-5. He devoutly saluted the feet of both the noble ones. Then full of great joy, he, the best one, took his leave of his son, and due to Viṣṇu's favour, his own religious merit and the practice of abstract meditation, the pious one went, with his wife, to Viṣṇu.

6-8. That sage entered Viṣṇu's abode, a place difficult to be obtained. This place granting salvation is not obtained by means of other (kinds of) religious merit or penance, or by means of meditating upon Viṣṇu, or renunciation, or contemplation, or knowledge, or hymns of praise. Viṣṇu is not seen by means of gifts or pilgrimages. The highest place is seen (only) by resorting to concentration and knowledge, as the brāhmaṇa entered Viṣṇu's body by means of deep and abstract meditation.

Sūta said:

9-10. Then that very lustrous Somaśarman practised penance there. He also looked upon gold and ornaments like a stone or a clod of clay. The righteous one had controlled his diet, he had given up sleep. Giving up all objects of senses he resorted to solitude.

11-12a. He had taken to the posture suited to profound and abstract meditation, was desireless and had no possessions. Then the time of his death arrived. Demons came to that brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman.

12b-16. When the time of death of him who was living (like that) at the great sacred place, Śaligrāma, adding to the honour of sages arrived, some demons and goblins who knew thus (i.e. knew that his death was imminent), spoke. The great sound (of the words uttered by them) entered the cavity of the ears of Somaśarman, the best brāhmaṇa. Fear of the demons entered him, who had adhered to knowledge and meditation. Due to that meditation and the fear of the demons the life of the noble one quickly departed. Being full of the fear of the demons he died.

17-18. Therefore, he was born in the house of the demon (Hiraṇyakaśipu) as Hiraṇyakaśipu's son. In the war' between gods and demons he was killed by Viṣṇu. The noble Prahlāda, while fighting well saw (the form of) Vāsudeva, endowed with the universal form.

19. Due to his former practice of abstract meditation, the noble one had the knowledge (of his former birth, so) he recollected all the former life of Śivaśarman:

20-22. "Formerly, I whose name was Somaśarman, entered the body of a demon. When shall I, due to my great religious merit, called knowledge, reach, from (i.e. casting) this body, the absolute, pious, excellent, abode granting salvation?" The noble Prahlāda, thought like this when he died formerly; O best of brāhmaṇas, listen. I have thus told you everything that removes (your) doubts.

Sūta said:

23-25a. When Prahlāda was killed in the battle by the disholder (i.e. Viṣṇu), the lord of gods, that beautiful woman, Kamalā, whose son was killed, wept. She was the mother of Prahlāda and the beloved (wife) of Hiraṇyakaśipu. Due to the grief caused by Prahlāda's death she, the loyal, glorious wife, (of Hiraṇyakaśipu), who was dear to him, lamented day and night.

25b. Nārada spoke to her, who was weeping day and night:

26-27a. "Do not grieve, O noble and meritorious one, for your son. Your son, the very intelligent one, who is killed by Viṣṇu, will come back endowed with his own (former) characteristics.

27b. He will again have his name as Prahlāda.

28-30a. He will be without the demonish thoughts, and will be endowed with godhead; he will be saluted by all gods and will enjoy the position of Indra, O good lady. O illustrious lady, always be happy with that son. (Please) do not reveal this good news to anyone. You should feign ignorance, and always keep this as a great secret.”

30b. Saying so, the brāhmaṇa, the best sage, Nārada, left.

31-33. He (i.e. Prahlāda) got an excellent birth in the womb of Kamalā (i.e. Prahlāda was born as the son of Kamalā). He was named Prahlāda; the account of that illustrious one (will be narrated by me). O brāhmaṇas, when he was a child, he thought of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) only. Due to the favour of Narasimha (i.e. Viṣṇu) he would be the king of gods in heaven. After having obtained godhead, he would also get the position of Indra; he, the all-wise, will attain salvation—Viṣṇu’s abode.

34. There are innumerable glorious individuals, there are many forms of creation. (So) the great-souled, wise ones should not commit errors.

35-36. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you everything that you have asked. O glorious one (ones) you may ask anything else. I shall remove your doubt: (I shall tell you about) the victory of gods and the destruction of demons brought about by the lord of gods, and (about) how he re-established the three worlds.

The sages said:

37. Who got the position of Indra, which sustained the title of gods? O best of brāhmaṇas, tell (us) in detail, who gave (him) the position of Indra?

Sūta said:

38. I shall tell you in detail for which best merit the best one, the glorious one, obtained the position of Indra.

39-40. When all the demons were killed in the great war, and when the sinners were completely annihilated by the magnanimous Viṣṇu, gods along with gandharvas, nāgas, vidyādhara, spoke, with their palms folded in obeisance, to Mādhava (Viṣṇu):

41. “O venerable one, O lord of gods, O Hṛṣīkeśa, our salutations to you. We are going to tell you something respectfully; (please) understand all that.

42-43a. O Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), make for (i.e. give) us a ruler, a protector, who is meritorious; (give us) a god, a king, viz. Indra, who is righteous and who would rule the worlds, and resorting to whom the beings in the three worlds would obtain happiness.”

Vāsudeva (i.e. *Viṣṇu*) said:

43b. O you illustrious ones, the best brāhmaṇa, endowed with the Viṣṇuite lustre, lived in my heaven for a long time.

44-48a. O you best gods, the period of stay in my heaven of that brāhmaṇa, that magnanimous devotee of me, was over. Due to Viṣṇuite lustre in him the pious one will be your guardian; and he loves righteousness; he, the best pious brāhmaṇa, will be your king and supporter for protecting you. The large-hearted son of Aditi will be known as Suvrata. He, the very powerful and very brave one will be Indra.

Sūta said:

48b-49. In this way, the lord of gods, granted best boons to the gods; then all the victorious and best gods went with Viṣṇu to see their father, Kaśyapa, and their mother.

50. The magnanimous ones saluted both (the parents) seated comfortably. Full of great joy, and with the palms of their hands joined, they said:

51. “Due to your favour we have attained to godhead.” Full of great joy, he (i.e. Kaśyapa) spoke (these) words to the gods:

Kaśyapa said:

52a-55a. You have always been following the virtuous path. Due to our favour and the power of penance, you have attained to the position of gods which is inexhaustible. To these I (now) give a boon: Full of great love you—gods, nāgas, gandharvas and great deities—will be immortal, will not be subject to old age,

will be imperishable, will have all your desires satisfied, and will be endowed with all perfections.

Viṣṇu said:

55b-56a. Well-being to you, O successful mother of gods; ask for a boon. I shall certainly give you whatever is desired by your mind.

Aditi spoke:

56b-59. O Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), due to your favour I had become a mother. I obtained these sons that are immortal, ageless, eternal, and righteous and affectionate, O Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), (please) listen: O Govinda, you are one who fully satisfies all desires and gives prosperity. Remaining in my womb (you should be born as) my son, so that with you as my son I shall be delighted. O lord, thus satisfy my desire, leading to prosperity.

Vāsudeva said :

60-65. For the mission of gods, you should go to (i.e. take up) a human form. Then I shall surely remain in your womb. O goddess, when the twelfth yuga comes, I shall, for removing the burden of the earth, and for killing all the kṣatriyas, be (born as) your son, viz. (Paraśu) Rāma, Jamadagni's son, the best of brāhmaṇas and endowed with valour and lustre, and best among all those who wield weapons. Similarly, when the twentyseventh yuga called Tretā arrives, I shall be, O loyal wife, (born as) your son, named Rāma. O you of pious mind, when at the end of Dvāpara, the twentyeighth yuga arrives, I shall be undoubtedly (born as) your son, by name Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), for the destruction of all demons and for removing the burden of the earth.

66a. O you auspicious one, now please do what I tell you.

66b-70a. O you goddess, who grant everything, having created an omniscient, handsome son, I shall give him the position of Indra, (so that) he too will be Indra.

Having heard thus that due to the favour of the lord of lords the son will be Indra, she was full of great joy. (She said:) "O magnanimous one, let it be so; I shall do as you tell me."

Then all the deities, free from fear and full of joy, went to their own abodes.

Sūta said:

70b-71. Having gone to Kaśyapa after she was in menstruation, the high-minded Aditi (said to him:) “O revered one, give me a son who will enjoy the position of Indra.” The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Kaśyapa), having thought for a moment, said to the high-minded lady:

72-82a. “O illustrious one, let it be so. You will have a son, who will be the creator of the three worlds and also enjoyer of the sacrifices.” Having put his hand on her head, the lustrous, best brāhmaṇa, who was endowed with truth and piety, practised penance. O best of brāhmaṇas, he (i.e. the son) would always live in the heaven of Viṣṇu. O best of brāhmaṇas, when his religious merit would be exhausted, he would, due to (the fruit of) his acts, fall from there; then he, of a great penance, would go to the womb of Aditi, with the desire to enjoy the position of Indra. Due to her truthful and meritorious deeds, and due to her religious merit and penance, the goddess conceived. Having gone to reside in a forest, she practised penance without laziness. A hundred divine years passed, when the mother of gods was (thus) practising penance. She practised penance difficult to be practised by gods and demons. She, bright with that penance and lustre, resembling the sun’s lustre and (looking) like another sun, resorted to meditation and shone brightly. Then due to the lustre of her penance, she looked superior in her beauty (i.e. looked more beautiful). That goddess, Dakṣa’s devout daughter, engrossed in penance and meditation, and feeding herself on air, shone more (i.e. looked more beautiful). All siddhas and sages, and gods of great prowess, closely intent (on looking after her), praised and protected the illustrious one.

82b-84. When a full hundred years were over, Viṣṇu came there. He said to that illustrious Aditi, endowed with penance: “O goddess, the foetus has fully developed; the time for delivery has come; the foetus is nourished by your penance and grown by your lustre. O you glorious one, today only you deliver the embryo.”

85-89. Speaking thus, the lord of the gods went to his own

abode. When a very prosperous time arrived, the goddess delivered a son, who was lustrous, who was as it were another sun, who was pleasing, who was charming in all limbs, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who had four arms, whose body was huge, who was regent of a quarter, who was the lord of gods, who was covered with lustrous blazes, whose hands looked lovely on account of disc and lotus; who, the very intelligent one, shone with a face resembling the orb of the moon, who was very wise, who was adorned with the lustre of Viṣṇu, with other good characteristics and divine disposition, who was full of all (good) characteristics, whose face was like the moon, whose eyes resembled lotuses.

90-92a. The gods, the sages who had mastered the Vedas, gandharvas, nāgas, vidyādharas, the seven sages, of inferior and superior prowess, came there. Other virtuous, magnanimous sages, giving merit and auspiciousness, with their minds full of joy also came there.

92b-94. When that glorious one of great prowess was born, all revered gods, all mountains, ascetics, milky and other oceans, unsullied rivers, all those that were affectionate and other mobile and immobile objects came there. All lords of gods happily celebrated (the occasion) with auspicious rites.

95-102a. The hosts of the celestial nymphs danced and the gandharvas sang songs. Gods and sages who had mastered the Vedas praised the magnanimous son of Kaśyapa with Vedic hymns. When he of great prowess was born, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and all the Vedas together with the Vedāṅgas and the Upāṅgas¹ came there. All the beings in the world that were endowed with religious merit came there only, when he of great prowess was born. With auspicious great festivals all of them performed sacred rites. The three gods led by Brahmā, as well as Kaśyapa and Brhaspati, of great prowess and full of joy and worshipping him, performed the naming ceremony of that magnanimous one. (They said:) "You will be known as Vasudatta; you are also (named) Vasuda; your names will be Ākhaṇḍala, and also

1. *Śāṅgopāṅgaiḥ*—With Aṅgas and Upāṅgas. The six Vedāṅgas are: (1) Śikṣā (Phonetics); (2) Kalpa (Rituals); (3) Vyākaraṇa (Grammar); (4) Nirukta (Etymology); (5) Chandas (Metrics); and (6) Jyotiṣa (Astronomy).

The Upāṅgas are said to be: Purāṇa-nyāya-mimāṃsā-dharma-śāstrāṇi.

Marutvān; you will also be known as Maghavan, Biḍaujas, and Pākaśāsani." (They said to Aditi:) "This your son will also be known as Śakra and Indra."

102b-105. All the deities, pleased and delighted in mind, gave these names to that magnanimous one only. The great gods took bath and performed the purificatory rites. Having called Viśvakarman, they gave that magnanimous one propitious and divine ornaments. All the gods of great prowess were thus glad when that glorious, magnanimous king of gods was born.

106-108. On an auspicious day, at an auspicious time, the magnanimous gods consecrated him with auspicious rites and established him as Indra. By the favour of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) he obtained the position of Indra. That Vasudatta, the lustrous lord of gods, practised penance. He was endowed with brilliant lustre, and had held weapons like the thunderbolt, the noose, and the goads.

Sūta said :

109. Seeing the great, entire power of penance, Śukra uttered a verse : "In the worlds, there will be none else as much handsome as this one.

110. This other great magnanimous one has obtained this divine grandeur by Viṣṇu's favour.

111. None else, of a strong power due to penance will there be in the worlds, who can be compared with this one".

CHAPTER SIX

Diti's Wailing

Sūta said

1-2. The other miserable wife of Kaśyapa, named Danu, being tormented by the grief due to the son (of Aditi) came to Diti's house. She was weeping, she who was reached by (i.e. was full of) great grief, saluted the two lotus-like feet of Diti. Diti advised her.

Diti said :

3. O glorious one, what is the cause of your weeping? Women are (said to be) 'Putrinī (i.e. endowed with sons) (even though) they have (only) one son. O beautiful, auspicious one, you are the mother of even a hundred magnanimous sons like Śumbha.

4-7a. Tell me the reason why you are unhappy—(you) who have the two magnanimous and very mighty and valorous sons like king Hiraṇyakaśipu and the very mighty Hiraṇyākṣa. O friend, tell me why you are having this great grief. Tell me fully the reason for which you are weeping now.

7b. Having thus spoken to the queen (i.e. Danu), the high-minded (Diti) ceased speaking.

Danu said :

8-9. See, see, O magnanimous one, the desire of my co-wife (i.e. Aditi) has been fulfilled by the god of gods—the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). As Viṣṇu had formerly granted a boon to Aditi, even now he has granted a great boon to her son.

10. This son is known to be born from Kaśyapa, and is the guardian of the three worlds. Snatching the position of Indra from your son, he has given it to him (i.e. to Aditi's son).

11-12a. (Now) Aditi, who is full of desires (i.e. whose desires are fulfilled) is exalting with happiness, (since) her younger son, Vasudatta, along with the gods, is enjoying Indra's position which is very difficult to be obtained.

Diti said :

12b-13. O you glorious one, tell me of which position my very intelligent son is deprived; O friend, (tell me) also how other demons and goblins are deprived of lustre. Tell me in detail the cause of this.

14a. Saying (these) words to her (i.e. to Danu), Diti, who was extremely unhappy, stopped speaking.

Danu said :

14b-16a. Gods and demons, being enraged, went to fight (i.e. fought). A great war, causing the destruction of the demons, took place. The gods and Viṣṇu struck down my sons in the war;

so also your sons (were struck down) by the god of gods, viz. the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

16b-20. As a lion would frighten with his own lustre (beings) that have gone to the forest, in the same way your sons and my sons were killed by him having the conch in his hand (i.e. by Viṣṇu). He destroyed, crushed, made to flee, and unnerved the army (of the demons) led by Kālanemi and unconquerable even for the gods and demons (together). As, in the forest fire would burn grass with its flames, so Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu) completely consumed all the hosts of demons. Many of my sons, O respectable lady, and many of your sons also died (in the war). As all the moths perish after reaching (i.e. coming in contact with) fire, similarly all the demons reaching (i.e. coming in contact with) Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), perished.

21a. Diti thus listened to this fearful account.

Diti said :

21b. O you good one, how do you tell me this, which is like the fall of the thunderbolt?

22-23a. Saying so, that respectable lady fell down in a swoon. She, who was very much oppressed by the grief due to her son, said : “Alas ! a misery has come about; it is very troublesome and tormenting.”

23b-32a. Seeing her, the greatest sage said (these) auspicious words: “Well-being to you; do not weep; O you illustrious one, persons like you, who are energetic and free from greed and infatuation, do not grieve like this. O honorable lady, in this mundane existence, to whom do the sons belong? To whom do the good relatives belong? One has nothing to do with anyone (else). O dear one, listen to it all. You are the daughters of Dakṣa and are my beautiful wives. O auspicious one, I am your husband, who fulfils your desires. I bring you together; I am your guardian, and protector, also, O you of a beautiful face. Why did the cruel demons, not controlling themselves, entertain enmity (with the gods)? O you magnanimous one, your sons are destitute of truthfulness. Due to that fault (of them) and due to your morbid affection (for them), O auspicious one, they were killed by Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa, i.e. Viṣṇu) and were thrown down by the gods. Therefore do not entertain grief which destroys real

salvation. Grief would destroy (i.e. destroys) religious merit, and one perishes by the loss of religious merit. Therefore, O you of a beautiful face, give up the grief being of the nature of an obstacle. Due to the power of their own faults the demons died. The gods were (just) an apparent cause; they (i.e. the demons) were destroyed by their own deeds. Realising this, O you glorious one, be happy”.

32b-33. Having thus spoken to his dear wife who was unhappy, the very intelligent, great contemplative saint, withdrew through dejection and stopped (speaking).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Account of the Body

Diti said :

1-2. O Lord, you have spoken all the truth; there is no doubt about it. Abandoning love for my husband, I entertained rivalry (with my co-wife), O brāhmaṇa. (Now) being tormented by pride, agony, humiliation and great grief, I shall, O best one, give up my life.

Kaśyapa said :

3-5. (Please) listen, I shall tell (i.e. explain) you in such a way that there will be (i.e. you will have) peace (of mind). O auspicious one, nobody is anybody's son, or mother or father. Nobody has a brother or a relative. None has kinsmen and friends. In the mundane existence such is the relation, affected by illusion and infatuation. O respectable lady, one is one's own mother, one's own relatives and kinsmen. One is oneself the eternal moral virtue.

6-8. O you honourable lady, a man becomes happy due to (good) conduct. He surely perishes due to bad conduct and sin. Due to this he even goes to (i.e. is born in) a wicked species; there is no doubt about this. A man, deluded by an untruthful act and a great sin, always remains as an enemy of (other) beings. Here

and there (i.e. everywhere) he has enemies; there is no doubt about this.

9. O you dear, auspicious and beautiful lady, when a man lives in a friendly way, he has friends everywhere.

10-11. O respectable lady, when the seed is concealed (underground) and is well-placed, the farmer gets the fruit exactly in accordance with it. Similarly your sons have vied with the good. Enjoy the fruit of that deed that has come to you.

12-13a. O illustrious one, your sons are destitute of penance and peace; due to that sin they have fallen from a great position. Realising this, be tranquil, and give up pain or pleasure.

13b-14a. To whom do the friends belong? To whom do relatives and friends belong? Beings live happily in accordance with their own deeds.

14b-15a. Due to their knowledge of the reality, the wise and the glorious do not think about another's interest. (To do so) is futile; there is no doubt about this.

15b-21a. The body is constituted of the five elements, and is just infirm because of the joints. O respectable lady, with a hope for happiness, it has befriended everything. Ātman (i.e. the soul) is greatly meritorious, omnipresent, and sees everything; he is virtuous, and grants all (kinds of) prosperity. Thus occupying everything, and being untinged, he, O respectable lady, moves all alone. While (thus) moving, he saw, in a secluded place, four meritorious best brāhmaṇas, (as it were) great power embodied. The fifth one was Wind, the friend of the former (four). Then the soul sought the help of Knowledge. The illustrious one, seeing them, said to Jñāna (Knowledge): "O Jñāna, see these five; they are consulting one another. Go to them and talk to them. Ask them: 'Who are you?' "

21b-22. Hearing those very significant words of that glorious one, Jñāna (Knowledge), propitiating him, said to him: "What have you to do with them? Tell me the truth (since) you are always pure."

Ātman (soul) said:

23-24. These five are glorious, handsome and high-minded. I shall go, meet them, and shall speak to them. O Jñāna (Knowledge), listen: I shall speak to these worthy ones, who have come

to the fifth one viz. Speed (i.e. Wind). O Knowledge, be (my) messenger; you are skilled in the act of a messenger.

Jñāna (Knowledge) said:

25-26. O soul, listen to my words, I am telling you the truth, and the truth (only). O dear one, O you of pure heart, you, desiring for the good, should never have the company of these five. O you very intelligent one, this Moha (i.e. Infatuation) is longing for your company.

Ātman (the soul) said :

27. Why do you, O Jñāna, avoid the company of these? O wise one, tell me the real reason of this.

Jñāna (Knowledge) said:

28. There will be great grief just due to their company. These five are the root of grief and cause affliction and tormenta-tion.

Ātman said:

29. Let it be so; I shall do as you tell me.

That Ātman, (thus) speaking to Jñāna, associated himself with Dhyāna (Meditation).

Kaśyapa said:

30. Then all the five saw that Ātman. Having called Buddhi (Intellect) they said to her: "Be united with Ātman only.

31-32. O you auspicious one, act as the messenger between Ātman and us. O Buddhi, having gone to him say to him: 'The five elements,¹ the magnanimous ones, the supporters of the world and the auspicious ones desire your friendship.' You have to do this mission of ours. (Please) go from here." (*Buddhi said:*)

33. "Let it be so; O glorious ones, I shall carry out this best mission of you." Having thus spoken to them, she went to that Ātman, and said to him:

1. The five elements are: Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Ether.

34-35. “O blessed one, I am Buddhi, I have approached you as a messenger from (i.e. of) the great (elements). Listen to their words (i.e. message). The five-natured (elements) desire your eternal friendship. Form friendship (with them), O you highly intelligent one, and abandon (i.e. keep) Dhyāna far away.”

Dhyāna (Meditation said):

36. O Ātman, you should not have their company. Merely by their contact there will be great grief (i.e. great grief will befall you).

37. How would you do your duty, when you are forsaken by Jñāna and me? So, you should not at all associate yourself with them.

38. O mighty one, they will make you live in the womb; there is no other go. Without Jñāna and me, you will certainly go to Ajñāna (i.e. Ignorance).

39. Thus speaking to that highly intelligent Ātman, Dhyāna ceased to speak. Then, Ātman, who was determined (to form friendship with the five elements), spoke to Buddhi, who had come to him:

40. “The illustrious Jñāna and Dhyāna are my virtuous ministers. It is not proper to go to them. So, O Buddhi, what shall I do (now)?”

41. Hearing thus (i.e. these words), the glorious Buddhi told in the vicinity of (i.e. to) them (i.e. the five elements) the full narration of Jñāna and Dhyāna (i.e. told everything that Jñāna and Dhyāna had said).

42-43. Then all the five (elements) went to Ātman (and said to him): “We constantly desire your friendship only. O you lord of the worlds, since you are pure, we have approached you. Thinking for yourself only (i.e. independently of Jñāna and Dhyāna), please give us a reply.”

Ātman said:

44. All you five have come; (and) you seek my friendship. Tell before (i.e. to) me your merit and power.

Bhūmi (the Earth) said:

45. My firmness rooted in the bones is the basis of all operations, is connected with skin and flesh, and with nails and the hair on the body.

46. O you very wise one, my strength is in the body. That magnanimous odour passing through the nose is my servant.

Ākāśa (Ether) said:

47-48. I, Ether, have come. Listen; I shall tell you about the lustre, of the nature of the highest Brahman; space is without and within; I live in a vacant place. My ministers are the two ears; they are set up for hearing.

Vāyu (Wind) said:

49. I remain in five forms,¹ and in this way I perform auspicious and inauspicious things. My minister, remaining on the habitation of the skin, resorts to the quality of touch.

Tejas (Fire) said:

50-54a. Always remaining in the body, I digest (articles of food). I manifest all matter and non-matter, without and within. I send forth semen, marrow, saliva, and also blood remaining in the skin and joints. I remain in the body. The two eyes are my ministers that cause the perception of matter. Thus before (i.e. to) you I have narrated my function. Everyday I well nourish the body with nectar. Such is my operation in the dear city of the body. Know² the tongue to be my minister who very much enjoys the tastes.

Nāsikā (Nose) said:

54b-56. I give great nourishment to the body with fragrance. Casting off bad odour, I manifest (good) odour over the body. O you illustrious one, united with Buddhi, and displayed by her existence, I remain steady in this body for the mission of my master. Know odour to be my quality which proceeds in two ways.

1. The five forms of Vāyu are: Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna, Samāna.

2. Before this verse some such words as 'Āpaḥ ūcuḥ' are missing.

The two Ears said :

57-58. Remaining in our body (i.e. the body to which we belong), we hear words telling about what ought or ought not to be done, and also auspicious and inauspicious words, true and false words, pleasant and unpleasant words uttered by people. My (i.e. our) quality is sound, and there is no doubt that I (i.e. we) employ my (i.e. our) operation when the intellect would intensify me (i.e. us).

The Skin said:

59-62a. The five-formed wind is well-settled without and within the body. I feel the movement of these (five forms). I feel cold, hot, sun, rain, and throbbing of the wind. I feel every touch, every contact (with) phlegm etc. of men. My quality is touch alone. I am telling the truth. Thus I have told you about my function.

The two Eyes said :

62b-64a. O best one, when the Intellect urges, and not otherwise, we observe all proper and improper forms that exist in the world. We remain in the body, and form is our quality. Thus is the propriety of our function in the body, O you highly intelligent one.

The Tongue spoke:

64b-66a. O dear one, united with Buddhi, I spread the kinds of taste. I find out every (taste) like saline, sour, insipid or sweet. Always associated with this function, I remain (in the body). This Intellect is the leader of all the sense-organs.

66b-67a. O dear one, listen, thus these five sense-organs have come together; and they again and again narrated their respective functions.

67b-68. Then Intellect approached the very intelligent one and said to him: "When the body is without me, it perishes; not otherwise. Therefore, O you highly intelligent one (i.e. Ātman), carry on, after having resorted to flesh (i.e. body).

69-70a. Then Karma (Fate) came there and said this (i.e. these words) to Ātman: "O you very wise one, I am Karma, and have approached you. I send you along the path by which you go here (i.e. in the world)."

70b-72a. Having heard all that, Ātman said to them: "You are united with the five-natured ones and are indeed common to all. Why do you seek the friendship of the five-natured one? You may (please) tell before (i.e. to) me the entire reason."

The five-natured ones said:

72b-74a. Due to our contact the body is produced; O you of a high intelligence, you who follow a good vow, stay in that body. Due to your favour all of us (also) stay there. For this reason we always desire your friendship.

Ātman said:

74b-75a. O illustrious ones, let that, which is dear to you, be so. There is no doubt that I shall befriend you through affection.

75b-76a. The glorious and high-minded one, though warded off by the noble Jñāna and also by Dhyāna, sought their company.

76b-77a. Then the lord, being deluded by attachment and hatred, and associated with the five elements, became embodied.

77b-80a. When he (i.e. Ātman) goes to the womb (i.e. is conceived), he, fallen into the lubricious eddy, full of excrement and urine, along with them, with his body distressed, said to the five-natured ones. "O you five-natured ones, all of you listen to my words. Due to your contact, I, being deluded by great grief, have fallen into this lubricious, very terrible and fearful (eddy)."

The five-natured ones said :

80b-82a. O lord, remain there till the foetus is full (i.e. mature). Then, there is no doubt that, you will come out of it. You are our lord, settled in the region of the body. Thus you should rule; you will be enjoying pleasures.

82b-83. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) them, Ātman, oppressed by grief, and desiring to go (away), became intent on running (away).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Account of the Soul

Kaśyapa said :

1. He, being afflicted day by day, became bewildered in the womb. The righteous one, harassed by all kinds of suffering, was overcome with grief.

2. With his face turned down he remained in the womb. He was overcome with mental agonies and physical diseases; he was lamented over; he was senseless.

3a. He was full of great grief. Being (thus) tormented, he said to Jñāna:

Ātman said:

3b-4. O you very wise one, at that time I did not do what you told me (to do). In spite of being prevented by Dhyāna, I fell into the danger caused by delusion. Therefore, O you highly intelligent one, protect me from this very fearful stay in the womb.

Jñāna said :

5. O Ātman, you were prevented by me; but you did not do what I told (you). You were put in this calamity of (remaining in) the womb by the very cruel five-natured ones. Now go to Dhyāna; you will obtain pleasure from him (in it). There is no doubt that you will be free from the residence in the womb.

6-8a. Understanding (i.e. hearing) those words—the fact—from (i.e. spoken by) Jñāna, he, having called Dhyāna, said (to him): “Please listen to my words. O Dhyāna, I have sought your refuge. (Please) protect me always.”

8b. “Let it be so, O you very wise one.” Thus Dhyāna spoke to that highly intelligent one (i.e. Ātman).

9. Hearing these words, Ātman then approached Dhyāna. With Dhyāna, and free from delusion, he lived in the womb.

10-11. When Ātman went to Dhyāna, he forgot the fear caused by (remaining in) the womb. The Ātman accompanied by the two (i.e. Jñāna and Dhyāna) and dissociated from delusion (remained) thinking about his own happiness only. “As soon as

I go out of this (womb) I shall give up the body formed by the five-natured ones.”

12-19. The lord, living in the womb, always thought like this. O you of a beautiful face, at the time of the delivery of the one related to Prajāpati the foetus is shaken by wind, and also by the strong breath of life. The vulva expands (only) twenty-four fingers; the foetus is (of the size of) twentyfive fingers; therefore he is troubled. O dear one, thus being troubled by swoon, he falls, with Jñāna and Dhyāna, on the ground, . He is separated from it by the divine wind related to Prajāpati. Merely by the touch of the ground, Jñāna and Dhyāna are forgotten. Ātman, confounded in the bondage of the worldly existence, remains there through love (for it). Filled with virtues and vices, and connected with great delusion, he everyday desires everything like eatables and drinks. Ātman thus being nourished with the five-natured ones is covered over with the sense-organs and all sinful objects of senses. O respectable lady, enticed by his relatives like his wife and others, day by day he becomes afflicted and agitated.

20-21a. This lord, Ātman, confounded by great delusion, (and thus) caught in the net of delusion, and being bound, as a fish is bound in a net by a fisherman, is unable to move.

21b-23. He is bound with strong bonds of the nets of infatuation. Deprived of Jñāna and Vijñāna, and struck by attachment and hatred, he is thus pervaded by the pervading universe. Being tormented by desire, and also by anger and bound by Prakṛti (i.e. the natural disposition) by means of his deeds, he became (i.e. becomes) greatly confounded.

Sūta said:

24-25. When Ātman was thus deluded and was occupied with all the wicked ones like greed, attachment, he was bound by the delusion of the form of the worldly existence like: ‘This is (my) wife; this is (my) son; this is (my) friend; this is (my) house.’

26. He is then distressed by griefs like bereavement of the

son etc., and is also consumed by old age, physical diseases and mental agonies also.

27. Thus Ātman is tormented by very fearful misery and delusion; and is frustrated by pride, humiliation and many miseries.

28. O respectable lady, he is, in the same way, troubled by old age in various ways. Constantly lamented over and senseless he thinks of misery (only).

29. At night he sees dreams, and by day he is without vitality. O respectable lady, similarly, day by day, he is full of the imperfections of the limbs.

30. When he was wandering in the mundane existence, he saw Vairāgya (i.e. detachment), that was fearless, friendless, very tranquil and contented.

31-32. Then Ātman spoke to him, that was free from desire and anger: "Who are you (remaining) with a naked form? How is it that you are not ashamed of your friends? Moving in the place where there are groups (of the elements), women, old persons, young women and mothers, you, who are uncovered, are not afraid (i.e. are not ashamed)."

Vitarāga said :

33-34. Who would be seen naked here? I am never naked. Even though you are well-dressed, you are very much bound. O divine one, I am never naked. You who live under the sway of the objects of senses and are without (i.e. do not care for) any bounds of morality appear to be naked.

Ātman said:

35. O you of a good vow, tell me in detail what the bounds of morality are, if you know them definitely.

36-37a. The very wise, very intelligent Vitarāga said to him: "The mind resorts to great firmness in (times of) happiness and unhappiness. And (when) it is troubled by respective objects, it should be given up to them.

37b-38. I shall now explain to you the sense of shame, which fully enters the mind. I have nothing to do today; I am removed

from my position, I am naked—(when thus) one is absorbed in remorse, that is said to be the sense of shame.

39. Of whom should one be ashamed? There is never a second. The divine Puruṣa (Person) is just one. What would he destroy and of whom?

40-42. Now I shall explain to you the groups which you mentioned. As a potter would put a lump of clay on the wheel, and then would cause it to revolve with a string, and would, with a firm mind, manifest (i.e. fashion) them (i.e. the pots) as he desires, in the same way—and in no other way—the creator fashions various forms. Later, for one reason or another, they perish.

43. One should be ashamed of the eternal groups (of the elements) that always remain, for they do not rest (i.e. depend) on the earth.

44. They are: Ether, Wind, Fire, Earth and Water as the fifth. These groups, that are present everywhere, shine.

45. These five well-settled in the regions of the bodies of beings, are present everywhere. (Then) of whom should one be ashamed?

46-47a. O dear one, I shall now explain to you the nature of women. As in thousands of pots with (i.e. containing) water the one (and only) moon shines (i.e. is reflected), similarly you shine everywhere.

47b-54a. You, who are very magnanimous, and who, remain in thousands of beings, and in the mobile and the immobile, are deluded. Through the door (i.e. opening) of the vulva, which is sinful and full of illusion and delusion, and also through the breasts and buttocks and age, you shine. Here also is seen the increase in (the shape of) the heart and flesh. For the fall of the people the form of delusion is manifested. There is no woman that is mentioned by you. The creator ever fashions the creation for his diversion. The soul of the man like that of a woman remains everywhere. Those that are free from breasts (i.e. from sexual desire) are always liberated. Man is called Puruṣa (i.e. the soul) and woman is said to be Prakṛti (i.e. nature, original source of the material world). She sports with him and is never free. You, united with Prakṛti, are seen among Puruṣas

(i.e. men). Who causes shame (and) to whom? Knowing thus go happily.

54b-56. O beautiful lady, I shall explain to you the old woman who is always old. The skin on her body, O lady of a beautiful face, is worn out. She is full of white and grey Hair. She is feeble, miserable and is covered over with folds. Such a woman would not be old; but she is called old.

57-58a. I have narrated her characteristics. Now I shall tell (the characteristics of) a young woman. She, living near the soul, always grows richer in knowledge. She is called Sumati (i.e. good intention), and is both old and young. The woman is always settled in puruṣas (i.e. souls). One should be ashamed of her. I shall also tell (you something) else.

58b-62a. I shall explain to you the mother, whom you mentioned. She is Cetanā (i.e. consciousness) always living in the bodies of beings. She gives the highest knowledge, and (therefore) she is called Prajñā (i.e. discernment). Prajñā is called mother as she lives in all the worlds for the protection, nourishment and well-fare of beings. That one who is described as Sumati, is called mātā (i.e. mother).

62b-63. All the forms always leading to the gates of the mundane existence are these mothers. They cause great misery. I have explained to you the nature of the mother. What else should I tell you?"

Ātman said :

64. Who are you, that have come here, and are removing my tormentation? (Please) explain to me in detail your own nature.

Vitarāga said :

65-67a. Well-being to you; I am Vitarāga, from whom all desires, being frustrated, turn away; whom these vile deeds do not see due to their wickedness—this has no alternative; whom hope never approaches; due to whose fear anger, greed and infatuation have perished; and Viveka (i.e. discrimination) is my brother.

Ātman said :

67b-68a. Of what nature is this your brother named Viveka? Tell me his—your brother's characteristics and also of your own.

Vitarāga said :

68b-70a. I shall not narrate before (i.e. to) you his characteristics and form. O glorious one, I shall (just) call that brother (himself). O Viveka, my brother, listen to our speech (i.e. words). O you very glorious one, O you very intelligent one, (please) come out of affection for me.

Kaśyapa said :

70b-76. He, omniscient, omnipresent, pervading, devoted entirely to truth, the enemy of all errors, and lover of knowledge came (there) with his two wives, Śānti (Tranquility) and Kṣamā (Forbearance). Dhāraṇā (Retentive memory) and Dhī (understanding) are the two daughters of the same magnanimous one (Viveka). Yoga (Abstract meditation) in his eldest son, and Mokṣa (salvation) is his great preceptor. That Viveka, who is spotless, ego-less, desire-less, having no possession, with his mind pleased at all times, free from the pairs of opposites (like pleasure and pain) and highly intelligent one, came (there) adorned with all jewels. That Viveka, whose ministers were the very glorious and highly intelligent Dharma (Piety) and Satya (Truth) came (there), accompanied by Kṣamā and Śānti. He said to Vitarāga: "Invited (by you) I have come. So, O brother, tell before (i.e. to) me the full reason resorting to (i.e. for) which you have invited me."

Vitarāga said :

77-79. This man, who is before (us) is restrained by great nooses, is deluded by Moha's arrows, and also by the bonds of the worldly existence. He pervades everything, and is the master of all, and also of me. He is seized by the five elements; and is bereft of Jñāna and Dhyāna. You who know facts should ask this Ātman.

Hearing the words of Vitarāga, Viveka spoke these words:

Viveka said :

80. O lord of the universe, you are carrying on happily, What pleasure did you yourself enjoy after coming to the worldly existence?

Ātman said :

81-86. O you highly intelligent one, I, void of knowledge, always experienced the great, unbearable and terrible grief of the residence in the womb. Being deprived of knowledge while in the body, I was born in many ways. When I was in childhood, O lord, I did undeserving deeds. As a youth I sported, and enjoyed my wife in many ways. When I reached old age I was tormented by the grief of (i.e. the bereavement of my) son etc. Due to the separation from my wife etc. I was burnt day and night. Everyday I was tormented by miseries of many kinds. O you highly intelligent one, I am not at all having any pleasure by day or at night. O you very intelligent one, what do (i.e. should) I, very much tormented by agonies, do (now)? Just tell me the means by which I shall get happiness. (Please) make me free from this great bond—this heap of the noose of the mundane existence.

Viveka said :

87-93. O you lord of the world, you are pure, you are free from the pairs (like pleasure and pain), and are free from sins. Go to this glorious Vītarāga, who gives happiness, whom you have undoubtedly seen naked and without any formality. He shows (the way to) happiness and destroys all distress.

Hearing thus (i.e. these words), the pure soul again went to Vītarāga. The melancholy one, sighing deeply, said to him (i.e. to Vītarāga): “(Please) listen to my words. Show me that way by (i.e. following) which I shall get happiness.” “O very intelligent one, let it be so. I shall do as you tell me. Again go to Viveka; you have told me a pleasant news. He (i.e. Viveka) only will tell you the way to happiness.” The lord, (thus) sent by virtuous Vītarāga, went (to Viveka); and spoke to the glorious, pure and best Viveka: “(Please), show me (the way to) happi-

ness. Sent by Vitarāga, I have sought your refuge. Protect me from the frightful worldly existence.”

Viveka said :

94a. O you very wise one, go to Jñāna; he will explain everything to you.

94b-95. Ātman, thus told, went to the place where Jñāna stayed. (He said to Jñāna): “O Jñāna of great lustre and illuminating all objects, I have sought your refuge; show me the way to happiness.”

Jñāna said :

96-97. O lord of the worlds, I am your servant. O you of a good vow, you do not know (i.e. you have not recognised) me. Formerly Dhyāna and I had repeatedly warded you off. Due to your contact with the five-natured ones (i.e. the elements), you have met with a calamity. O you highly intelligent one, go to Dhyāna, he will grant you happiness.

98-105. Sent by Jñāna, Ātman remained after having resorted to Dhyāna. (He said to Dhyāna): “O Dhyāna, show me the happiness that is perfectly accomplished. Thus protect me who have sought your shelter.” Dhyāna having heard these words spoken to him by Ātman, was delighted, and again said to that Ātman: “O dear one, well-determined in (doing) all deeds, by you and by Vitarāga and Viveka, I am never to be forsaken. Be endowed with Dhyāna, and observe yourself, by being self-possessed, firm, free from fear and doubt. You will go to (i.e. obtain) salvation by burning (i.e. destroying) your blemishes, as a lamp in a place sheltered from wind is firm and emits soot. Always remain in a secluded place; remain without food (or) with limited food. Be without the pairs of opposites (like pleasure and pain), without words, and firmly remaining on your seat. Reflecting, with a firm mind, on your self only you will reach that highest place of Viṣṇu, (which is also) my place.”

CHAPTER NINE

Instructions to Diti

Kaśyapa said :

1-2. The intelligent Ātman, thus addressed by Dhyāna and others, desiring to give up the product of the five-natured ones, and finding out motives, abandoning his aimless body, which he did not notice when it fell down, went to them.

3. There is no connection between life and body that were brought up together. For what reason is there a relation with wealth, sons or wife?

4-13a. O you very dear one, realising thus, be calm; do not be weak-minded. He alone is the highest Brahman; he alone is eternal. This Ātman lives in demons and gods in his own nature. He is Brahmā; he is Rudra; he is the eternal Viṣṇu. He creates all things; he protects the beings. This (Ātman) Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the pious one and of the nature of virtue withdraws (all). O you very dear one, he has created gods and demons. Gods are liberated due to their piety (while) your sons are wanting in piety. This virtue is Viṣṇu's body, preserved by all gods. O respectable lady, one (i.e. a man) should think about proper conduct and follow proper conduct only. The meritorious Viṣṇu always favours him. Gods always lived with piety, truth and penances. Those, with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, have practised virtue here (i.e. in this world). This proper conduct is the body of Viṣṇu and truth is his heart. Viṣṇu is pleased with him who always practises them. He, who would defile truth and piety would always have sin. The very powerful Viṣṇu would be angry with him and would destroy him. Viṣṇu's devotees, abiding by truth and penance practised piety. The virtuous one is pleased with them and protects them thus.

13b-14. Your sons, as well as the sons of Danu and Simhikā, who were wicked-hearted, and who lived by (i.e. committed) impiety and sins, were killed in battle by Viṣṇu, having the disc in his hand.

15-17. That Ātman whom I formerly described before (i.e. to) you only, is Viṣṇu (himself); there is no doubt about it. He is meritorious and is the guardian of all. He who lived comfortably

in the bodies of the demons, resorted to sin only. He, O respectable lady, the highly intelligent one, became angry, and killed the demons. Being within and without he struck down your sons. O respectable lady, they were struck down by him who had created them.

18-19a. You should not have any infatuation for them. Listen (to my words). He who lives sinfully, dies (i.e. perishes). Therefore, give up infatuation, and always practise piety.

Diti said :

19b-20. Let it be so, O glorious one; I shall do as you have told me.

She, who was afflicted, and who was addressed by the sage, gave up her sorrow, after having said these words.

CHAPTER TEN

The Practice of Penance by Demons

The sages said :

1-2. O you very intelligent one, what effort did all the demons, who were accompanied by Hiraṇyakaśipu and had fled from the battle, do? Tell us in detail their excellent account. O brāhmaṇa, we all now desire to hear it from you.

Sūta said :

3. All the demons who had fled from the battle, who had become powerless, prideless and distressed with grief, went to their father.

4-5a. Having devoutly saluted (their father) Kaśyapa, they then said to him:

The demons said :

O best brāhmaṇa, we demons are born from your semen, so also are gods.

5b-9. All we demons are strong, powerful and brave; we also are knowers of expedients; we are very courageous and full of exertion. We are many, and the gods are few. How is it that they are victorious and we, endowed with power and lustre, have fled from the great battle? What is the reason for that, O father? Each one of the demons has the strength of a thousand intoxicated elephants. The gods do not have (strength) like that; and yet in the great war victory is had by the gods. So (please) tell (the reason for) all this. Please remove (our) doubt.

Kaśyapa said :

10-12a. O all my sons, listen to the reason for the victory (of the gods)—due to which the gods became victorious in the battle. The father is the giver of the semen (i.e. the seed); and the mother is always the soil. She conceives, protects and nourishes (her son). What would a father do in the case of a son whose intentions are fearful?

12b-18. Here (the son's) fate is (i.e. his deeds are) important (i.e. responsible). This is what I think. Association with Karma is due to two things: sin and merit. Proper conduct can be practised by resorting to truth only. Truth endowed with penance and meditation leads to emancipation, O (my) sons. There is no doubt about this that (even) with power, (good) attendants and nobility of birth, sin always leads to a fall, O (my) sons. All that power (etc.) of him who is without religious merit is impaired. O (my) good sons, there are tall and dense trees on the mountains and inaccessible places, (but) by the force of the wind they fall down along with their roots. Similarly those who are without truth and piety go to Yama's abode. O (my) good sons, this is a common rule (applicable) to (all) beings. You have abandoned the truth associated with piety, due to which a being is emancipated here (i.e. in this) and the next world.

19-24. O (my) sons, you, who were destitute of truth, have resorted to impiety. Fallen from truth, piety and penance, you have fallen into the ocean of grief; and (i.e. on the other hand) the gods who are endowed with truth and virtue, and with penance, tranquility and restraint, have a great religious merit and are sinless. Victory is seen there where there are truth, piety, penance, religious merit and Viṣṇu Hṛṣīkeśa. Eternal Vāsudeva

i.e. Viṣṇu helps them (only). Therefore, gods endowed with truth and piety become victorious with (Viṣṇu as their) helper and also due to power and valour. O (my) sons, you are destitute of penance and truth. Those who are conversant with (laws of) morality, know that that man who has Viṣṇu as his helper, and who has penance and power is alone seen to get victory.

25. You are without piety and also deprived of penance and truth, and you had also formerly secured Indra's position by force.

26. O (my) very intelligent sons, Indra's position cannot be obtained without penance, piety and glory (and merely) with qualities of power and pride.

27-28. O sons, those getting Indra's position (without penance, piety etc.) fall from it. Therefore, O (my) sons, you (should) together practise penance without quarrel and endowed with knowledge and meditation. You should never entertain enmity with Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

29. O (my) sons, when you will be blessed like this; then (only) you will obtain highest success; there is no doubt about this.

30-31. Thus told by the noble Kaśyapa, the very vigorous demons, having listened to the words of their father, devoutly saluted Kaśyapa and rising hastily, gathered together and held thorough consultation among themselves.

32-34. Then king Hiranyakaśipu said to the demons: "We shall (now) practise penance difficult to practise (but) giving everything." At that time Hiranyākṣa said : "I shall practise terrible penance. Then with (my) power I shall seize (all) the three worlds. There is no doubt about this. Having vanquished in battle that wicked-hearted Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) and having killed all gods, I shall reach Indra's position."

Bali said :

35. O lords—the sons of Diti—it is not proper for you to act like this. That enmity which you have with Viṣṇu, is the cause of destruction.

36. Men obtain happiness by propitiating that Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) with charity, religious merit, penance, and performance of sacrifices.

Hiranyakaśipu said :

37-38. Like this (i.e. as advised by Bali) I shall never propitiate Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). The wise ones take it to be excelling death if one, by giving up one's nature, serves one's enemy. Neither I nor other demons will serve Viṣṇu.

39-43. Then Bali again said to that magnanimous grandfather (of him) : "This is what is observed in the codes of laws by sages knowing truth—an advice full of statesmanship—especially regarding an enemy. Knowing oneself to be inferior, and the enemy to be powerful one should go near the enemy and wait for the time (i.e. opportunity) for victory. Darkness always stays by resorting to the shadow of a lamp. Darkness knowing the oiliness of the wick of the lamp and the very powerful light, goes to it and increases. Similarly remaining screened, and showing love actually, O demons, you should form friendship with gods following piety.

44. O prudent king of kings, formerly sage Kaśyapa has given good advice; do your deeds in accordance with it."

45. Having heard those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the powerful demon said : "O grandson, I shall not humiliate myself like this."

46-48a. Other kinsmen also said to him who was proficient in statesmanship : "What Bali said is meritorious and dear to the gods; what he said would increase Indra's pride and is fearful to the demons. All of us will just practise excellent penance. Having vanquished the gods with penance, we shall forcibly (regain) our position."

48b-50. Having thus conversed and having repudiated Bali at that time, the great demons entertaining great enmity with Viṣṇu in their heart, practised penance in mountaneous inaccessible places and (mountain-) peaks. Thus the demons had abandoned attachment, were well-determined, were free from desire and anger, remained without food and had overcome fatigue.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Story of Suvrata

The sages said :

1. You, the omniscient one, have narrated (to us the account of) the war between (the gods and) the demons. Now we desire to hear (the account) of the noble Suvrata.

2. Of whom was he—the very intelligent one—the son? In whose family was he born? What (kind of) penance did the brāhmaṇa have (i.e. practise)? How did he propitiate Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu)?

Sūta said :

3-4. O brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the account of the noble Suvrata as I had heard it due to the power of my intelligence. I shall tell you, with Viṣṇu's favour, the divine, purifying account bringing the Viṣṇuite merit (to the narrator and the listener).

5-7. O illustrious ones, in the former Kalpa, the best brāhmaṇa, named Somaśarman was born in Kauśika's family at an excellent sacred place which removed sins and which was very meritorious, named Vāmana, on the bank of Revā. Being sonless and full of great grief, he was always oppressed by painful poverty. Day and night he thought about the means (to have) a son and wealth also.

8-12. Once his dear wife, Sumanā by name, and of a good vow, saw her husband full of worry and with his face hung down. The devout (woman), seeing her husband (like that) said to him: "Your mind is overpowered by innumerable worries. You are confounded by infatuation. O you very intelligent one, give up your worry (i.e. stop worrying). Tell me (about) your worry. Be composed and happy. There is no (other) distress like worry which parches up the body. He who lives by giving up his worries, enjoys happily. O Brāhmaṇa, tell me the cause of your worry." Hearing the words of his beloved (wife) Somaśarman said to her :

Somaśarman said :

13. Thoughts (are) due to desire, O good lady; and thinking is the cause of grief. I shall tell you all that. Having heard it, understand it accurately.

14. O you of a good vow, I do not know due to which sin I am poor and sonless. This is the cause of my grief.

Sumanā said :

15-16. Listen. What I say will remove all doubts; the advice (should be such as) shows the correct knowledge. Greed is the seed of sin, and delusion is its root. Falsehood is its trunk, and deceit is its well-expanded branch.

17-22. Religious hypocrisy and crookedness are its leaves; it is always flowered with wicked intellect. Deception is its fragrance, and ignorance is its fruit. The sinful cruel birds like dishonesty, heresy, theft, envy have resorted to the branch of deceit of the tree of delusion. Its good fruit is ignorance; and the juice of the fruit is unrighteousness. Nourished by the water of thirst (i.e. desire) faithlessness is its exudation, O dear one. The good juice of it viz. impiety is (felt to be) superior and becomes sweet, and the tree of greed has fruits of such a type only. That man who is happy after resorting to its shadow, who everyday eats its very ripe fruits, and who is nourished by the juice of fruits i.e. impiety, becomes pleased and proceeds towards a fall.

23-27. Therefore giving up worrying a man should not have greed. He should not at all worry about wealth, sons and wife. Even if he is a learned person he goes along the path of fools, O dear one (if he worries). Everyday a fool thinks: 'How can I get wealth? How can I get a good wife? How can I have sons?' Being deluded, he thinks like this day and night. (Just) for a moment he (is deluded and) finds great pleasure while worrying; again he comes to his senses and is oppressed by great grief. O brāhmaṇa, give up worry and delusion and act. O you highly intelligent one, nobody has (any) connection with anyone (else) in the worldly existence.

28. Friends, relatives, sons, fathers and mothers with servants, and wives come to have a (chance) relation with a man.

Somaśarman said :

29. In the same way, O good lady, tell (me) in detail what kind of relation is there, by which wealth, sons and other relatives become related.

Sumanā said :

30. Some are relations through debt; some are those who had taken away (other's) wealth; some are helpful; others are indifferent.

31-35. Sons, friends or wives are born (and are) of (these) four kinds. So also wife, father, mother, servants, relatives and friends are born on the earth in accordance with their connection with a person. The person, whose deposit was taken away by another person becomes the latter's virtuous and handsome son on the earth—(is born) in the house of him who has taken away his deposit; there is no doubt about this; because he had left after giving him terrible grief by taking away his deposit. O glorious one, the owner of the deposit becomes the good son of him who had taken away his deposit; he is virtuous, handsome, and is endowed with all good characteristics. Being (born) as his son, he everyday shows devotion to him.

36-38. He speaks sweetly, is attractive and healthy, and shows great love for him; producing excellent love in him by being born as his son and by means of his great qualities, he gives him the same terrible fatal grief by taking away his wealth as he had given him by taking away his deposit in a former existence. So also being short-lived, he dies (a premature death).

39-40a. Thus again and again he is born, gives grief, and dies. When he (i.e. the father) laments, 'Oh my son !' he (i.e. the son) just laughs. So who is whose son and who is the father?

40b-42. (The son says:) "The deposit that was helpful to me was taken away by him. Even by taking away the wealth my life did not formerly depart, even due to great, unbearable grief. Therefore, giving him grief and taking away excellent wealth I shall today go. Whose son am I, who am like this?"

43. He is not my father, nor was he the son of anyone. To this wicked one only I have given the state of a goblin."

44-45. Speaking like this, he repeatedly laughs, and goes. Giving him very terrible grief, he goes along this way. O dear one, thus (persons) become the sons of them who had taken away their deposits. Everywhere in the mundane existence, (fathers) full of great grief are seen.

46. I shall later explain to you the son connected (with the father) through debt.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Dialogue between Somaśarman and Sumanā

Sumanā said :

1-3. (Now) hereafter I shall describe to you the son who is related through debt. He, from whom a man takes a loan dies—i.e. the creditor, being (i.e. is born as) the son or the brother or the father, or might be (born as) a friend (and) is always very cruel, O dear one. The cruel one of a rough form, does not notice the virtue (in others), and always utters harsh words among his relatives.

4-7. He always eats sweets and desired articles (of food) and enjoys pleasures. He is ever engaged in gambling and has a desire to steal. He forcibly enjoys the wealth which is in the house (i.e. wealth of the family) and gets angry if prevented (from doing so). Everyday he abuses his father and mother. He is a thief, causes fear and talks too much and harshly. Thus enjoying that wealth (of the family etc.) he lives happily. Being very cruel he makes money by means of birth-rites in childhood, and in many ways through various kinds of marriages.

8-10. Thus wealth is obtained by him and he gives it in this way also. (He thinks:) 'The house, field etc. are mine. There is no doubt about it.' Everyday he hits his father and mother with pestles by giving them many very fearful strokes. When his father or mother is dead, he who is very cruel becomes affectionless and rough. There is no doubt about it.

11. He never performs the Śrāddha-rites and never gives gifts. Sons of this type are born on the earth.

12-16a. O best of brāhmaṇas, I shall explain to you a hostile son. When he reaches childhood, he always behaves like an enemy (with his parents). Even while playing he would beat his father and mother; and after repeatedly beating them he laughs and departs. Again being fearful, he comes to his father and mother; and after repeatedly beating them he laughs and departs. Again being fearful, he comes to his father and mother. He is always angry; and again and again abuses (them). Thus he is always engaged in hostile acts. Having again beaten his father, and also his mother, the wicked one departs as a result of the former enmity.

16b-21. Now hereafter I shall describe the son from whom desired things can be obtained. As soon as he is born he does dear things to (i.e. pleases) his parents, and (delights them) by indulgence and sports in childhood; and immediately after he attains youth he does things liked by his mother and father. With devotion he pleases and delights them by means of affectionate words and conversation dear to them. When he comes to know about the demise of his parent, he weeps through affection (for the parent). Extremely grieved, he performs all rites like Śrāddha and offering piṇḍas. He also offers them maintenance. Conforming to (the repayment of) the three debts, he always feeds them. O you very intelligent one, O my dear husband, being their son he returns in this manner whatever would be (i.e. is) obtained from them.

22-24a. O dear one, now I shall describe to you (the son called) indifferent. He does not give and now receives; he is neither angry, nor pleased. O best of brāhmaṇas, an indifferent (son) does not give by making a sacrifice. I have told you everything—i.e. this mode of existence (of various types) of sons.

24b-35a. Like the son are the wife, the father, the mother and the kinsmen; so also are said to be the others (like) the servants, beasts and horses; so also elephants, buffaloes and attendants. All these are connected through debt. We have for that reason not taken a debt from anyone; so also in the former existence we have not made any deposit with anyone. O dear husband, we are not indebted to anyone. (Please) listen. We

have no hostility with anyone which is entertained in a previous existence. O my husband, O best brāhmaṇa, we have not given up anything. Realising this, be calm and give up (your) worry causing unhappiness. Whose are the sons, or whose is the dear wife? Whose are the relatives and friends? You have never snatched (anything) from anyone and have given nothing to anyone. Then how can wealth come to us? O my husband, do not have any doubt. O best brāhmaṇa, whatever wealth is to be obtained, it easily comes to the hand (of a person). A man preserves wealth with great care; but the departing one (i.e. the one that dies) departs (all alone); but the wealth remains just there. Realising this, give up your worry which is useless and be calm. Whose are the sons? Whose is the dear wife? Whose are the relatives and friends? O best brāhmaṇa, in this mundane existence, nobody belongs to none (else), since there is no connection (between the two). Men of wicked hearts and deluded with great infatuation (say:) 'This is my house; this is my son; the women are mine only.' O dear husband, this bond of the mundane existence is seen to be unreal.

35b-36a. Thus advised by his dear wife, the respectable lady, he again spoke to his dear wife Sumanā, who expounded knowledge.

Somaśarman said :

36b-38a. O good lady, you have spoken the truth, which has removed all (my) doubt. Still good men, really wise men become fascinated (with all these). O dear one, as I am anxious to have a son, I am also anxious to have wealth. I shall produce (i.e. have) a son by this or that means.

Sumanā said :

38b-43a. A man conquers the worlds with a son; a son emancipates the family. Due to a good son alone the father and the mother are (i.e. proved to be) living beings. One learned son is most precious. What is the use of having many worthless sons? The first (i.e. the good) one emancipates the family, (while) the others cause tormentation. I have previously only told (you) that others are (just) relations. Due to religious merit (only) a son is obtained; (similarly) due to religious merit (birth in a good)

family is obtained. A good embryo is obtained by religious merit; therefore practise religious merit. One that is born gets death (i.e. is sure to die); and one that dies gets birth. Due to meritorious acts a good birth (i.e. birth in a good family) is obtained, so also is obtained (peaceful) death; and O dear husband, he obtains happiness and wealth due to meritorious deeds.

Somaśarman said :

43b-44a. O dear one, tell me about the practice of good deeds, and also about the (various) existences. Of what nature is a man of meritorious deeds? (i.e. What are the characteristics of the man of meritorious deeds?) O good lady, tell (me) the characteristics of religious merit.

Sumanā said :

44b-45. I shall first explain to you (what) merit (is), as I have heard about it; and also (I shall explain to you) how a man or a woman behaves everyday, and how by means of meritorious deeds he or she obtains fame, dear sons and wealth.

46a. O dear husband, I shall tell you all the characteristics of merit.

46b-48. One should practise virtue which has these ten components viz. celibacy, truthfulness, performance of five sacrifices,¹ charity, restraint, forbearance, purity, harmlessness, good prowess and non-stealing, O dear one. Complete merit is produced as satisfaction (is produced) in the belly by mouthfuls (of food after they are swallowed).

49-50a. A righteous person creates Dharma by means of three kinds of acts. Dharma, with his heart pleased leads him to religious merit only. The wise one gets whatever he desires (even though it is) difficult to obtain.

1. Pañcamakha—The five daily sacrifices or acts of piety to be performed by a householder: (1) Brahmajñā i.e. teaching; (2) Pitṛyajñā i.e. offering oblations to the manes; (3) Devayajñā i.e. performing sacrificial rites; (4) Bhūtajñā i.e. an offering to all created beings; and (5) Nṛyajñā i.e. honouring guests.

Somaśarman said :

50b. O you beautiful lady, what kind of form does Dharma have? What are the parts of his (body)? O my dear wife, kindly tell (it) to me; strong desire (to hear it) is produced (in me).

Sumanā said :

51-60. O best brāhmaṇa, in this world none has seen the form of Dharma. He, of a true nature and with his course seen by none, is not seen (even) by gods and demons. The brāhmaṇa Dattātreyā, Anasūyā's son and born in Atri's family has always seen that great Dharma. The two noble ones (i.e. Dattātreyā and Durvāsas) practising excellent penances, behaving righteously, shining with a more praiseworthy form than that of (even) Indra due to penance and prowess, remained for ten thousand years in a forest; the two of a charming appearance ate (i.e. lived on) wind or went without food. For ten thousand years they practised penance. Merit was observed in them who practised penance. O best brāhmaṇa, they both performed the (vow of) five fires till (i.e. during) that period (often thousand years). They practised it for all the three times and (during that period) did not eat food. Dattātreyā and the sage (Durvāsas) remained in water during that period. The best sage Durvāsas was tormented by penance. The best sage got angry with Dharma. O noble one, when the best sage was (thus) angry, the intelligent Dharma came there in his own form along with Celibacy etc. and Austerities.

61-68. Truth in the form of a brāhmaṇa, also Celibacy, similarly Penance in the form of an excellent brāhmaṇa, and Restraint as an intelligent excellent brāhmaṇa, so also Control, and Charity in the form of a brāhmaṇa maintaining the sacred fire and offering oblations to it, came to (Durvāsas), the son of Atri. O best brāhmaṇa, all these having female forms, viz. Forbearance, Tranquility, Shame, Harmlessness, and Imagination, arrived there. So also Intellect, Wisdom, Faith, Retentive Faculty, Good Act, Tranquility, all the five Sacrifices, the holy Vedas with their limbs (i.e. the Vedāṅgas), were ready. The Consecration of Fire, the holy Horse-sacrifices and others, endowed with good forms and handsomeness, adorned with all (kinds of) ornaments, wearing divine flowers and garments, besmeared with

divine sandal, endowed with crowns and earrings and adorned with divine ornaments, bright and handsome, filled with lustrous flames (came there). Thus Dharma, accompanied by his retinue came there where the angry Durvāsas remained like death.

Dharma said :

69-70. O brāhmaṇa, why are you angry? You are endowed with penance. There is no doubt that anger would destroy virtue and penance. Anger destroys everything; therefore one should avoid anger. O best brāhmaṇa, be at ease; the fruit of penance is excellent.

Durvāsas said :

71-72a. Who are you that have come with these best brāhmaṇas? Seven beautiful and well-adorned women are standing (by you). O you highly intelligent one, tell me in detail (as to who you are etc.).

Dharma said :

72b-73. See, in front of you has come this Brahmacharya (i.e. Celibacy), in the form of a brāhmaṇa, endowed with all lustre, well-pleased, having a staff in his hand and holding a water-pot.

74-76. O best brāhmaṇa, see this other bright one viz. Satya (i.e. Truth), tawny (in complexion) and having reddish-brown eyes. Similarly, O you pious one, see this Tapas (i.e. Penance), lustrous like all gods, the one that you practised and resorting to all gods; it has come into your vicinity.

77-78. Similarly Dama (i.e. Self-restraint), that is lustrous and intent on being kind to all beings, and that always nourishes, has come.

79-80. O best brāhmaṇa, Niyama (i.e. Control) has come to you. He is wearing matted hair, is rough, tawny, very sharp, and a great master. With a sword in his hand, he is the destroyer of sins. He is tranquil, of a great merit, and always endowed with rites. Here in your vicinity (i.e. to you) has come Śauca, the brāhmaṇa, who is free, very bright, resembling crystal, holding a pitcher of water and a twig used as a toothbrush.

81. This Śuśrūṣā (i.e. Service), extremely chaste and very noble, adorned with the ornaments of truth, with her body charming with every ornament, has come.

82-86. O best brāhmaṇa, this Kṣamā (i.e. Forbearance), extremely wise, of a pleasing body, fair (in complexion), of a smiling face, with a lotus in her hand, a foster-mother, lotus-eyed, extremely beautiful, and endowed with divine ornaments has arrived. (This) Śānti (i.e. Tranquility) extremely peaceful, famous, endowed with many auspicious things, looking charming due to many divine jewels, adorned with divine ornaments, engaged in obliging others, full of many truths, of a limited speech, always incomparable, pleased, and with Kṣamā, adorned with all ornaments, having a lotus as her seat, beautiful, of a dark complexion, successful and noble, has come to you, O you highly intelligent one.

87-89a. This noble Ahimsā (i.e. Harmlessness) has come to you. Her complexion is like heated (i.e. bright) gold; she is looking graceful with red garments; she is well-pleased; she has a good counsel; and she is not looking here and there.

89b-94. See, O noble one, see, this Śraddhā, full of knowledge, of pious hands, devout, endowed with beauty due to pearls, spotless, and smiling charmingly, has come. O you very wise one, full of much intelligence and much knowledge, with her form strongly attached to good pleasures, well-settled, charming and auspicious, endowed with all desirable meditation, the victorious mother of the worlds, endowed with beauty on account of all ornaments, having plump buttocks and breasts, of a fair complexion, adorned with flowers and garments, is standing by you only. O you noble one, this Prajñā (i.e. Intellect) resembling a swan and the moon, having put on a pearl-necklace, adorned with all ornaments, well-pleased, high-minded, covered with a white garment, having a lotus as her couch, having books in her hands, always shining as she is seated on a lotus, has come to a fortunate person (i.e. to you).

95-98. O best brāhmaṇa, this Dayā (i.e. Pity) with her complexion like lac juice, always well-pleased, wearing a garland made of yellow flowers, having ornaments like necklaces and armlets, endowed with rings and bracelets, adorned with earrings has come near you. The respectable lady always shines with

a yellow garment. She is (simply) matchless in helping and nourishing the three worlds. She, whose character is always glorified has come.

99. This old, pious one is the wife of Thought, O you highly intelligent one. O best brāhmaṇa, she is my mother. O you of a good vow, I am your Dharma (i.e. Merit).

100a. Realising this, be calm and preserve me.

Durvāśas said :

100b-101a. If now Dharma has approached me, then tell me the reason for this (i.e. your arrival), O Dharma, what do (i.e. can) I do for you?

Dharma said :

101b-102a. O best brāhmaṇa, why are you angry? What wrong have they done? Tell me the reason, O Durvāśas, if you (so) desire.

Durvāśas said :

102b-104. O god, listen to the reason for which I am angry. I have purified my body with restraint, purity and sufferings. I have practised penance for a period of a lakh of years. You see me like this, (and yet) compassion is not produced in you. Therefore, I am angry with you, and today only I shall give you a curse.

105a. Having heard thus (i.e. these words) from (i.e. uttered by) him, the very intelligent (Dharma) said to him.

Dharma said :

105b-108a. O you very intelligent one, when I perish, the world will perish. O dear brāhmaṇa, I very much remove the root of grief. Then afterwards I give pleasure (to the man) if he does not give up truthfulness. One who depends upon (i.e. is after) happiness, is a sinner. Merit is gained with pain. (When) a being thus practising merit casts his life, I give him great happiness in the next world; there is no doubt about it.

Durvāsas said :

108b-110. Great grief is reached by him (in the next world) by whom pleasure is obtained (here); but one mortal gives it up, and somebody else enjoys it. Then who knows (what) happiness (is)? Nobody sees (i.e. knows) it definitely. I am not seeing (any) felicity; you have done an unjust thing. The body which does (certain things) does not enjoy that happiness.

111-113. Suffering is had by one body (while) happiness is enjoyed by another body. So who knows happiness, injustice or righteousness? One suffers, while someone else gets happiness. O Dharma, whatever a man enjoys is accompanied with felicity. By it alone he gets religious merit, and also (good) fruit. The (fruit of) pious rites done by one is enjoyed by another.

114-117a. All that is called happiness, whose characteristics are narrated in scriptures, and it is not otherwise. They suffer unhappiness with the same body with which they perform (bad acts). Therefore by this (behaviour) they do not enjoy in the next world also. Realising this, you who are righteous, should properly observe. How is it that happiness is not enjoyed (by a man) as the very sinful thieves suffer poignant grief with great difficulty with their bodies?

Dharma said :

117b-118. The sinful ones suffer pain with that body only with which they commit sins; for that is the fruit of a sin. The wise have observed in the law-books that Daṇḍa (i.e. punishment) is superior.

119a. You yourself (should) understand it in its essential characteristics according to these rules.

Durvāsas said :

119b-120a. O lord of virtue, listen, what, I think, (conforms to justice): I, being angry, will give you three curses; this cannot be otherwise.

Dharma said :

120b-122. O you highly intelligent one, since you are angry, (please) forgive me. If you are not (prepared) to forgive me, then,

O best brāhmaṇa, make me the son of a maid, also a king, and a Cāṇḍāla also, O great sage. O brāhmaṇa, be favourably disposed to me, who am always bowing to you.

Then the angry Durvāsas cursed Dharma.

Durvāsas said :

123. O Dharma, you today become a king, (then) the son of a maid, not otherwise; go to (i.e. be born in) the family of a Cāṇḍāla; O Dharma, go as you desire.

124. Thus giving three curses, the best brāhmaṇa left. It is said that formerly Dharma was seen in this connection also.

Somaśarman said :

125. How (i.e. in what form) was Dharma born when cursed by that noble (Durvāsas)? O you beautiful lady, if you know, (then) tell me (about) his form.

Sumanā said :

126-128. Being Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma was born in the family of the Bharatas. He was also born as Vidura, a maid's son. I (shall) also tell you something else. When King Hariścandra was tormented by Viśvāmitra, the very intelligent one became a Cāṇḍāla. Thus even the noble Dharma enjoyed the fruit of his actions due to Durvāsas' curse. I have told the truth to you.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Sumanā Explains Ten Basic Virtues

Somaśarman said :

1. O beautiful lady, tell me in detail the characteristics of Celibacy if you know them. Of what nature is Celibacy?

Sumanā said :

2. (He is a true celibate) who is always interested in truth; he the righteous one would (i.e. is) always be satisfied; and

being free from faults would approach (i.e. cohabit with) his own wife when she menstruates.

3-4a. He never gives up the good practices of his family. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you this (i.e. these characteristics) of a householder. I have indeed explained to you the celibacy of (i.e. as observed by) householders.

4b-6a. Now I shall explain to you the celibacy of (i.e. as observed by) the ascetics. Listen to me who am explaining it. He is always endowed with restraint and truthfulness; and is always afraid of sin. Avoiding (i.e. he avoids) union with his wife, he is settled in meditation and knowledge. I have (thus) told you the celibacy of the ascetics.

6b-9a. (Now) I shall just explain penance. Listen to me who am explaining it. Free from carnal desires and anger he should behave according to the (proper) rules. He remains full of exertion for obliging beings. I have thus explained penance. (Now) I shall speak about truthfulness in the same manner. He is called truthful, whose mind, on seeing other's wealth or wives, would (i.e. does) not have longing for them.

9b-16a. I shall just explain charity by means of which human beings live. He who desires his own happiness in this or in the next world, should make the great gift of food or (i.e.) of eternal happiness. Similarly at least a morsel should be given to one who is oppressed by hunger. There is no misgiving about it. When (food) is given (like this) it leads to great religious merit, and he ever obtains immortality. Everyday a man should give, as is possible according to his wealth, grass, a bed, words, very cool shadow of (i.e. shelter in his) house; so also he should give land, water, food, excellent pleasing words, a seat, words free from crookedness. He, who, for his own existence, daily does this, and honouring deities and manes, thus give gifts, is happy in this world and in the next world also. He, who, even being born as a human being, would make (every) day fruitful by means of giving gifts, study and (other) rites, is (just) a god; there is no doubt about this.

16b-18a. I shall explain to you restraint (*niyama*) —the excellent means of religious merit. (He is a restrained person) who is engaged in worshipping deities and brāhmaṇas, is always

full of restraint and is engaged in vows like giving gifts and other meritorious obligations. This is restraint that I have explained.

18b-20. O best of brāhmaṇa, I shall now explain the nature of forgiveness. (Please) listen. Hearing the loud cry of someone being beaten by someone else, he should not get angry, and should not beat (back) even if he is beaten. The pious one should be patient. He has no attachment. He gets great happiness here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world.

21-22a. I have thus explained forgiveness. Now I shall explain purity. He is pure, who is pure externally and internally, and is free from attachment. He lives with such practices as bath and sipping water.

22b-23. I have thus explained purity. Now I shall tell you about non-violence. One who knows should not (i.e. one should not deliberately) pull off even (a blade of) grass. He should be devoted to harmlessness; should look upon others as upon himself.

24-25a. I shall (now) explain tranquility. A man gets happiness through tranquility. He should observe tranquility, and should not at all give it up because of trouble. Giving up enmity with beings, he should thus make up his mind.

25b-26. Thus I have explained tranquility. Now I shall tell about non-stealing. A man should not snatch away other's wealth or should not kidnap other's wife, mentally, by words or physically (i.e. should not think or talk about or do these things). Thus he should make up his mind.

27-28a. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall just explain to you sense-control (dama). Being sensible and controlling himself, he should destroy the insolence of his senses and his mind susceptible to emotions by curbing them.

28b-32a. I shall explain to you service (śuśrūṣā) as is told in religious texts, and shall tell you about it as it is explained by former preceptors. By means of words, mind and body one should accomplish his preceptor's mission. That is said to be service where (i.e. by which) favour is produced. O best brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you Dharma (i.e. righteousness) in all its forms. O my husband, I shall tell you anything more that you desire to hear. A man who always lives in (i.e. practises) Dharma like this is never again born in this mundane existence.

32b. . By means of (practising) Dharma he goes to heaven. I am telling you the truth, (and) the truth (only).

33-34a. Knowing thus, O you highly intelligent one, go to (i.e. practise) Dharma. O dear one, everything, that is difficult to be accomplished on earth is obtained by the favour of Dharma. (Please) do only what I tell you.

34b-35. Hearing the words of his wife, the very intelligent Somaśarman, again spoke to his wife, Sumanā, who explained Dharma.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sumanā Describes the Death of the Virtuous

Somaśarman said :

1. O good lady, how do you do such an excellent and highly meritorious exposition of Dharma? From whom did you learn this?

||
Sumanā said :

2. O you very intelligent one, well-known Cyavana, well-versed in all (branches of) knowledge, and born in the family of the Bhārgavas was my father.

3-4. I was his dear daughter, dearer to him than his own life. Always playing, I used to go with him wherever he went—to sacred places, groves, assemblies of sages and temples of deities, O you of a good vow.

5-6. Very intelligent Vedaśarman, born in the family of Kauśika, a friend of my father, overcome by great grief and repeatedly brooding, while wandering by chance came (to my father).

7. My father said to the noble one who had come (to him): “O you of a good vow, I feel that you are tormented by grief. Tell me the cause by which you are (thus) afflicted.”

8-10. Hearing these words of that magnanimous Cyavana, he i.e. Vedaśarman, of a good vow, told my father the cause of his entire grief, O you very wise one: “My very chaste wife, solely devoted to me—her husband—is sonless; I do not have any lineage. I have told you the cause, since I was asked about it by you.”

11-12a. In the meantime, there came a divine seer having supernatural faculties. Both my father and that Vedaśarman got up and honoured him with devout offerings, food and sweet words; and both of them asked the secret, as you had asked me before.

12b-14. The pious one told both my father and his friend the means of Dharma, as I had told you before: “By (practising) Dharma (i.e. religious precepts), a son, wealth, corn, and also wives are obtained.”

15. Then that Vedaśarman fully practised Dharma. From that (i.e. by practising that) Dharma, there was great happiness, along with a son, for him.

16. In consequence of that meeting (between the Siddha and the two friends) I am convinced as I told you about the very auspicious words, O my dear husband.

17. Always follow the practices laid down for a brāhmaṇa, as were heard from the great Siddha, and which would remove all (your) doubts.

Somaśarman said :

18. O my dear wife, tell me what kind of death or birth (does one have?). Tell me all about the nature of both.

Sumanā said :

19. I shall tell you how death comes to him who has practised Dharma by means of truthfulness, purity, forbearance, tranquility and religious merit (and by visits to) sacred places etc.

20-22. He does not contract any disease, nor is there any suffering in his body. He does not have to toil, he has no fatigue, perspiration, and he does not commit an error. Gandharvas, and brāhmaṇas, taking up divine forms and ready with Vedic texts, and conversant with the knowledge of singing, come to his side

(i.e. to him) and sing his matchless praise. He is composed, and seated on a seat is indeed engaged in the worship of deities.

23-30. He, very much devoted to religious practices, and a wise one, obtains a sacred place for bath. If a man remains in a fire-chamber, in a cowpen, in temples of deities, in a grove or a lake, or a place where there is the *aśvattha* tree, and also if he remains by resorting to (i.e. under) a *palāśa* or an *udumbara* tree or a *bilva* tree¹ also, and by resorting to (i.e. in) a stable of horses, or of elephants, or if he remains by resorting to (i.e. under) an *aśoka* tree or a mango tree, also in the vicinity of *brāhmaṇas*, or (even) if he has gone to the abode of old age (i.e. even if he has become old), or after he resorts to (i.e. goes to) a battle-field and dies, these places where he dies are holy. The cause for this (i.e. such a death) is Dharma alone. Reaching (i.e. choosing) the sacred place called *Gograpa* or *Amarakaṇṭakā*,² he, loving pious practices and of a pious conduct, also practices Dharma. When the best man resorts to death (i.e. when he dies), he sees his mother and his meritorious father; also, he sees his brother endowed with virtue, his kinsmen and friends. In the same way, he, being praised by bards, would not at all see his most sinful mother or father etc.

31-34. The *Gandharvas* sing songs and the panegyrists praise him with panegyrics; *brāhmaṇas* would honour him with the recitations of hymns and his mother would honour him with love; his father, the groups of his relatives would honour the pious and highly intelligent man. O lord, I have thus narrated to you the messengers and the holy places. He actually sees the messengers full of love (for him). That king of Dharma (i.e. Yama) would invite you, not in a dream or through troublesome delusion. O noble one, come (to that place) where that Dharma stands.

35-38. He (i.e. who practises Dharma) has no delusion, not error, no languor, no confusion of memory. There is no doubt that he remains with a pleased mind. Endowed with sacred and worldly knowledge, and remembering god *Janārdana* (i.e.

1. *Brahmavṛkṣa*—*palāśa* or *udumbara* tree. *Śrivṛkṣa*—*bilva* tree, or *aśvattha* or the sacred fig-tree.

2. *Amarakaṇṭaka*—Name of that part of the *Vindhya* range, which is near the source of the river *Narmadā*.

Viṣṇu), he, with his mind thus pleased, goes with them. In his case, when he casts his body, unity (with the Supreme Spirit) takes place. Resorting to the tenth aperture¹ his soul goes (out of his body). A palanquin or a beautiful vehicle with swans yoked to it, or an aeroplane or an excellent horse or elephant comes (to carry him).

39-41. Then the pious and meritorious man, with an umbrella held over his head, being fanned with chowries and fans, and endowed with all pleasures, being praised with songs by singers and bards, and eulogised by learned brāhmaṇas—masters of the Vedas, and praised by the good, obtains the fruit in accordance with the efficacy of his charity.

42-43a. Happily he goes to the gardens and orchards. Mixed (i.e. surrounded) with celestial nymphs and endowed with auspicious things, and being praised by gods, he sees the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama).

43b-47. Gods with Dharma go forward to (greet) him (and say:) “O magnanimous one, come, come (and) enjoy pleasures as you like.” In this way he sees the very intelligent Dharma of a pleasing form; and due to the efficacy of his own religious merit he enjoys heaven itself. The pious one, after the exhaustion of his pleasures, is reborn. Due to his own religious merit he goes to (i.e. is born in) the family of a pious brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya, or of a rich man, or of a very pious vaiśya, O you very intelligent one. There he rejoices with (i.e. due to) his pious acts and he again performs (deeds leading to) religious merit.

1. Daśamadvāra = Brahma-randhra.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Death of Sinners

Somaśarman said :

1. O good and beautiful lady, tell me, if you know it, in detail, what characteristics appear at the death of sinners.

Sumanā said :

2-4a. O my dear husband, listen; I shall tell you what I learnt from the Siddha about the death of the sinners and what its marks are. I (shall) also tell you about the place and actions of great sinners. A very wicked man reaches a region which is inauspicious due to its being impure on account of excretion and urine; and has a painful death.

4b-7a. That (wicked man) being afflicted, reaches the land of a cāṇḍāla, or a land roamed over by donkeys or resorts to a prostitute's house, and dies in a painful condition; (or) he dies after having gone to the house of a seller of spirituous liquors which is full of bones, skins and nails, and full of evils and blemishes. Having reached that (place) the wicked one surely dies; (or) having reached some other place with evil practices, he dies.

7b-12a. Now I shall tell you the movements of (Yama's) messengers, desiring (to take) him (to Yama's abode), and frightful, terrible, fearful, very dark and of large bellies, of tawny eyes, yellow and dark-blue, or very white and large-bellied, very tall, very dreadful, resembling dry flesh and marrow, of fearful fangs, fearful, having faces like those of lions and having serpents in their hands. O you very intelligent one, seeing them he trembles and is repeatedly afflicted. All the messengers make loud cries like those of jackals into his ears. Having tied him with nooses round his neck, waist and belly, and overcoming him knock him down. He repeatedly cries—'Ah', 'Ah'.

12b-15a. Now I shall tell the actions of the dying sinners who have taken away another's wealth, molested another's wife, not returned debt or wealth of others taken through greed, enjoyment and infatuation. All the (messengers) seize the neck

of the dying man who commits the great sin of accepting a gift from a bad person.

15b-16a. Whatever sins were formerly committed by that great sinner come to his throat; (this) does not (happen) in any other manner.

16b-21a. Due to obstruction caused by excessive phlegm they produce affliction. Due to severe pains his throat snorts. He weeps and trembles very much. He repeatedly remembers his mother, father, brother and wife. Being deluded by great sin he again forgets them. His life, full of many afflictions, does not depart. He falls, trembles and swoons again and again. The deluded one, thus full of suffering, experiences grief. O my dear husband, listen. His life going (out) with great grief and pain, resorts to his anus and pass out (through it).

21b-22. In this way a being, who is greatly deluded and who is full of greed and infatuation, is carried by Yama's messengers. I shall now tell you about the suffering.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Death & Post-mortem State of Sinners

Sumanā said :

1. That wicked man being burnt and struggling again and again is taken along a path full of a heap of charcoals.

2. Being tormented by the sun's rays, he is taken along that path on which the sun's heat is intense and which is heated by twelve suns.

3. The wicked-minded one is taken along the path, on mountains, inaccessible and shadow-less places, while he is very much tormented by hunger and thirst.

4-5. Being hit by the messengers (of Yama) with maces, swords and hatchets, and being beaten with whips and being censured by them, he is then taken along a cold path and is again served (tormented) by wind. Due to that (severe) cold he becomes afflicted. There is no doubt about it.

6-11a. Being dragged by (Yama's) messengers he is taken to many inaccessible places. In this way, the sinner, the wicked-minded man, who reviles gods and brāhmaṇas, and who commits all sins, is taken by Yama's servants. The wicked-hearted man sees Yama, king of Dharma, who resembles a heap of black collyrium, who is fierce, ruthless, fearful and with (i.e. surrounded by) fearful messengers, who is full of (i.e. who has with him) all diseases, who is accompanied by Citragupta, who is mounted upon a buffalo, who is very fierce due to his large teeth and is very fearful, O best brāhmaṇa. His face resembles death. The wicked-minded man sees Yama, who has worn a yellow garment, who has a mace in his hand, who is besmeared with red sandal, who has adorned himself with red flowers, and whose body is huge. He sees Yama like this.

11b-12. Seeing him approaching, Yama observes him who is outcast from all religions, who is wicked, most sinful and an enemy of the customary law. He would punish (i.e. he punishes) him with tortures and with wooden mallets.

13a. Till the end of the period of a thousand yugas he is parched with heat.

13b-14. Again and again he is roasted in hells of various kinds. The sinner goes to (i.e. is born in) a hellish species among crores of insects. Being miserable and senseless he is parched with heat in an impure (place).

15. Thus certainly does the wicked-hearted man die. Thus the wicked-minded man experiences the fruit of his association with sin.

16-19a. I shall (now) explain (to you) rebirth and the species to which he goes. Having obtained a hundred births as dogs he again experiences (the fruit of) sin. The wicked-hearted one becomes (i.e. is born as) a tiger, and goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) a donkey. Then he goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) a cat, pig or a serpent. He is repeatedly born in all the species of various kinds and in (those of) lower animals. He goes to (i.e. is born among) the sinful birds and in other great species. The sinner goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) cāṇḍāla, bhilla or (as a member of the barbarous tribe called) pulinda.

19b. I have (thus) told you everything about the birth of sinners.

20-21. O my dear husband, listen to the very fearful struggle of them (i.e. of the sinners) at the time of their death. I have told before (i.e. to) you (i.e. explained to you) the practice of sin and merit. O you who show respect to others, like this I shall tell you something else, if you ask.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Story of Somaśarman's Previous Birth

Somaśarman said :

1-2. O respectable lady, you have told (me) the excellent form of Dharma. O you noble one, O you of a good vow, tell me if you know how I would get a son endowed with all virtues. There is no doubt that good acts like charity (are fruitful) in this and the next world.

Sumanā said :

3. Go to Vasiṣṭha who knows (what) virtue (is). Request that great sage. From him you will (learn how to) obtain a son knowing piety and loving it.

Sūta said :

4. When she had said these words, Somaśarman, the best brāhmaṇa (said to her:) "O auspicious lady, I shall follow your words (i.e. advice). There is no doubt about it."

5-6. Speaking thus, the best brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, quickly went to the omniscient, divine Vasiṣṭha, who was the best among those who practised penance, who lived on the bank of the Ganges in a hermitage, who was the best among the brāhmaṇas, who was full of the flames of lustre and was as it were another sun.

7. He repeatedly, devoutly, saluted the shining, noble, best brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Vedas, in the manner of a staff (i.e. by prostrating himself before Vasiṣṭha).

8. The very lustrous, sinless son of Brahmā (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), said to him: "O you highly intelligent one, (please) sit comfortably on the auspicious seat."

9-10. Saying so, the best of the yogins again said to him, who was rich in penance: "O noble one, O dear one, is there all well in your house, with your sons, wife, servants, and fires used for sacred rites? Are you alright, and do you always practise virtue?"

11. Speaking thus, the very wise one (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) again said to Suśarman (i.e. Somaśarman): "O best brāhmaṇa, what work dear to you should I do for you?"

12a. Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, Vasiṣṭha ceased (to speak).

12b-13. When that best, noble sage Vasiṣṭha spoke (like that), he (i.e. Somaśarman), spoke to noble Vasiṣṭha, the best among those who practise penance: "O revered sir, (please) listen to my words with a very much pleased mind.

14. O best among the sages, O best brāhmaṇa, if you want to do what I like, (then) remove the doubt expressed by my question.

15-17. O dear one, due to what sin (does) poverty (come to one) and how is it that one does not get happiness? This is my doubt. Tell me due to what sin (this happens). O brāhmaṇa, I am confused with great delusion. I was advised by my dear wife. I, who was eager, was sent to you by her. Then tell me all that which would remove all my doubts. (Please) relieve me from the bondage of the worldly existence."

Vasiṣṭha said :

18. Sons, friends, brother, and kinsmen and relatives are the five kinds of men, according to the difference (depending upon the relation).

19. (About) all of them Sumanā has already told you. O best brāhmaṇa, all those are bad sons, connected on account of debt.

20-24. I shall (now) tell you the auspicious characteristics of a son. That son whose mind is attached to merit, who is always engaged in religious conduct, who is endowed with purity and knowledge, who practises penance, who is best among speakers,

who is very steady in all his acts, who is devoted to Vedic studies, who knows (i.e. has studied) all sacred books, who honours gods and brāhmaṇas, who performs all (kinds of) sacrifices, who is a donor, who gives away (in charity without expecting any reward in return), who speaks agreeable words, who is always intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu, is tranquil, restrained and friendly, who is always devoted to his father and mother and affectionate to his kinsmen, who is a saviour of his family, who is learned, who supports his family—a son endowed with such virtues gives happiness.

25-26. Others connected by relation (as a son) cause grief and tormentation. What is the use of such a useless son? All such (sons) come into the worldly existence as sons and go out of it after causing great tormentation, O you best brāhmaṇa.

27. Again listen to all the wonderful account which I shall tell you about the religious merit which you did and (the practices) you maintained in the previous birth.

Vasiṣṭha continued :

28-31. O you very intelligent one, in the former birth you were a Śūdra, and none else. You were a farmer; you were ignorant; you had great greed; you had one wife; you always hated (others). You had many sons; you never gave away (anything in charity); you did not know religious conduct at all; you had never heard (what) truth (is). You had never given a gift; you had never listened to sacred texts; O you highly intelligent one, you had never undertaken a pilgrimage to a sacred place.

32. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, you practised agriculture repeatedly. O best brāhmaṇa, you again and again guarded animals, all cows, buffaloes and also horses. O best of brāhmaṇas, such deed(s) you did formerly (i.e. in your previous birth).

33. Similarly, through greed you collected much wealth; but you never spent it in a good way.

34. You never gave any present to a worthy person, or seeing a weak person you never showed him any compassion and never gave him money.

35. You also collected beasts like cows and buffaloes, and having sold them you hoarded ample wealth.

36a. (And also you hoarded ample wealth) by selling butter-milk, ghee, milk and curd.

36b-38. Being deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, O brāhmaṇa, you, thinking of (i.e. taking advantage of) bad times, made food more costly here (only), O best brāhmaṇa. You, who were cruel, never made any present (to anyone). O brāhmaṇa, you never worshipped deities. When the parvan-days arrived, you never gave money to the brāhmaṇas.

39-40a. When the time for Śrāddha came, you never performed it with faith. Your virtuous wife (used to) say: "O you very intelligent one, the day has come. It is time for offering Śrāddha to (my) father-in-law, and to (my) mother-in-law also."

40b-42a. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) her, you (used to) abandon and run away from your house. You never saw (i.e. cared for) the path of righteousness nor did you ever hear about it. Greed (was) your father, your brother. Greed (was) your kinsmen and relatives. Always forsaking religious conduct, you cherished greed alone.

42b. Therefore, being extremely oppressed by poverty, you became unhappy.

43-48. Everyday great greed increased in your mind, whenever in your house wealth increased. Being burnt by the fire of anxiety, you definitely used to think of wealth even when you used to sleep at night. When the day dawned, you were always pervaded by great delusions: 'When will there be a thousand, a lakh, a crore or one hundred millions or one thousand crores or a billion (coins) in my house?' Thus a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand crores, a billion (coins) were (collected by you); but (your) greed never went away leaving (i.e. from your) body. (On the contrary) it always increased. You never gave (in charity); you never offered oblations to fire, you never enjoyed (wealth); you dug the earth and deposited (the coins in it) without the knowledge of your sons. O brāhmaṇa, you also always adopted other means to get wealth.

49-51. Being intelligent you also asked people about other means of getting wealth. Asking (people) about spades, colly-

rium¹, explanation (of secret formulae) and minerology, and being fully deluded by greed, you wandered all alone. You always thought of sexual union, and about procedures giving superhuman powers. Always thinking about entering into fissures you asked (people about them).

52-54a. Due to the blazing of fire of greed, you were (reduced to a pitiable plight, always) saying 'Alas, Alas', and had become senseless. O best brāhmaṇa, you were thus infatuated; and had been subdued by destiny. When your wife and sons asked you about that wealth, you never told them (any) account of it, and abandoning life, you went to Yama.

54b-57. Thus I have told you all your former account. O brāhmaṇa, due to this deed (i.e. these deeds) you became indigent and poor. Viṣṇu is pleased with him in whose house, in his worldly existence, the sons are of good character, endowed with knowledge and always interested in truthfulness and in good conduct. He with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, endlessly enjoys in the world of mortals wealth, grains, wife, sons and grandsons. O brāhmaṇa, without Viṣṇu's favour he cannot obtain a wife, sons or a good birth or a good family. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Account of Somaśarman's Birth in a Brāhmaṇa Family

Somaśarman said :

1-2. O sage, you told me about my sin in the former birth. O best brāhmaṇa, in what way was I forsaken by śūdrahood and did I obtain brāhmaṇahood? O you well-versed in spiritual and worldly knowledge, tell me all about it.

Vasiṣṭha said :

3. If you think (like listening to them) listen; I shall explain to you, O brāhmaṇa, what religious deeds you did in the former birth.

1. Añjana—seems to refer to the practice of putting a particular kind of collyrium into the eyes and then to see where wealth may be found. Vāda—seems to be a reference to the exposition of certain secret spells helping to obtain wealth.

4-6. A certain innocent, well-learned brāhmaṇa of a good conduct, religious-minded, and always solely devoted to Viṣṇu wandered over the earth for pilgrimages to sacred places. He, the very intelligent one, while (thus) wandering, came to your house. O best of brāhmaṇas, he requested you for a place to stay (i.e. for accommodation). You with your wife and sons gave it to him (saying:)

7-9a. "O brāhmaṇa, come, come happily (i.e. you are welcome) to my house." You repeatedly said these words to that brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu: "O you of a good vow, live here comfortably; this is your house. Today I am blessed; today I have visited a sacred place. Today I have obtained the fruit of a visit to a sacred place by seeing your two feet."

9b-12. (Then) you showed him the cowpen for his lodging. Having massaged his body you also shampooed his feet. You also washed them with water. You also bathed with the water with which his feet were washed. You thus forthwith gave ghee, curd, milk, food and buttermilk to that noble brāhmaṇa. Thus with your wife and sons you pleased that very learned, noble brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee.

13-16. When it was the dawn of the auspicious and blissful day, on which fell (i.e. which was) the Ekādaśī (eleventh day) of the bright fortnight of Āṣāḍha (called) Pāpanaśinī (the destroyer of sins), which destroyed all sins, and on which day god Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) goes to sleep (called) Yoga-nidrā, O brāhmaṇa, when that day came, all wise men having given up all domestic duties, became engrossed in meditating upon Viṣṇu. With songs and (playing upon) musical instruments they celebrated a great festival. All the brāhmaṇas praised (Viṣṇu) with (hymns from) the Vedas, and very auspicious hymns of praise.

17. When the great festival had come, the best brāhmaṇa stayed there on that day. He (also) fasted properly.

18. The brāhmaṇa recited the hymn to Ekādaśī. With your wife and sons you also listened to the excellent (account of) religious virtue.

19. When that very auspicious (account) was heard by your wife and sons they urged you: "Observe this vow in the company of this brāhmaṇa."

20-26a. Hearing those great (i.e. very important) words, giving all merit, you were determined (to observe it and so said:) "I shall observe this vow." Then going to the river with your wife and sons, you bathed in the river. O brāhmaṇa, with a pleased mind you worshipped Viṣṇu with all (kinds of) auspicious presents and with sandal, incense etc. You kept awake by dancing and singing songs during that night. In the company of that brāhmaṇa you again bathed in the river. Saluting Viṣṇu with devotion and bathing him again and again, you worshipped the lord of gods with auspicious (objects like) flowers, incense etc. and similarly gave a present to that noble brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, having devoutly saluted that brāhmaṇa, you gave him ample presents. Then you broke the fast, O brāhmaṇa, with your sons, wife etc. You sent him (away) with devotion and good feelings.

26b-30a. O best brāhmaṇa, you yourself observed the vow like this, due to the company of that brāhmaṇa, and due to the favour of Viṣṇu. You, endowed with a truthful conduct became (i.e. was born as) a brāhmaṇa. Due to the efficacy of that vow you obtained (i.e. were born in) a great family of brāhmaṇas, wise and of truthful conduct. To that noble brāhmaṇa, devoted to Viṣṇu, you gave well-cooked food with faith and truthfulness. Due to the efficacy of that food sweet food comes to you.

30b-33. O brāhmaṇa, in your previous birth you were deluded through folly, and your mind was pervaded with desire. (So) you collected money only. You did not give it to brāhmaṇas or to helpless persons, or to your wife, as you died through desire for a son (not being satisfied). (So) due to the effect of that sin, poverty, non-fulfilment of your desire, and loss of affection came to you. It is just the result of that sin that you were born sonless.

34-35. O brāhmaṇa, a family with good sons, wealth, grains, excellent wife, good birth or death, excellent enjoyments and happiness, kingdom, heaven and salvation, and all that is difficult to obtain (are obtained) through the favour of that magnanimous Viṣṇu.

36-38. Therefore, by worshipping that Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, you will obtain that highest position i.e. the highest position of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I have fully told you about having good sons, wealth, grains, excellent enjoyments and happi-

ness, and all the deeds that you did in your former birth. O blessed one, knowing thus be solely devoted to Viṣṇu.

39-41. The best brāhmaṇa of great prowess was (thus) advised by Brahmā's son (i.e. Vasiṣṭha). The noble one, being full of joy, having saluted Vasiṣṭha there, and having taken his leave of that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) went home. Joyfully approaching his wife Sumanā, (he said to her:) "O auspicious lady, due to your favour that brāhmaṇa, Vasiṣṭha, told me all my former account and behaviour. Today only my delusion is destroyed. I shall just propitiate Viṣṇu and shall reach that highest position, viz. salvation."

42. Hearing those excellent, great, very auspicious words bringing about happiness, she, full of joy, said to her husband: "You are lucky (that) you are advised by that brāhmaṇa."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Somaśarman's Eulogy of Viṣṇu

Sūta said :

1-3. The very intelligent, the best (brāhmaṇa) Somaśarman, having bathed, with (his wife) Sumanā, at the auspicious (sacred place called) Kapilāsaṅgama,¹ on the bank of Revā, causing great merit, he, the intelligent one, and of a good vow, having gratified (with oblations) gods and manes, practised penance there, with a very calm mind and with meditation, muttering with the hymn of twelve syllables (the name) of auspicious Viṣṇu—that Vāsudeva, the magnanimous god of gods.

4. Always being steady and without desire and anger he saw Viṣṇu (only) (while sitting) on a seat, or (lying) on a bed or (going) in a vehicle or in a dream.

1. Kapilāsaṅgama or Kapilā-tirtha—Anyone bathing there and performing worship obtains a thousand brown cow. See Mahābhārata (critical edition published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona) 3.81.38.

5. That virtuous, glorious Sumanā, devoted to her husband, served only her husband endowed with penance.

6-9. Various obstacles frightened him who was meditating. Great black serpents of strong poison came near that Somaśarman; and also were seen lions and tigers. They simply frightened him. Vampires, demons, imps, spirits of dead persons and also jackals showed him terrible fear, (capable of) destroying life. Very terrible lions of various kinds, with fearful fangs and cruel came there and roared very fiercely.

10-26. The best, virtuous sage, the intelligent (Somaśarman), disturbed by the growing great obstacles was not distracted from his meditation on Viṣṇu. (Though) the best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman was very much harassed by very high winds in the rainy season, cold, or heavy showers, he did not move away from meditation. A very fearful lion roaring (terribly) came there. Seeing him, and being frightened, the brāhmaṇa (Somaśarman) remembered god Viṣṇu, who resembled a sapphire, who had put on a yellow garment, who was having a great prowess, who held a conch and a disc and a mace and a lotus, who was shining with a necklace of big pearls resembling the moon in beauty and also with jewel (called) Kaustubha¹, whose chest shines with the divine mark (called) Śrīvatsa, whose body looked charming due to all ornaments, whose eyes resembled lotuses, whose face had a charming smile on it, and was very much pleased, who looked charming and shone with a jewelled necklace. He verily meditated upon (Viṣṇu:) “O Kṛṣṇa, affectionate to those who seek your shelter; my salutation (to you) the god of gods; what will fear do to me? I have sought the refuge of him, in whose belly remain the three worlds and the seven magnanimous ones. Where then is fear for me? I have sought the refuge of him, the destroyer of all fears, from whom all very powerful fears like Kṛtyā etc. proceed. I have sought the refuge of him, who is a great fear to all sins and demons, and who is the protector of Viṣṇu’s (i.e. his) devotees. I have sought the refuge of him who is the refuge of all the eminent, magnanimous demons, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. his devotees). I have sought the refuge of him, who being fearless destroys fears, and who

1. Kaustubha—Name of a celebrated gem obtained with 13 other jewels at the churning of the ocean and worn by Viṣṇu on his chest.

possessing knowledge, destroys sins, and who alone remains in the form of Indra. I have sought the refuge of him, who, being of the form of herbs, removes diseases, and who (himself) is pure and entirely full of bliss. I have sought the refuge of him, who, himself being fixed, would move the worlds, and being sinless is knowledge (itself); (then) what will fear do to me? He, Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the guardian of all good people; he, the universal soul, protects the universe. I have sought his refuge. I have sought the refuge of him who, in the form of a lion, shows great fear to me (standing) in front (of me). I salute that (Viṣṇu) in the form of Narasimha.

27-28. (In the form of) an intoxicated, huge elephant (he) has come. I have well sought the refuge of him, who has the face of an elephant, who is endowed with knowledge, who holds a noose and a goad, who has a black face like that of an elephant.

29. I have sought the refuge of (that Viṣṇu who in his) Boar¹ (form) killed Hiraṇyākṣa. I have taken shelter with that Vāmana, affectionate to those who seek his shelter.

30. All the short, dwarfish, hump-backed spirits of dead persons and imps etc., holding the form of death, frighten me.

31-38. I have taken shelter with the immortal. What will fear do to me? Viṣṇu is of Brahmā, he is the giver of Brahman (i.e. takes one to the supreme spirit), he is Brahmā, and is full of the knowledge of Brahman; I have taken shelter with him; what (then) will fear do to me? He who is fearless, who removes the fear of the world and himself causes fear, and is of the form of fear—I have taken shelter with him. What will fear do to me? I have sought the shelter of that Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) of the form of Dharma, who is the emancipator of all worlds and the destroyer of all sinners. I shall seek his refuge who takes up a wonderful form, foreign to gods, in a war. He is always my shelter. A terrible storm afflicts my body very much. I have taken shelter with him; he is always my refuge. I have sought the refuge of that god who torments in these forms viz. of very cold, heavy showers and heat. These, of the form of death have come here, and are disturbing me. I have always taken the shelter of these forms of Viṣṇu.

1. Varāha—the Boar-form of Viṣṇu.

39. I take the shelter with that Viṣṇu, the first Siddha and the lord of Siddhas, whom they call all-good, the highest lord, exclusively alone, full of knowledge and brilliant."

40. Thus everyday meditating upon and praising Viṣṇu, the destroyer of afflictions, he brought Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) into his heart through devotion.

41. Seeing the exertion and courage of that Somaśarman, Viṣṇu, being delighted, manifested himself before him and said:

42. "O very intelligent Somaśarman, listen with your wife. O best brāhmaṇa, I am Viṣṇu; O you of a good vow, ask for a boon."

43-47. (Thus) addressed by him, the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Somaśarman) having opened both his eyes, saw that god, the lord of the universe, who was dark like a cloud, who was very glorious, whose body was charming due to all ornaments, who was endowed with all weapons, who was endowed with divine characteristics, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who was with (i.e. who was clad in) a yellow garment, who, the lord of gods, was shining, who was mounted upon Garuḍa, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace (in his hands), who was the great saviour of Brahmā and others, and also of this world, who was always beyond this universe, who was above (all) forms, who was the lord of the worlds. The very glorious brāhmaṇa, full of great joy, prostrated himself before him who was accompanied by Śrī (Lakṣmī or grandeur), who was shining, and had the lustre like that of a crore of suns.

48-57. With Sumanā, he joined the palms of his hands (i.e. saluted him) and said: "Victory to you; victory to you, Mādhava, who removes pride. Victory to you, who sleep on the body of the serpent (viz. Śeṣa). Victory to you, O Yajñāṅga, O lord of sacrifices. Victory to you, O eternal and omnipresent one. Victory to you, O lord of all, O eternal one, O you of the form of sacrifice; my salutation to you. Victory to you, O best among those who possess knowledge. Victory to you, O giver of everything; victory to you, O omniscient one, and cause of all. Victory to you, O lord of the original forms of souls; saltuation to you, O great soul. Victory to you, O giver of wisdom, O Prajñāṅga (i.e. having wisdom as one of his parts); victory to you, O giver of life, Victory to you, O destroyer of sins, the lord of merit.

Victory to you, O Viṣṇu, the controller of merit. Victory to you, O you of the form of knowledge; salutation to you, who can be comprehended by knowledge. Victory to you, O you having eyes like lotus-petals. Salutation to you, Padmanābha (from whose navel sprang the lotus). Victory to you, O Govinda, O Gopāla, victory to you, O holder of the disc; salutation to you whose forms are unmanifest and manifest. Victory to you, O you, whose body is charming due to your valour; victory to you, the leader of valour; victory to you, O you, who have Lakṣmī as a part of your sport. Salutation to you, full of the Vedas. Victory to you, O you whose body is charming due to your valour; victory to you, O you who give diligence; victory to (you) who put an end to all exertion, victory to (you, O Viṣṇu who are yourself) exertion. Victory to you who are capable of elevation, victory to you who had the three elevations (i.e. three steps). Salutation to you, who undertake exertion and who are Dharma.

58-59. Salutation to you, having a golden seed. Salutation to you who are lustre. Salutation to you, who are of the form of great brilliance, and who are full of all lustre. Salutation to you, who destroy the prowess of the demons, and who remove evil lustre. Salutation to you who (work) for the well-being of cows and brāhmaṇas, and to you, who are the highest soul.

60-71. Salutation to you, the enjoyer of the offerings and the carrier of the oblations to gods. Salutation to you, the carrier of the oblations to the manes and to you of the form of Svadhā. Repeated salutations to you, of the nature of Svāhā, to you, who are the sacrifice and who are the purifier. Salutation to you who hold the Śārṅga bow in your hand, to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) the remover of sins. Salutation to you who direct the good and the bad, and who shine with wisdom. Salutations (to you), of the form of Vedas, and the purifier. Salutation to you of tawny hair, and the remover of all afflictions, to (you) the highest Keśava, and the sustainer of everything. Salutation to you who favours (all) and who are full of joy. My constant salutation to you, the eternal, pure one, the destroyer of suffering. My constant salutation to you, who are joy, who are pure and who are perfect; to you, whose feet are saluted by Rudra and who are saluted by Brahmā. Salutation to you, whose lotus-like feet are saluted by the lords of gods and demons. Repeated salutations to you who

are the highest lord, who are unconquered and whose heart is full of nectar. Salutation to you, whose abode is the milky ocean; to you to whom Lakṣmī is dear. Repeated salutations to you, who are Omkāra, are pure, and who are stable. Repeated salutations to you who are comprehensive and who pervade (everything), and you who destroy all calamities. Repeated salutations to you of the form of Vāmana, and to you, noble Nṛsimha. Salutation to you, divine Paraśurāma, who killed all the kṣatriyas. Salutation to you, who are omniscient, who are Matsya and Rāma. Salutation to you, who are Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and the destroyer of Mlecchas. Salutation to you, the brāhmaṇa (named) Kapila, and Hayagrīva. Salutation to you, of the nature of Vyāsa and to you who have every form.”

72-75. Having thus praised Hṛṣīkeśa, he then said to that Janārdana: “O you purifier, Brahmā does not know you, the farthest limit of virtues; neither omniscient Rudra (i.e. Śiva), nor the thousand-eyed (Indra) is able to praise you. Who can describe you? O lord, of what kind (i.e. how limited) is my intellect? O Keśava, I have praised you, who are qualityless and having qualities. O you of a good vow, (please) forgive me for my words—bad words; I am your servant. O you purifier, O you lord of the words, (please) forgive me, birth after birth.”

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Birth of Suvrata

Hari said :

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased by this meritorious penance of yours, and also by your truthfulness; and I am also pleased by the holy hymn of praise. Choose a boon. O you illustrious one, I shall grant you the boon that you have (i.e. cherish) in your mind. I shall fulfil (i.e. satisfy) whatever desire you entertain.

Somaśarman said:

3. O Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), first, with a pleased mind, grant

me a boon much desired by me, if you have good (i.e. great) pity for me.

4. Getting birth after birth (i.e. in every existence) I shall be devoted to you. Show me the highest, stable place, giving (me) salvation.

5-8a. O Keśava, (give me) a son, who will emancipate his family, who will be endowed with divine characteristics, who will be always intensely devoted to Viṣṇu, who will sustain (i.e. continue) my family, who will know everything and grant everything, who will be endowed with the lustre of penance, who will always protect and honour gods, brāhmaṇas and (other) people, who will be pious, who will be a donor and will be mature in intellect due to knowledge. Give me such a son, (and) remove my poverty. May it be so certainly (lit. there is no doubt). I choose this boon.

Hari said:

8b-11. O best brāhmaṇa, may it be so. Undoubtedly it will take place. By my favour, may you have a good son, who would emancipate your family. You will enjoy divine and human boons here (i.e. in this world). Perceiving great, virtuous happiness due to your son, you will, O brāhmaṇa, not see (i.e. experience) unhappiness as long as you live. You will be a donor, an enjoyer and will appreciate merits. There is no doubt about this. You will meet with death at a sacred place (and) will obtain the highest position.

12. Thus having granted a boon to that brāhmaṇa dear to him, the lord vanished. He was seen as (though seen) in a dream.

13-21. Then that best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman, (accompanied) with (his wife) Sumanā, gave auspicious gifts at the great and purifying sacred place Amarakaṇṭaka, on the auspicious bank of Revā, giving merit. When a very long time of that Somaśarman passed (i.e. when he thus passed a long time), he bathed at the confluence of Kapilā and Revā and set out. In front of him the brāhmaṇa saw a white elephant, which was very bright, beautiful, divine, of a profuse ichor, and of charming (i.e. auspicious) marks, with his body looking beautiful on account of many ornaments, and endowed with great grace.

Both his temples shone with red lead and saffron. (He saw the elephant) whose ears were having blue lotuses on them, and which was having a banner and a staff. On the elephant was seated a divine, very bright man, who was endowed with divine marks, and who was adorned with all ornaments, who had put on divine flowers and who was besmeared with divine sandal. The best (brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman) saw him to be very pleasing like the moon, and endowed with an umbrella and chowries, and going, after having mounted the elephant (i.e. being carried by the elephant). (He saw the man) who was very auspiciously being praised by Siddhas, bards and Gandharvas. Seeing that beautiful, excellent elephant and the man with divine characteristics, Somaśarman, with his mind full of amazement, reflected :

22-27. 'Who is this, of a divine body and a good vow, going after having reached (i.e. along) the path?' When, thinking like this, Somaśarman came to his house, (he saw) the divine charming form entering (through) the door of his house. Full of great joy, the religious-minded, best brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, quickly went to his house; but when he went upto the door of his house he did not see him, (but instead) the very intelligent one (saw) charming divine, fragrant flowers fallen in the courtyard (of his house). Seeing this courtyard besmeared with auspicious, fragrant sandal and saffron, and with dūrvā grass and sacred rice grains, he, thus amazed, and reflecting repeatedly, saw Sumanā with divine and auspicious excellence.

Somaśarmana said :

28. Who gave (you) these divine ornaments, (this) fortune in the form an excellent dress, and decoration (in the form) of garments and ornaments?

29. O good one, then, without any apprehension tell me the reason.

Thus speaking to his wife, the best brāhmaṇa ceased (speaking).

Sumanā said :

30-31. O my husband, listen. Someone best among the gods, mounted upon a white elephant, adorned with divine ornaments,

with his body smeared with divine sandal, endowed with divine wonders, had come. I do not know which deity he was (who was) served by brāhmaṇas and Gandharvas.

32-38a. He, who was being praised by gods, Gandharvas and bards, had come. With him were ladies who were endowed with auspicious forms, with beauty and excellent dresses, with charm due to all ornaments, and all with their desires satisfied. In front of them the illustrious man filled our quadrangle with gems and is (therefore) endowed with all charm. Then I was placed on an auspicious seat by brāhmaṇas. All of them gave me garments, ornaments and decorations. They all consecrated me with auspicious Vedic hymns and meritorious songs from the sacred texts, and they again disappeared. O best brāhmaṇa, all of them (being) around me, again said : "We shall always dwell in your house. O you auspicious one, always remain undefiled along with your husband." Speaking thus, they all left. Thus only (i.e. this much only is what) I saw.

38b-45a. The very intelligent one, having heard the account told by her, again reflected: 'What is this brought about by the lord?' Thus thinking the very wise Somaśarman engaged himself in the religious duties of a brāhmaṇa. That illustrious Sumanā observing a vow became pregnant from him. That respectable lady then looked more beautiful due to that embryo. She was endowed with the flame of lustre as she was having that bright son (in her womb). She, due to (the efficacy of) her penance, gave birth to a son resembling a god. At that time divine drums resounded in the sky. Great gods blew conches, Gandharvas sang charming songs; and indeed all the celestial nymphs danced at that time. Then the calm, best brāhmaṇa, Brahmā, having come there with gods, named him (i.e. the boy) Suvrata. Having named him, all the gods of great prowess left.

45b-57. When the gods had left, the best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman performed rites like the birth-rite (of the boy). When the illustrious son Suvrata, brought into existence by gods, was born, there was great prosperity in his house mixed with (i.e. full of) wealth and grains; and also (there were) elephants, buffaloes and cows, gold and jewels. The house of that Somaśarman shone as the house of Kubera shone with heaps of wealth.

The best brāhmaṇa performed rites like meditation (and other) auspicious deeds. The brāhmaṇa, full of many merits went on a pilgrimage. The intelligent one, endowed with knowledge and merit, gave there auspicious gifts. With great joy he celebrated the marriage of the son. The son's sons, virtuous and endowed with good signs, were born. They were endowed with truthfulness, righteousness and penance. Somaśarman performed all auspicious rites of (i.e. about) them; and the illustrious one was happy with their grandsons. He enjoyed all pleasures and was without (i.e. free from) old age and diseases. His body was as (if) he was twentyfive years old. That very wise Somaśarman was lustrous like the sun. That noble, respectable lady Sumanā also shone with pious and auspicious (things), with sons and grandsons, and with vows and restraints. With auspicious vows like (being very loyal to) the husband, the large-eyed one shone excellently. She was (so much) endowed with youth that she was as it were sixteen year old.

58-60. The magnanimous, righteous, very prosperous, charming and auspicious couple was delighted and full of joy. O best brāhmaṇas, thus was their behaviour full of auspicious practices. I shall now tell you the observance of the vows by Suvrata (and) how he (obtained bliss) by having propitiated Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Suvrata's Devotion to Viṣṇu

Sūta said :

1. Once that resplendent Vyāsa, being extremely amazed, asked Brahmā, the lord of the world, (about) the entire account of Savrata.

Vyāsa said :

2. O soul of the worlds, O you in whom the worlds are deposited, O god of gods, O great lord, I now desire to hear the life-account of Suvrata.

Brahmā said :

3. O you noble Pārāśarya (i.e. son of Parāśara), listen to the meritorious, excellent account, full of practice of penance, of the brāhmaṇa Suvrata.

4-8. The intelligent Suvrata reflected upon Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), even from his childhood, (since) he had seen (that) god Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa while (still) in the womb (of his mother). Due to his having performed (good) deeds (in the) former (birth), he always meditated upon Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). He meditated and reflected upon that god Padmanābha, holding a conch and a disc and giving great merit, in (i.e. while he sang) songs, (did) study and recitations. Thus the best brāhmaṇa, the excellent boy, always reflecting upon Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, always played with children. The intelligent, pious one, loving merit, named the sons of him, the magnanimous one (i.e. his own sons), after Hari. The very intelligent one called his friend by Hari's name:

9-16. 'O Keśava, come, come along; O Mādhava come; O Cakradhṛk (i.e. the disc-holder i.e. Viṣṇu) come; O Puruṣottama, play with me only. O Madhusūdana, we shall go together only.' In this way the brāhmaṇa called (others) by the names of Hari, while playing, reciting, laughing, lying, singing or viewing (something), or in a vehicle, on a seat, while meditating, (reciting) sacred hymns, or comprehending or (doing) good acts. He saw Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) the lord of the world only; he talked to him only. He the very wise one, meditated upon (i.e. saw) that great lord, the ruler of the world viz. Keśava, Govinda, having lotus-like eyes, in grass, in wood, in a dry or wet (object), and also in the sky, on the ground, on mountains, in forests, in water, on dry land, in a stone or in beings. (Thus) Sumanā's son, that brāhmaṇa Suvrata, that religious-minded one, saw Nṛsimha (i.e. Viṣṇu) everywhere. Resorting to a child's sports he thus played everyday; and sang about Kṛṣṇa with songs with good musical modes, couched in sweet words, having beating times,¹ or *laya* (i.e. times in music), with charming notes of the gamut and melodies.

1. Rāga, tāla, laya etc. are terms used in music. Laya—Time in music. It is of three kinds: druta, madhya and vilambita. Mūrccchanā—The rising of sounds, an intonation, a duly regulated rise and fall of sounds, conducting the air and the harmony through the keys in a pleasing manner, changing the key or passing from one key to another.

Suvrata said :

17-24a. Those who know the Vedas always meditate upon him, who is the enemy of demons, in whose body (remains) the entire universe, who is the lord of reflective meditation, and who destroys all sins. I shall seek the shelter of (that) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), who occupies all the worlds, and in whom all the worlds abide. I salute that highest lord free from all faults and I always salute his pair of feet. Those whose minds are purified by the (study of) Vedānta everyday recite (the hymns about) Nārāyaṇa, the treasure of virtues, and of unlimited power. I seek his shelter in order to cross the entire ocean of the worldly existence which is endless, fathomless and difficult to cross. O enemy of demons, protect this poor one viz. me (who am devoted to) the pure and large pair of the feet of him who is the royal swan in the Mānasa lake (i.e. the minds) of the best reflecting sages, who is pure and whose entire prowess always (continues). I meditate upon the god, the lord of the entire world, who is the moon (that has come) here only to destroy the darkness in the form of grief, who has led Dharma (i.e. piety) for the protection of the world, who is endowed with truth, who, the lord of the worlds, is the chief of all the worlds. With charming songs and measuring the beatings of time I constantly meditate upon Śrīraṅga (i.e. Viṣṇu), the lord of the world, destroyer of ignorance, comparable to the sun only, the root of joy, and full of all prowess. I sing with unique joy (the praise of) him who alone is full treasure of the portion of nectar, who is endowed with his senses of deep meditation and who has the true perspective. He always observes the mobile and immobile universe. The very sinful people do not at all see him to be here.

24b. He (i.e. Suvrata) always sought the shelter of that Keśava.

25. Beating the time with (the clappings of) the hands he sang songs (about) Kṛṣṇa and rejoiced with (other) children.

26. Thus, being a child, Suvrata, Sumanā's son, intent on meditating upon Viṣṇu, was engaged in sports.

27. His mother said to Suvrata of fine characteristics, (and) playing: "O my boy, have your meal; hunger might oppress you."

28. The wise Suvrata again said to his mother: "I am satisfied with the great nectar viz. the delight (derived) from the meditation upon Hari."

29-34a. When he got (i.e. sat) upon the seat (used while taking) meal he saw sweet food. (He reflected:) "This food is Viṣṇu (himself); the soul has resorted to this food. May that Viṣṇu who is (present here) in the form of the soul be gratified with this water in which he dwells due to his remaining in the milky ocean. May Keśava, satisfied with his own form be gratified with tāmbūla, sandal, fragrant substances and these charming flowers." When the religious-minded one went to bed, he would reflect upon Kṛṣṇa: "I have sought the refuge of that Kṛṣṇa who is endowed with the Yoganidrā (i.e. his sleep at the end of a yuga)." The brāhmaṇa (Suvrata) would reflect upon that Vāsudeva, while taking meal, while covering himself, on a seat or bed, and would prepare everything for him.

34b-37. When the religious-minded one attained youth, he gave up enjoyment of pleasures and was engaged in meditating upon Keśava on the excellent Vaidūrya mountain, where there is the symbol of Viṣṇu called Siddheśvara and destroyer of sins. He, reflecting upon the great lord called Maheśvara glorified by Brahmā (and situated) on the right bank of Narmadā, and having resorted to Siddheśvara, thought of (practising) penance.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

Dharmāṅgada Born as Suvrata

Vyāsa said :

1-3. O noble one, I shall put one question to you. Now speak (i.e. answer) it; you yourself had formerly said that Suvrata meditated upon lord Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya, due to former practice. In which caste was Suvrata born in his former birth? Now tell that to me (and also) how Hari was propitiated by him. O lord of gods, who is he that is full of merit?

Brahmā said :

4-13. In the auspicious city (called) Vaidiśa, full of all prosperity, (lived) a very lustrous, powerful king, the son of Ṛtadhavaja. His very intelligent son was well-known as Rukmabhūṣaṇa. His loyal wife was the glorious Sandhyāvatī. The king's son (i.e. Rukmabhūṣaṇa) having produced a son on her like himself, named him Dharmāṅgada. This (Dharmāṅgada), the most fortunate son of Rukmāṅgada, was endowed with all auspicious marks and was intensely devoted to his father; and he, for the happiness of his father, even gave his own head to Mohinī. Hṛṣikeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) was pleased by his Viṣṇuite way of life and devotion to his father; and took him physically to Viṣṇu's position. He, who knew all codes of conduct, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who was best of the Sātvatas, he—Dharmāṅgada, who was very wise, who was well-versed in judgement and knowledge, who was an ornament of piety, living there only gladly enjoyed all divine pleasures according to his desire. When a full thousand yugas were over, he who was piety (himself) and an ornament of piety, dropped from that position, and due to the favour of Viṣṇu, was born as the eldest and most fortunate and intelligent son of Somaśarman, increasing the delight of Sumanā, and named Suvrata. The intelligent one practised penance and was intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu.

14-18a. The best brāhmaṇa, having abandoned blemishes like desire and anger, having controlled the group of senses, continuously practised penance by concentrating his mind and uniting it with Viṣṇu, near Siddheśvara on the best mountain Vaidūrya. The lord of the world, holding a conch, a disc and a mace was well-pleased with the meditation of the noble one, who thus had remained in it for a hundred years. That Keśava, with Lakṣmī, granted him another boon: "O you pious Suvrata, O you best among the wise sages, well-being to you; choose a boon, I am Kṛṣṇa that have come to you."

18b-19. Having heard these excellent words of Viṣṇu, the intelligent one was full of great joy, and seeing god Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), he joining the palms of his hands, saluted him.

Suvrata said :

20. The ocean of mundane existence is full of the waves of

very great (i.e. poignant) griefs, and of the ripples of the heaps of follies. Through my vices and virtues I have reached it. O Janārdana, from it quickly take up me who am helpless.

21-28. When the great cloud of my deeds is thundering, it is raining, lightning is flashing; due to the heaps of my sins and coverings of the darkness of delusion, I do not have (i.e. I have lost my) sight. (So) O Madhusūdana, give your hand to me, who am helpless. This dense forest of the worldly existence is resorted to by (i.e. has) many trees of great grief, and by many lions of the form of follies. It is blazing with the lustre of the great fire of compassion. O Kṛṣṇa, protect me who am constantly being burnt. The tree of the worldly existence is extremely old and also high. It has the bulbous root of illusion and many branches of pity and many afflictions; it has the leaves of union with one's wife etc. It has borne fruit. O lord Murāri, protect me who climbed it and fell from it. O Kṛṣṇa, I am constantly burnt by the fires of griefs, with profuse (columns of) smoke in the form of various delusions, and with distresses like separation resembling death. Give me salvation. Always sprinkle me with water of knowledge, me—who have fallen in the great ditch covered with fearful darkness and called Samsāra (i.e. the worldly existence). O Kṛṣṇa, you show a great favour to me who am distressed and suffering from fear. Being disgusted with it, I have sought your refuge. Those, who with controlled minds and full of devotion, meditate upon you with their minds (full of) knowledge, obtain the (highest) position; since saluting the very auspicious pair of your feet the groups of Kinnaras and gods think of you (only). I do not talk to anyone else, I do not worship anyone else, I do not think about anyone else. I (just) continuously salute the pair of your lotus-like feet. O Kṛṣṇa, today satisfy my desire. Let the heap of my sins go far away. I am your slave, I am your servant in existence after existence. I constantly remember the pair of your lotus-like feet.

29-30a. If, O Kṛṣṇa, you are pleased, then grant me a good boon: O great god, with me take (also) my parents physically to your abode. There should be no hesitation about it.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said :

30b. There is no doubt that this great affair of you will take place.

31-35. Hṛṣīkeśa was pleased with him and was very much delighted by his devotion. Free from tormentation and destruction the two viz. Sumanā and Somaśarman, went, along with Suvrata to Viṣṇu's heaven. O you very intelligent one, till a couple of yugas came (i.e. was over) the brāhmaṇa Suvrata enjoyed repeatedly divine worlds. And by the words (i.e. order) of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) the very intelligent one again came down to (i.e. was born in) the house of Kaśyapa for the mission of gods; and enjoys Indra's position due to Viṣṇu's favour. Well-known as Vasudatta, and saluted by all gods, he enjoys the position of Indra at present.

36. Thus I have told you the entire cause of the propriety of creation. I shall (even), tell (i.e. explain to) you anything else that you ask.

Vyāsa said :

37. The powerful and very intelligent Dharmāṅgada, the son of Rukmāṅgada, was Indra at the time of creation in the first Kṛtayuga.

38-39a. Then, O lord of gods, how is it that there is another Dharmāṅgada on the earth, and also another king (named) Rukmāṅgada, and how is it that this one is also the lord of gods (i.e. Indra)? This doubt has arisen (in my mind); please explain (i.e. remove) it.

Brahmā said :

39b-40a. Oh, I shall tell you that which will remove your doubt. O best brāhmaṇa, the sport of the god is for the creation.

40b-42. As days, fortnights, months, seasons, years and Manus pass (i.e. come and go) in the same way the yugas again and again pass. Then arrives the Kalpa; then, O very intelligent one, I myself go to Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) and the mobile and the immobile go to (i.e. merge into) me. (Then) he, whose nature is contemplation, again creates the universe as before.

43-44a. Again, I, the Vedas, the deities and brāhmaṇas, as well as all kings with their dispositions are born, O noble one. A wise man is not confused by this.

44b-47. As in the former Kalpa the magnanimous king Rukmāṅgada was born, in the same way this well-known

brāhmaṇa Dharmāṅgada is born (now). The very intelligent ones like Rāma, Yayāti, Nahuṣa,¹ and also the magnanimous Manu and others are born and die. Kings devoted to piety enjoy the position of Indra, as the hero Dharmāṅgada is now enjoying (that) great position. In the same way Vedas, gods, Purāṇas, preceded by Smṛtis (come and go)

48-49. O best brāhmaṇ, I have thus narrated to you Suvrata's entire account which is meritorious and which leads to good position. O noble one, I shall explain to you the invisible (one).

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Slaying of the Demon Bala

The sages said :

1-2. O you best among speakers, you have told us this wonderful, meritorious, excellent tale, bringing about glory, and destroying all sins. Please tell us the propriety of the creation.

1. Yayāti—Name of a celebrated king of the lunar race. He was the son of Nahuṣa. He married Śukra's daughter Devayāni, who was cursed by Kaca that she would marry a Kṣatriya. Śarmiṣṭhā, daughter of the king of Asuras was told by her father to be Devayāni's servant as a sort of recompense for her formerly having slapped and thus insulted Devayāni. Yayāti fell in love with Śarmiṣṭhā and secretly married her. Devayāni came to know about the marriage, and complained to her father of the conduct of Yayāti. Śukra cursed him that he would be prematurely old. Yayāti propitiated him and obtained from him permission to transfer his infirmity to anyone who would accept it. His youngest son Pūru agreed to take it. Yayāti enjoyed youth for a thousand years. With a strenuous effort he renounced his sensual life and restoring youth to Pūru, and appointing him as his successor, he left for a forest to lead a pious and meditating life.

Nahuṣa—He was Āyus' son, Purūravas' grandson, and Yayāti's father. He was a very wise and powerful king. For some time, he deputed Indra at latter's request. He made the Seven Sages to carry him in a palanquin to Indrāṇi's house, whose love, he thought, he would win. On his way, he insulted the Sages by ordering them to move on (*sarpa, sarpa*). One of the Sages cursed him to be a *sarpa* (serpent). He fell down on the earth and remained as a serpent, till he was freed by Yudhiṣṭhira from that condition.

O son of Sūta, tell us in detail, as to how the creation (took place) formerly.

Sūta said :

3-5. I shall tell in detail the cause of creation and destruction, merely by hearing which a man would become omniscient. Hiraṇyakaśipu occupied the three worlds. Having propitiated Brahmā by penance, he obtained a boon, difficult to obtain, and also immortality from that noble god. He, having pervaded gods and the worlds secured mastery (over all).

6-9. Then gods with Gandharvas, sages who had mastered the Vedas, and Nāgas, Kinnaras, Siddhas, Yakṣas and others, led by Brahmā, went to lord Nārāyaṇa, who was enjoying his sleep at the end of a Yuga in the Milky Ocean. With the palms of their hands joined, the gods awakened him with (i.e. by singing) hymns of praise. When the lord of the gods awoke, O you very wise one(s), they told him the account of that wicked one (i.e. Hiraṇyakaśipu). Having heard it, the lord of the world, resorting to the form of Nṛsimha, killed Hiraṇyakaśipu.

10-15. Then with the Boar-form he killed the very powerful Hiraṇyākṣa. He lifted up the auspicious Earth, and killed that demon at that time. He also killed other fierce-looking demons. When thus the great demons had perished, when the others i.e. Diti's sons had (also) perished, when the gods had attained great positions, when sacrifices and other religious rites had proceeded (i.e. were being performed), when all the worlds had well-settled, that Diti who was oppressed by grief, who was tormented by the bereavement of her sons, who cried 'alas, alas,' and had become senseless, devoutly saluted her husband Kaśyapa who resembled the sun, who was endowed with the lustre of penance, who was a donor and was magnanimous, and said to that very intelligent best brāhmaṇa:

16-20. "O revered sir, that god—the holder of the disc—has made me sonless. Gods have struck down all the sons of Diti (i.e. of me) and of Danu. O best sage, I am burnt by the fire of grief (due to the loss) of my sons. O lord, give me a son, who would delight (everyone), who would remove the lustre of all, who would be very powerful and charming in all limbs, who would be lustrous like the king of gods, who would be very

intelligent and omniscient, who would be learned and wise, who would be endowed with the lustre of penance, who would be strong and would have auspicious marks, who would be well-versed in the Vedas, who would be knowing (i.e. possessing knowledge), who would honour gods and brāhmaṇas, who would be the conqueror of all worlds, and, who would, O brāhmaṇa, give me joy, and who would, O lord, be endowed with all (good) characteristics."

21-23a. Having heard these excellent words of her, the noble Kaśyapa with his mind full of pity and pleased with her who was grieved, who was helpless and whose mind had become distressed, and having put his hand through great love for her, on her head, said to her: "O glorious one, a son, as desired by you, will be (born to you)."

23b-28. Having said so, he went to Meru, the best mountain. He of a great vow, all alone practised great penance (there). In the meanwhile, she conceived an excellent embryo. That high-minded Diti, knowing all rules of conduct, doing good deeds, remained with a pure heart for a period of hundred years. She gave birth to a son who was endowed with Brāhmaṇic lustre. Then Kaśyapa, full of great joy, came there; (and) the best and intelligent one named him. He called his son 'Bala', who, the great one, was like (i.e. true to) his name. Thus he named him, and performed his thread-ceremony. He said to him: "O (my) glorious son, practise celibacy."

29. (Bala said): "O best brāhmaṇa, I shall just do as you tell me. O best one, with (i.e. practising) celibacy, I would study the Vedas."

30-31. Thus an entire century of years passed while he was practising penance. He, endowed with the lustre of penance, came to the presence of (i.e. came to) his mother. Diti, full of great joy saw the divine celibacy, full of the power of penance, of her magnanimous son.

32-35. She said to that son (of her) viz. Bala, who was magnanimous, who was possessed of penance, who was intelligent, who was great-souled, who was well-versed in judgement and knowledge: "O intelligent one, as long as you live, my sons like Hiraṇyakaśipu killed by him who holds a disc in his hand (i.e. by Viṣṇu), will live onward. O my boy, conclude the hostility

(i.e. take revenge), kill in battle (our) enemies—the gods.” That Danu said to that very powerful Bala these words: “Son, first quickly kill Indra, the lord of gods. Then strike down gods, and after that (strike down) him, whose vehicle is Garuḍa (i.e. Viṣṇu).”

36. Having heard (the words) of the two (i.e. Diti and Danu), Aditi, who looked upon her husband as a god, and who was full of great grief, said to her son, Indra :

37-38a. “Diti’s son, of a huge body, is increasing with brāhmaṇic lustre. For killing gods, he practised penance in (honour of) Śiva. Understand like this, O lord of gods, if you desire happiness here.”

38b-39. Having thus heard those words of his mother, Indra, the lord of gods, was extremely worried due to uneasiness. Being tormented by great grief, he then thought:

40-45. ‘How shall I kill this (Bala) who is polluting the piety of gods?’ Thus the lord of gods decided to kill Bala. Once that Bala resorted (i.e. went) to the ocean to offer his daily prayers. He shone with a divine skin of an antelop and a piece of stick, and with spotless merit and that (i.e. undescribable) celibacy. Indra saw him seated upon the seat meant for daily prayers, near the ocean, muttering prayers and extremely tranquil. That Diti’s son was hit (by Indra) with that divine thunderbolt. Seeing Bala fallen dead on the ground, the king of gods full of great joy was then delighted. The pious Indra, having thus struck down that demon, Diti’s son, ruled happily.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Vṛtra Duped

Sūta said

1-2. Having heard that her very powerful son Bala was killed, Diti piteously wept saying: “Oh, I am facing a great misery.” Having thus very piteously wept for a long time, the

miserable, glorious one went to Kaśyapa, her husband, and said to him :

3-4a. "Seeing your son who had gone to the ocean, the very sinful Indra, the lord of the host of gods, with his thunderbolt killed him having the characteristics of a brāhmaṇa and just practising *sandhyā* (i.e. the daily prayer)."

4b-5. Having heard thus, (Kaśyapa) Marīci's son got angry at that time, and was full of great anger, as it were, burnt with fire. The best brāhmaṇa plucked a hair from his matted hair, (and putting it into) pure fire (said:)

6-10a. "I shall create a son just for killing Indra." From that fire-pool, from the mouth of fire was produced a fierce figure, full of black collyrium (i.e. very dark), and tawny-eyed, with the interior of his mouth fearful on account of the fangs, causing fear to the worlds, capable of giving a big blow with the flat of his hand, holding a sword and a shield, bright with lustre of the entire body, resembling a large cloud and strong. He said to the brāhmaṇa viz. Kaśyapa: "Give me an order. O brāhmaṇa, tell me the purpose for which I was produced; I shall accomplish it through your favour, O you of a good vow."

Kaśyapa said :

10b-11. O you highly intelligent one, fulfil the desire of this Aditi (Diti?) and of me also. Kill the wicked Indra; and when that king of gods (i.e. Indra) is killed, enjoy Indra's position.

12-14. Thus ordered by that noble Kaśyapa, Vṛtra exerted to kill Indra. Endowed with valour, he practised archery. The thousand-eyed one (i.e. Indra), seeing the demon's strength, power and his lustre with courage befitting a kṣatriya, was afflicted by fear. He thought of a means to kill that wicked Vṛtra.

15-16. Having called the Seven Great Sages, the god of gods sent them to Vṛtra, the lord of demons: "O best sages, you may please go (to the place) where Vṛtra is staying, and bring about a treaty between them (i.e. the demons and me)."

17. Thus ordered and urged by that thousand-eyed (Indra) the Seven Sages then said to that demon Vṛtra:

18-21a. “Indra offers to make friendship (with you), O best demon; make that friendship.” The Seven Sages, knowing the fact, said to the very powerful Vṛtra: “O best one, the very wise Indra desires your friendship. Then how is it that you do not do it (i.e. do not accept his offer)? O hero, enjoy happily half the position (i.e. kingdom) of Indra; let Indra have the (remaining) half. Giving up their enmity, let all demons and gods live happily.”

Vṛtra said :

21b-23a. If the best lord of the gods really desires friendship, I (too) shall do (the same) by resorting to truth (i.e. truthfully); there is no doubt about this. O brāhmaṇas, if, by putting forward (i.e. by resorting to) dishonesty, Indra plays mischief, then what is the surety in this matter?

23b-24a. The sages said to Indra : “Give certainty about this. Tell us the truth if you desire friendship here (with Vṛtra).”

Indra said :

24b-25a. If I behave with you falsely and dishonestly, then I shall be stained with the sins of killing brāhmaṇas etc. There is no doubt about it.

25b-27a. The very powerful (brāhmaṇas) again spoke to Vṛtra, the lord of demons: “‘I shall be stained with the sins of killing brāhmaṇas etc. There is no doubt about it.’ Thus, O very wise one, Indra has said to you. O you very intelligent one, form friendship (with Indra), with this (i.e. taking those words to be the) surety.”

Vṛtra said :

27b-28a. O best brāhmaṇas, on account of your respectable manner and this truthfulness of him, I shall likewise form friendship with him.

28b-33. The chief brāhmaṇas took Vṛtra into the vicinity of Indra. Seeing Vṛtra, ready for friendship, having arrived, the pious Indra got up from his seat, and taking the material of worship quickly, offered (the same) to Vṛtra: “O very wise one,

enjoy half of this great position of Indra. O best of demons, we two should stay happily." O best brāhmaṇa, having thus produced confidence through friendship of Vṛtra, the wicked-minded one always saw his weak point. Vṛtra too was always cautious. Indra also would think day and night (to find out his weak point). He did not find out the weak point of the noble Vṛtra.

34-43a. He thought of a stratagem to kill him. He sent Rambhā (after telling her:) "With this or that trick, delude the great demon. O auspicious one, do that to delude the great demon, so that by killing him I shall get happiness." (Rambhā resorted to Nandanavana—Indra's garden,) the garden which was auspicious, very divine, resorted to by pious trees, full of many trees with fruits, full of beasts and birds, looking beautiful all around with divine heavenly cars, always full of divine music of the Gandharvas and bees, full of auspicious, sweet and prolonged cooings of cuckoos everywhere, full of the notes of peacocks and the sounds of antelopes at every place, everywhere adorned with divine sandal trees and also with charming wells, pools and lakes full of water and lotuses in bloom; it looked beautiful with gods, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Kinnaras as well; also with divine sages and with an excellent garden. It was crowded with hosts of celestial nymphs; and with various curious and auspicious objects. It was thronged with golden palaces, and was everywhere adorned with staffs, umbrellas and chowries, and with pitchers and banners. It was full of the sounds (of the recitation) of the Vedas and with the sounds of songs.

43b-44a. Reaching the Nandana like this, that sportive Rambhā, smiling charmingly sported there with celestial nymphs.

Sūta said :

44b-51. Once that Vṛtra, dragged by death, went very joyfully with some demons, to that forest. The lord of gods and brāhmaṇas, looking for his weak point, moved unnoticed by the side of that noble one. That very wise Vṛtra, confiding (in Indra) in all matters, and knowing Indra to be a great friend, was not afraid of him. Moving (i.e. he moved) in the great auspicious forest. The forest was very charming and (full of) curious objects and crowded with bevvies of women. That glorious and noble Rambhā, of large eyes, who had resorted to the cool and very

auspicious shade of a sandal-tree, was seated on a swing and was playing dice with her friends. She (also) sang a melodious song, infatuating the entire universe. Vṛtra, having come there, saw that Rambhā, with charming, large eyes with his mind full of sexual desire.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Killing of Demon Vṛtra

Sūta said :

1. (Vṛtra thought:) ‘Who is this woman with charming eyes, singing in graceful modes? This attractive woman shines all round. She would delude people with full emotions.’

2-3. Seeing that Rambhā, of large eyes like lotuses, of plump breasts, with her body smeared with sandal, with her face resembling a lotus, (he thought) ‘Is she the abode of my sexual desire or is she charming and attractive Rati? Sent here only by Cupid, I shall certainly approach her, who is full of emotion, endowed with good form, disposed to sex, and of an extremely good disposition.’

4. Thus the demon, very much distressed, full of great anxiety, deluded by sexual desire, prompted (like this) for a long time, went there quickly, and with his mind afflicted said to her, whose eyes were charming:

5. “O beautiful lady, whom do you belong to? By whom are you sent (here)? Tell me what your most auspicious name is. By your extremely lustrous beauty I am infatuated. O you young lady, come under my influence.”

6-7. Thus addressed (by Vṛtra), the large-eyed one (said to him:) “O noble one, I am Rambhā; I have come to this excellent forest, Nandana, with my friends, to sport. But who are you? Why have you come to me?”.

Vṛtra said :

8-10. Listen, I shall tell you who I am that have come here, O young lady. O you auspicious one, I am Kaśyapa’s son, born

from fire. O you of a beautiful face, I am also the friend of Indra, the lord of gods. I am enjoying half the portion (i.e. the kingdom) of Indra. I am Vṛtra, O you respectable lady; how do you not recognise me, under whose control have come all the three worlds, O you of an excellent complexion?

11. O you beautiful lady, I have sought your shelter. Protect me from the (disturbance caused by) sexual desire. O you of large eyes, resort to me, who am, O dear one, distressed by sexual desire.

Rambhā said :

12. There is no doubt that today I shall submit myself to you; O hero, you should do whatever I tell you to do.

(He said:)

13a. "O you noble one, let it be so; I shall do all that (you will tell me to do)."

13b-14a. Having thus established a relation with her, the very powerful best demon enjoyed in that very meritorious forest.

14b-15. The great demon was very much stupefied by her singing, dancing, charming smile and sexual intercourse (with her). She said to that noble and best demon:

16a. "(Please) drink wine; (please) drink madhu-mādhavi (a kind of intoxicating drink)."

16b. He said to that Rambhā of large eyes and of a moon-like face:

17. "O good lady, I am a brāhmaṇa's son, who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. How shall I drink wine (an act) that is condemned?"

18-20. But that respectable lady Rambhā lovingly gave wine to him against his will. Due to civility for her he drank wine at that time. When he was extremely stupefied by the wine, and lost his senses, just then Indra struck him with his thunderbolt. Then that killer of Vṛtra (i.e. Indra) was tainted with such sins as killing a brāhmaṇa. Then the brāhmaṇas said: "O Indra, you have committed a sin.

21. That very powerful Vṛtra relied on (you) due to our words (i.e. because we told him). You have killed him through (falsifying that) reliance on you."

Indra said :

22-24. An enemy should always be killed by this or that means. You are angry because the wicked demon, the lord of even the three worlds, the killer of gods and brāhmaṇas, the enemy of sacrifices and righteousness is killed. Is it a sign of justice? O best brāhmaṇas, first think (properly), then you may be angry if you think my injustice (i.e. if you think I have done injustice).

25-26. The brāhmaṇas were thus addressed by Indra. The best ones were also admonished by all gods like Brahmā. When that demon, the enemy of righteousness was killed, they went to their respective abodes.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Origin of Maruts

Sūta said :

1-3. O best brāhmaṇas, that Diti, hearing that her son was killed, was afflicted with pain and tormented with grief due to (the death of) her son. She again said to that noble, best sage Kaśyapa: "O best brāhmaṇa, to kill that very wicked Indra, give me, O lord, a son having Brāhmaṇic lustre, strong and unbearable to all deities, if I am very dear to you, O my beloved husband."

Kaśyapa said :

4-5. Wicked god Indra, resorting to sinful ways, killed my very strong sons, Bala and Vṛtra. To kill him only, I shall give (you) one son. O you glorious one, be pure for one hundred years.

6-12. Speaking like this, that best meditating sage, put his hand on her head and he, with her only, went to a penance-grove (on) Meru. Always remaining pure, that respectable lady, living in the penance grove, practised penance for a son, O best brāhmaṇa. Then knowing about the assiduous effort of Diti, that

thousand-eyed god, O noble one, saw her weakness. The god of gods becoming (i.e. turning himself into a youth) twentyfive years old, and resembling a deity went, in the form of a brāhmaṇa, near her. The thousand-eyed righteous one saluted the mother, endowed with penance, and was (thus) addressed by her: "O best brāhmaṇa, who are you?" The thousand-eyed one (i.e. Indra) said to her: "O you beautiful, auspicious lady, I am your son, a brāhmaṇa, knowing the Vedas. I (also) know Dharma. I shall help (you) in your penance. There is no doubt about it." He served that respectable mother, endowed with penance.

13. She did not know him to be Indra, of wicked deeds, that had come there. She looked upon him as her lawful son, serving her everyday.

14-15. He would (first) shampoo the body of that respectable lady, and would then wash her feet. The virtuous one always gave Diti leaves, roots, bark-garments and the skin of an antelope. Pleased with his devotion, she, being delighted, said to him:

16. "O you blessed one, when a very meritorious son will be born (to me), and when Indra will be killed, you rule over the divine kingdom along with my son."

17-20. (Indra said:) "O you fortunate one, let it be so; it will be like that due to your favour." Indra desired to find her weak point only. For ninety-nine years he kept on looking for her weak point. (Once) without washing her feet, Diti entered into (i.e. slept on) her bed. She put her head on the border of the bed. She, with her hair loose and being very much perturbed, (tried) to get sleep. Indra entered her side, and with his thunderbolt of a sharp edge, cut the embryo lying in the womb, into seven pieces; it wept.

21-25. O best brāhmaṇas, the very lustrous Indra again and again said to that large embryo, weeping due to being in Indra's hands, "Do not weep". Again Indra cut that embryo born of (i.e. conceived by) Diti into seven parts. That king of gods cut each (portion of the embryo) that was weeping. In this way the Maruts of great prowess were born. Since they were (thus) addressed by Indra (*mā rodih*) they got this name. The Maruts, of great vigour and huge bodies, of sharp lustre and valour, were forty-nine (in number). They were known as Maruts and attended on Indra only.

26-28.* They illumine the great host of all beings. Hari, the lord of beings, successively gave in (various) habitations, kingdoms (to kings) preceded by Pṛthu. That supreme spirit Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), who pervades everything, who is the lord of the world, who is triumphant with penance, who has great lustre is all alone the lord of the beings.

29-32. O best brāhmaṇa, to him who knows correctly, belongs merit, and this immobile and mobile world, this creation of beings. He has no fear of again being born here (i.e. in this world); then wherefrom can he have fear in the next world? That man, who devoutly listens to this meritorious, auspicious (account of) the creation that removes all sins, is free from all sins. He is blessed, he is meritorious and is endowed with truth. He, who listens to (this account of) creation, gets the highest position. With his heart cleared of all sins, he goes to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Coronation of the Kings

Sūta said:

1-3a. That lord, Brahmā, the master of all worlds, having then consecrated on the entire kingdom (i.e. as the king of all the kingdom) that great lord, king Pṛthu, Vena's son, of large arms and a huge body, and resembling Indra, the lord of gods, and taking into account (other) kingdoms one by one, proceeded to give each one that kingdom, which he deserved.

3b-4. The highly intelligent one consecrated Soma (i.e. the Moon) as the king of the trees, brāhmaṇas, of planets and stars, of all pious acts, of religiously conducted sacrifices, of merits and of those of an auspicious lustre.

5-8a. O best brāhmaṇa, having consecrated Varuṇa (as the chief) among the waters and of places sacred to deities and of gems, and Vaiśravaṇa as the king of all other Yakṣas, the grandsire appointed Viṣṇu on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of

*The relevance of these lines is not clear. They seem to have been inserted in wrong place. (Ed.)

Ādityas, for the good of the people, O you very intelligent one. He appointed the capable Dakṣa, conversant with all religious practices, the chief of the attendants of the lord of the beings, as the chief of all auspicious objects.

8b-15. He appointed Prahrāda, knowing all religious practices, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the sons of Diti and Danu. He consecrated Yama, the son of Vivasvān, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the dead ancestors, and (appointed) Śiva, having the trident in his hand, (as the king) of the Yakṣas, demons, ghosts, goblins, reptiles, of all female meditating sages, of magnanimous vampires, and also of all skeletons and spirits, and of all kings. (He appointed) the great mountain Himālaya (as the king) of all mountains. The lord of gods appointed the auspicious ocean, the best sacred place of all, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of rivers, lakes, small wells, of pools, and wells and other divine (sacred places). Then Brahmā, the lord of gods, consecrated Citraratha on the auspicious kingdom (i.e. as the king) of all the Gandharvas. Then the four-faced god (i.e. Brahmā) consecrated Vāsuki on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the snakes (nāgas) of auspicious vigour and Takṣaka (as the king) of the serpents (sarpas).

16-18. In the same way, he consecrated Airāvaṇa on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the elephants, and Uccaiṣravas (as the king of) all the horses, and (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā (as the king) of all the birds. He then appointed the lion on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of all the beasts. The lord of beings consecrated an excellent bull (as the chief) of the bulls. The grandsire (appointed) the Indian fig-tree (as the king) of trees.

19. In this way the grandsire Brahmā, the best one, having founded all the kingdoms, appointed the regents of the quarters.

20-27. The best one consecrated Sudhanvan, Vairāja's son, as the regent —as the king— in (i.e. of) the eastern quarter. He consecrated the noble Śaṅkhapada, son of Kardama Prajāpati, as the king of the southern quarter. Similarly Brahmā, the lord of beings, consecrated the son of Varuṇa Prajāpati, named Puṣkara, in (i.e. as the chief of) the western quarter. In (i.e. as the regent of) the northern quarter, Brahmā consecrated Nalakūbara. Thus he consecrated the very powerful regents of the quarters, by whom even now the earth with the seven islands and (many)

cities, is righteously protected according to (i.e. in) the regions (assigned to them). That illustrious Pṛthu also was consecrated as the king in accordance with the rites as seen (i.e. mentioned) in the Vedas and with all great sacrifices like the Rājasūya, in the pious period of Manu¹ called Cākṣuṣa, which has gone by, which had great splendour and which led to the good of gods and the righteous, O you illustrious one. Then he gave the kingdom to Vaisasvata Manu.

28-31. O best among the brāhmaṇas, if you desire to listen carefully, I shall also tell you the minute details about the magnanimous Pṛthu. This is the basis (*adhiṣṭhāna?*) (which is) said to be very meritorious. This (alone) is always determined (i.e. definitely told) in all the Purāṇas. That man, who, devoutly and with rapt attention, listens to this (account), which is meritorious, which leads to fame, gives long life, and an auspicious stay in heaven, which is blessed, pure, causing longevity, which bestows sons and prosperity, enjoys the fruit of (performing) the horse-sacrifice. There is no doubt about this.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

The Story of Pṛthu

The sages said:

1-7. O noble one, (please) tell us in detail (about) the birth of that magnanimous Pṛthu. We desire to hear it. (Tell us) how that noble king formerly milked this cow (i.e. the earth); how gods, manes, sages knowing the truth, demons, serpents, Yakṣas, trees and mountains, goblins and Gandharvas, brāhmaṇas doing auspicious acts, and how other magnanimous ones (did so). O you highly intelligent one, tell us especially how they held the pot of milk and the manner in which she was milked.

1. Manvantara—the period or age of Manu. This period comprises ~~4320000~~ human years or 1/14th day of Brahmā, the fourteen Manvantaras making up one whole day.

O Sūta's son, tell us why formerly the very meritorious and angry sages churned the hand even of that noble king Vena. This is a strange account which destroys all sins. We are desirous of hearing it; O noble one, (it is so interesting that) we are not at all content with (i.e. even though we hear) it.

Sūta said :

8-10a. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you in detail about king Pṛthu's—Vena's son's—birth, power, his wife, also about the entire life of the intelligent (king). O noble and best brāhmaṇas, desire to hear it (i.e. listen to it).

10b-11. This account should not be narrated to one who is not a devotee, to one who is faithless, to a cheat, to a great fool, to one who is greatly deluded, to a bad disciple, to one who is void of faith, to one who is untruthful; do not narrate it to one who destroys everything.

12-13. He who recites it in a different way, goes to hell. You are full of devotion, and are intent upon behaving truthfully. In front of you (i.e. to you) I shall fully narrate the whole account that removes sins. O best brāhmaṇas, (please) listen.

14-17. O excellent brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the secret, which leads (one) to heaven, to fame, which causes longevity, which is excellent, which is accepted by the Vedas and which is told by the sages. He, who, after saluting the brāhmaṇas, always narrates in detail this (account) of Pṛthu, the son of Vena, would never lament over what he has done and not done. The sin earned by him during seven births, perishes by just hearing it. A brāhmaṇa would know (the meaning of) the Vedas, a kṣatriya would be victorious, a vaiśya would be prosperous with wealth, and a śūdra would get happiness. One thus gets the fruit by reciting or listening to it.

18-26a. The biography of Pṛthu is pure and it removes sins. Formerly there was a Prajāpati, Aṅga by name, born in Atri's family and a lord resembling Atri. He preserved piety, was very intelligent and well-versed in the meaning of the Vedas and (other) branches of knowledge. His son was Vena, a lord of beings. Abandoning righteousness, he always proceeded (in all his acts). Mṛtyu had a highly virtuous daughter by name

Sunīthā. The noble Aṅga married that Sunīthā. On her he begot Vena, the destroyer of righteousness. Due to the blemishes of his maternal grandfather, Vena the son of the daughter of Kāla, gave up his own way of righteousness and became fondly attached to wickedness. Due to (sexual) desire, greed and infatuation he practised sin only. The lord of men gave up the virtuous practices as told in the Vedas, and being deluded by pride and jealousy, behaved sinfully. People at that time lived without Vedic studies. When he was the lord of the subjects, they were without the Vedic studies and Vāṣaṭkāra (i.e. they did not study the Vedas and did not offer oblations). Deities did not drink Soma that proceeded and was offered at sacrifices.

26b-30. The wicked one always said to the brāhmaṇas: "You should not study (the Vedas); you should not make offering into the fire. You should not give gifts; you should not perform sacrifices and should not make offerings into fire." When destruction was imminent, this was the declaration of that king. Again and again (he told): "Sacrifices are to be offered to me. I am the sacrificer as well as the sacrifice." (He) also (told them:) "Sacrifices should be offered to me; offerings should be made to me." Thus Vena always spoke. (He also said:) "I am the eternal Viṣṇu. I am Brahmā, I am Rudra, I am Indra. I am the wind. I am the enjoyer. I am the oblations offered to the deities and manes. There is no doubt about this."

31. Then all the very powerful sages, who got angry, got together and said to the king of a wicked mind:

The sages said :

32. The king is surely the lord of the earth (and) he always protects the subjects. The emperor is the image of righteousness, therefore he should protect it.

33. We are entering upon an initiation for a twelve-year sacrifice. Do not play a mischief with the sacrifice. Righteousness is the way of the good.

34. O great king, practise righteousness; practise truthfulness and merit. You have made an agreement that you would protect the subjects.

35. Vena, of a wicked mind, laughed and said this nonsensical thing to the sages, who were speaking like that:

Vena said :

36. Who else (but me) is the creator of Dharma (i.e. religious practices)? Whom else should I listen to? Who, on the earth, is like me in (point of) learning, power, penance or truth?

37. I am the source of all beings and especially of religious practices. You, who are confounded and ignorant do not know me.

38. If I desire, I would burn the earth or would inundate it with water. I would block up the heaven and the earth. There should be no discussion about this matter.

39-45a. O king, when they could not dissuade Vena from his infatuation and pride, the angry great sages, forcibly seized him with rage, and churned the left thigh of his, who was trembling with anger. The magnanimous ones saw (there a being) that was possessed of (=like) a heap of black collyrium, that was very short and strange, that had a long face and deformed eyes, that was bright due to an armour, that had a protruded belly and broad ears, that was very much frightened and that was a gamester. They then said to him, "sit down". Hearing those words of theirs, he, being distressed with fear, sat down. His race was settled in mountains and forests. (They are) the Niṣādas, the Kirātas, the Bhillas, the Nāhalakas, the Bhramaras, the Pulindas and those that belong to the other Mleccha species. From that part (i.e. left thigh) all those sinful ones were produced.

45b-52a. Then all the sages, with their minds pleased, (found) Vena, the best king, to be without a blemish. They churned the right hand of that magnanimous one only. When his hand was (thus) churned, sweat was produced. The sages again churned the right hand only. From that excellent hand a man was produced. He resembled twelve suns; the complexion of his body was like heated gold; he was covered with (i.e. he had put on) divine flowers; his body was shining due to divine ornaments; he had besmeared divine sandal on his body. He shone with a crown resembling the sun in colour (i.e. brilliance) and with a pair of ear-rings. His body was huge, his arms were large, he was matchless in form; the great lord had held a sword and arrows, a bow and had put on an armour. The highly intelligent one was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, and was decorated with all ornaments, and with a lustrous form and had a

good complexion. The son of Vena was (i.e. shone) on the earth as Indra in heaven.

52b-53. When that magnanimous one was born, gods and spotless sages celebrated a festival to (i.e. in honour of) the son of Vena. With his body he was evidently bright like fire.

54-55. When, holding the first Ājagava bow (i.e. Śiva's bow) which was excellent, and divine arrows and a very bright armour for protection, the magnanimous and noble hero Pṛthu, was born, all the beings were happy, O best brāhmaṇa.

56-59. To consecrate him (with their water), all the best brāhmaṇas proceeded to all sacred places and various auspicious (places of) water. O best brāhmaṇa, gods led by the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā), various beings, the immobile and the mobile consecrated that king, the great hero, the protector of the subjects, viz. Pṛthu. That son of Vena, noble and brave, being approached by the mobile and the immobile, by all gods and brāhmaṇas, was consecrated by them as the emperor of (all) kings.

60-63. His father had never pleased his subjects; (but) pleased by him, they were very happy. The term Rājan (i.e. king) came about (i.e. was coined) because of the hero's pleasing (his subjects). Due to the fear of that magnanimous one, the entire water of the ocean stood still when the great hero approached the ocean. Cutting off difficult passage, the mountains offered easy passage. All those mountains never insulted his flag. Crops grew in unploughed land, and everywhere cows gave milk as desired (by those who milked them).

64. Rain(-fall) was as (much as) desired. All brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and others performed Vedic sacrifices and celebrated great festivals.

65. When that king was ruling, all trees bore fruits as desired, there was no famine, no disease and no untimely death of men.

66. When that un-assailable, noble king of kings was ruling, all people, intent on following religious practices, lived happily.

67. At this time only, (i.e. from) the auspicious sacrifice of the grandsire, on a grand, pleasing day, Sūta was born of Sūti.

68. In (i.e. from) the same sacrifice the wise Māgadha was also born. By the great sages the two were invited there for praising Pṛthu.

69. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall narrate the characteristics of Sūta: He is endowed with a lock of hair on the crown of his head and a sacred thread; he is devoted to Vedic studies.

70-73. He knows the meaning of all the sacred books; he maintains the sacred fire; he is endowed with (i.e. he gives) gifts and study; he is intent upon Brāhmaṇic practices. He is always engaged in worshipping gods and brāhmaṇas. He is a sacrificer and would perform sacrifices to the accompaniment of Vedic hymns. He was always intent upon Brāhmaṇic practices and always had friendship with brāhmaṇas. Māgadha was born like this (but was) without studies. All those bandins and cāraṇas should be known to be (i.e. were) magnanimous and were without Brāhmaṇic practices, and predominated as bards.

74-78a. Both the skilful Sūta and Māgadha were created for eulogising; all the sages said to them: "Praise this king; and also the deeds worthy of him, and (narrate) also how the king is." The Bandin (i.e. the Sūta) and Māgadha said to all the sages: "We two shall please all the gods and sages with our deeds; but we do not know his deeds, and also his characteristics and his glory. O best brāhmaṇas, we do not know that deed of this magnanimous (king) with which (i.e. taking which into consideration) we would praise him. This best king, whose merits are not known (to us), would be praised with (i.e. with reference to) his future auspicious qualities."

78b-86. All the sages told (them) the deeds which that very glorious Pṛthu performed, (and also) all the divine virtues of that magnanimous one. (The sages said:) "He (will be) truthful, endowed with knowledge, intelligent and of well-known valour; he (will) always (be) brave, (will) appreciate merits, (will be) meritorious, truth-speaking, and the best performer of sacrifices. He (will) speak pleasing words, (will) speak the truth, (will) have grains and wealth, (will) know and appreciate (others') merits, (will) know what is right, and (will) love truth, (will) be omnipresent, omniscient, friendly to brāhmaṇas, knower of the Vedas, and very intelligent. He (will) be wise, (will) have a sweet voice, and (will) master the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He will support and protect (his) subjects; he (will) be victorious on the battle-field. The best king will perform sacrifices like the Rājasūya, and is the only one on the earth who is endowed with

all virtuous practices. The magnanimous one will possess these qualities.” The two, viz. Sūta and Māgadha, were appointed by the sages to sing the praises of that magnanimous one with (reference to) the future qualities (i.e. qualities he will possess). O highly intelligent one, since then people are delighted with eulogies, and hereafter also the donors will be pleased with excellent praises.

87-93. Since then, O best brāhmaṇas, blessings are employed (i.e. included) in eulogies; and they (who sing praises) get excellent (i.e. abundant) wealth. The noble Pṛthu, out of graciousness, gave Sūta, Māgadha and Bandin, the prosperous and excellent country, viz. Tailaṅga, and also the Haihaya country. Having established a city named after himself on the bank of the Revā, he, performing sacrifices, formerly gave (gifts) to brāhmaṇas, O best brāhmaṇa. All the subjects, and also the sages of pure penance saw the best man, who was omniscient, gave all gifts, and whose strength lay in piety. The meritorious ones said to one another: “He will give livelihood to gods and especially to us. He will protect the subjects and maintain them.” O you very wise ones, it is said that formerly this earth became stable after the seed sown (in it) was eaten by the created beings for living.

94-98. Then the subjects ran to Pṛthu. Having heard (i.e. he heard) the words of the sages, ‘Give us a good livelihood’. The Earth, having consumed all (kinds of) food, became very stable. The best king, seeing the very great fear of the subjects, and also by the word of the great sages, took his bow with an arrow, and the angry king speedily ran to the Earth. The Earth, through his fear, took up the form of an elephant, and concealing herself, moved through forests and inaccessible places. The very wise one did (i.e. could) not see (her in) the form of an elephant.

99-101. Then the king ran after her in the form of an elephant. Being struck by him with sharp arrows, she, taking up a lion’s form, became wholly occupied in running. The king, observing that (Earth in a) lion’s form, ran towards (i.e. after) her. That very wise one, who was extremely angry, and whose charming eyes were red due to anger, struck the Earth with whetted and sharp excellent arrows.

102. Struck with the arrows, she (i.e. the Earth) was

afflicted and alarmed. Taking up the form of a buffalo she became intent on fleeing.

103-120. The archer (i.e. Pṛthu), with an arrow in his hand, ran fast (after her). O you best brāhmaṇas, she became (i.e. turned herself into) a cow and verily went to heaven. She sought the shelter of Brahmā and of the noble Viṣṇu also. She did (i.e. could) not secure the refuge of gods like Rudra. Not getting a great (i.e. good) protection, she regarded Vena's son only (as her refuge). Afflicted with (the injury caused by) the stroke of the arrow, she came to his side (i.e. to him). With her hands joined in humble entreaty, she spoke (these) words to Pṛthu. She said to the king: "O king of kings, protect me, protect me. O magnanimous one, I am mother Earth, the support of all. O king, when I am killed, (all) the seven worlds are destroyed. I am always to be worshipped by the three worlds, with the palms of their hands joined in obeisance." She also said to the king: "O king, a woman is always exempt from death (i.e. is never to be killed). The best brāhmaṇas have considered killing a woman to be a great sin. The best brāhmaṇas have also considered killing a cow to be a great sin. O great king how will you support the subjects without me? O king, when I am stable, then (only) the mobile and immobile worlds become stable. These mobile and immobile worlds will perish without me. When I perish, the beings will perish. O king, how will you support your subjects without me? The people are steady on me, the world is supported by me. There is no doubt that when I perish all the beings will perish. If you desire bliss, then (please) do not destroy me. O lord of beings, O king, listen to my words. Undertakings become highly successful through efforts, O noble one. Properly consider that effort by which you will support (your) subjects. O you very wise great king, by destroying me, i.e. without me, how will you always support, maintain, nourish and hold in your possession these subjects? Control your anger. I shall be full of food and will support these subjects. As a woman I am not to be killed; (if you kill me) you will have to atone (for having killed me). They say that a female, even of the lower species, is not to be killed. Considering in this way, you should not give up your proper conduct." Thus the earth spoke many words

to the king: “O great king, give up this terrible wrath. O king of kings, if you are pleased then (only) I shall be happy.”

121. Thus addressed by her, king Pṛthu, the lord of subjects and the son of Vena, said (these words) to the noble Earth, O best brāhmaṇas:

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The Story of Pṛthu (Contd.)

Pṛthu said :

1-13a. If a very sinful one is killed, O you of sinful conduct, good people rich in merit live happily. Therefore one that is most sinful and of a wicked mind should be killed. Now you have suppressed all seeds by devouring them. Where will you go by being stable after having destroyed the beings? When a sinful one of a bad conduct is killed, the good live happily. Therefore sin should be destroyed; this is the truth; there is no doubt about it. That from which merit proceeds, should be carefully preserved. You have committed a great sin causing the destruction of the beings. He who for himself or for someone else kills one who torments the world, does not incur sin. O auspicious Earth, when many people become happy by a wicked one having been killed, there is neither a (major) sin nor a minor sin. There is no doubt that (i.e. certainly) I shall kill you. If, O Earth, for the good of this world (i.e. these beings), you do not act according to these meritorious and good words of (i.e. uttered by) me, I shall kill you with sharp arrows, if you are averse to my words. There is no doubt that I shall sustain, by means of my lustre and merit, the virtuous beings living in the three worlds. Accepting my meritorious rule, and obeying my order always rejuvenate these beings, O Earth. If, O you good one, you today obey this order of mine, then I shall be pleased with you, and will always protect you, and also other best kings (will protect you); there is no doubt about this.

13b-14a. That Earth, in the form of a cow, with her body adorned (i.e. covered) with arrows, said these (words) to the highly intelligent Pr̥thu, Vena's son, who was the support of righteousness:

The Earth said :

14b-18. O great king, I shall carry out your order, full of truth and merit, for the well-being of the beings; there is no doubt about it. O best king, enterprises and meritorious undertakings become successful by means of exertion and resourcefulness. O king of kings, find out a means by which you would be upright. Support all the subjects in such a way that you make all of them prosperous. Your stone-like (i.e. hard) and sharp arrows have stuck to my body. O king, you yourself extract them. They very much prick me. Make me (turned into) such (a shape) that the water would remain on me.

Sūta said :

19-24. Extracting those big and stone(-like arrows) of various forms with the end of his bow, he made the Earth even. Since then, O best brāhmaṇas, those stones grew in size. The son of king Vena, with pleased mind, having extracted his arrows from her body, made even the ditches and the caves with the strokes of his arrows. Thus, he, prospering with merit, made even the entire Earth. Having made her even, and having thought repeatedly, the noble one made Svāyambhuva Manu as the first calf. O best ones, during the Manu-periods that had passed, the Earth had become uneven; and there was no path anywhere, O best brāhmaṇas, even and uneven portions were naturally there.

25-32a. When the first period of Cākṣuṣa Manu arrived, and when the first creation came up, and when the surface of the Earth was uneven, the boundries of villages, cities, towns, countries, and fields that were seized (*kṣetrapannānam?*) were not noticed. There was no agriculture, no trade and no cow-keeping. No one told lies; there was neither greed nor jealousy. It is said that nobody ever entertained pride or committed sin. O best brāhmaṇa, when the Vaivasvata period came, the beings were

born even before the birth of Vena's son. All these beings desired to have an abode. All the beings, through their merit, lived at some places on the ground, or on a mountain, or on the banks of rivers, or in bowers, or at all sacred places, or on the sea-beaches. Fruits, roots and honey was their food. O best brāhmaṇas, (they got) their food with great difficulty.

32b-43. Having seen the misery of the beings, the king Pṛthu, Vena's son, made Svāyambhuva Manu the calf. O you highly intelligent one, he used his own hand as the vessel. That Pṛthu, the tiger (i.e. the best) among men, then milked the Earth, (and) the milk (was) all the crops and all food of a good quality. Those beings satisfied by means of that auspicious food, resembling nectar, all gods and others (like) the manes. Those beings lived happily by the favour of that son of Vena. O best brāhmaṇas, all the virtuous beings, after offering food first to gods, then to brāhmaṇas and especially to guests, enjoyed food. Some offered oblations in sacrifices, and pleased Viṣṇu only, the lord of gods with the same food. The deities also were satisfied (with the food). Rain sent by Viṣṇu showered. By virtue of that great auspicious trees sprang up. All kinds of crops (grew when) Pṛthu, Vena's son, was the king. Due to that food even now all beings live. The sages also, coming together, milked this Earth. It was again milked by the very blessed sages and the truthful gods. Soma was the calf and the lord of gods himself was the milkman. Energy was the milk, resembling water, by which the gods live. All the beings live due to their truthfulness and merit. They follow truth and merit. (Thus) the Earth was milked by the sages.

44-49. Now I shall narrate how formerly the Earth was milked by the manes and who was made the calf. Making a silver pot and svadhā, with nectar, the milk, and making Yama the calf, Antaka (i.e. Yama) himself became the milkman. O best brāhmaṇas, then the snakes (Nāga) and serpents (Sarpa) milked (the Earth) and (made) Takṣaka the calf. Taking a vessel made of gourd (they collected) the milk i.e. the poison (in it). The valorous Dhṛtarāṣṭra was the milkman for the snakes. O best brāhmaṇas, the matchless serpents and snakes live by that. O best brāhmaṇas, the snakes and the fearful serpents also live by that very poignant poison of a fierce nature,

The fierce, huge-bodied and very powerful ones live by that only. They eat it, move with it; that is their power and valour.

50-59. O best brāhmaṇas, now I shall narrate to you as to how all the demons and the goblins milked the Earth, making, at that time, an iron-pot, and making the milk of the nature of illusion, useful for all purposes, resembling food and destroying all the enemies. The calf of the demons was that powerful Virocana. The priest was Dvimūrdhan, and the very mighty Madhu was the milkman. Due to that illusion, the very strong, very wise, huge-bodied and very lustrous and valorous demons thrive. That is their power; that is their manliness; the demons live by that. O best brāhmaṇas, even now they, of limited intellect, live with that illusion. That is their strength. In the same way the Yakṣas milked the good Earth, the support of all. O best brāhmaṇas, thus we have heard. Formerly the noble ones (milked the Earth) in the former kalpa (when) the milk was of the nature of obscurity (*antardhānamayam?*). The very intelligent Vaiśravaṇa was made the calf; and the milkman of her (i.e. the Earth) was the meritorious, wisest and best among the intelligent viz. Rajatanābha, father of the Yakṣa Maṇibhadra. He was omniscient; he knew all the ways of good conduct; he was the powerful son of the king of Yakṣas; he had eight arms, two heads, and had great lustre and had very great (i.e. severe) penance (to his credit). O best brāhmaṇas, the Yakṣas always stood by him.

60-82. This Earth was again milked by the very strong demons; in the same way she (was milked) by the eager goblins who had consumed water. A human skull—a vessel that came up from a dead body—and one made of iron (were the pots used by them). They of strong anger and valor wanted to enjoy (i.e. to have) good progeny. The very strong Rajatanābha was their milkman, the calf was (one) by name Sumālin, and blood was the milk. The demons, evil spirits, and powerful goblins, Yakṣas and fearful groups of ghosts live by that (milk). Gandharvas and the celestial nymphs, making the learned Citraratha the calf, milked the Earth again. They milked her (milk) full of the music of Gandharvas. O best brāhmaṇas, the very intelligent and most meritorious Gandharva, Suruci, was their milkman. The noble ones milked pure songs as the good milk at that time. The Gandharvas and others (i.e.) the celestial nymphs also live

by that. The auspicious mountains also milked this Earth. They (obtained as milk) various gems and herbs like nectar. The noble Himālaya (mountain) was made the calf. Meru was the milkman, and the pot was made from a big rock. All the very powerful mountains grew (strong) by (drinking) that milk. The great auspicious trees like Kalpa (i.e. the desire-yielding) tree again milked (the Earth). They had brought the pot made of Palāśa tree with its sprouts cut off and burnt. At that time Śāla, of a flowery body milked (the Earth) and Plakṣa was the calf. This (Earth) the supporter of all and the giver of everything was also milked by Guhyakas, Cāraṇas, Siddhas and groups of the Vidyādharas. Whatever the worlds desired with (i.e. by employing) particular vessels and calves, all that she just gave to them, (and) like this (she also gave) them milk with a good mind. This Earth is the supporter, the creator; she is the greatest. She is a cow yielding all desires and is adorned with the auspicious ones. She is the eldest, she is the prop. She is the creation and the beings. She is purifying, she gives merit, she is virtuous, she causes all the crops to grow, she is the supporter and the origin of all the mobile and the immobile. This (Earth) is great fortune, is learning, and is always full of everything. She yields (i.e. satisfies) all desires; she is a cow yielding milk; she causes all seeds to grow. This (Earth), the supporter of all the human race, is the mother (i.e. the origin) of all righteous deeds. She is the light and the form of even the five elements. She was bounded by the ocean and was known as *Medini*. The entire Earth was submerged with (i.e. in) the marrow (*medas*) of Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Therefore she is called *Medini* by the expounders of the Vedas. Then, O best ones, due to the arrival of Pṛthu, the wise son of Vena, she became his daughter, and is called *Pṛthivi*. O best brāhmaṇas, that king protected this Earth that is the support of villages and houses, and that is crowned with cities and towns, that has crops and mines, that is bulky and full of all crops, O brāhmaṇas. Thus this goddess Earth is full of all people; (her) prowess like this is mentioned in the Purāṇas.

83-91. The noble Pṛthu, Vena's son, was noted for all (good) deeds. He was like Viṣṇu, like Brahmā (or) like the ancient Rudra. The three gods deserve to be saluted by the expounders of the Vedas led by gods. The best king who is the

founder of the castes and the stages of life, and who supports all the worlds, deserves to be saluted by brāhmaṇas and sages. Also the first, valorous king Pṛthu, Vena's son, deserves to be saluted by noble kings, and by those desiring to be kings. (Pṛthu) who has given livelihood to kings deserves to be saluted by warriors who desire (to master) archery and who always desire victory. O best brāhmaṇas, in this way I have narrated to you the particular vessels, the special properties of calves and of the milkmen in particular. I have also properly told you the speciality of the milk as desired by the king. O best brāhmaṇas, he, who listens to the account of Pṛthu, Vena's son, which is blessed, which leads to glory and good health, which is meritorious and which destroys sins, has (the credit of) a daily bath in the Bhāgīrathī. He, with all his sins purified, goes to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Sulobha and Śapharahā; Suśaṅkha and Sunithā

The sages said :

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, what was the course of conduct of that sinful Vena, whom you mentioned as behaving sinfully, and what fruit did he get ? O you wisest and very intelligent one, tell us in detail the account of that Vena (as it) formerly (took place).

Sūta said :

3-9a. I shall properly tell you the story of that Vena and also the very meritorious account of his noble son, as I have heard it before. When that magnanimous son, Pṛthu, was born, the king (Vena) became spotless and again became religious. All the major sins earned (i.e. committed) by mean persons vanish with their close contact with the sacred places. There is no doubt that merit alone is produced in the company of the good; and sin alone is produced in the company of sinners. Sin would spread around by talking with, seeing, touching, sitting and taking food with and by the company of sinners. In the same way merit alone

would spread in the company of the meritorious. The sinners are purified by their contact with great sacred place (only) and in no other way; and ultimately, with all their sins completely washed, they obtain a holy status.

The sages said :

9b-16a. O best brāhmaṇa, how do the sinners reach the highest attainment ? Tell that in detail ; faith is produced (in us).

Sūta said :

There were very sinful hunters, slaves and fishermen, who remained in the water of Revā, Yamunā and Gaṅgā. By chance they knowingly or unknowingly bathed and sported in the water of the great river and obtained the highest position. Casting off their slavish life—the heap of sins—they went to the highest position. Due to their contact with the holy water they all crossed (the ocean of mundane existence). (This was) due to (their) contact with the great river, and not due to contact with other rivers, O best ones. By the contact of a highly meritorious person, and also by seeing and touching him, the sin of even the sinners perishes. No doubt should be raised about this. O brāhmaṇas, in this matter an account, destroying sins, is heard. I shall today tell you that (account) giving great merit.

16b-24a. In a great forest there was a deer-hunter named Sulobha. Greedy of tasting flesh, he everyday killed deer with (the help of) dogs, and with traps and snares. Once that very wicked one, holding a bow and arrows in his hand, being surrounded by dogs went to Vindhya-forest. He killed many beasts, deer and pigs that were frightened. A man, the killer (i.e. hunter) of śaphara (a kind of small glittering fish), resorting to the bank of Revā, and killing many śaphara, came out of the water. Then a female deer, afflicted with fear of that deer-hunter Lobha, and intent upon saving her life, distressed, frightened and with her mind unsettled, fleeing hurriedly, resorted (i.e. came) to the bank of Revā. She that was hurt by the stroke of an arrow, was attacked by dogs. Sulobha, the deer-hunter, pursued her with the speed of wind, and the female deer ran before him. The śaphara-killer, with an arrow in his hand and ready (to strike), bent his bow quickly and checked the female deer.

24b-30. Just then the hunter called Lobha came there with his dogs. "Do not kill her, she is my (game), she has come in the range of my hunt." Hearing (these) words of him (i.e. of Lobha), the wicked and very powerful fish-killer, greedy of flesh, discharged an arrow directed towards her. Struck by the deer-hunter with an arrow, the female deer who was (thus) struck with the two arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the two wicked ones, died there. (Trying) to run away in a hurry, she, being attacked by the dogs, fell from the peak into the Revā-pool that destroyed sins. The dogs also hurrying (to attack her) fell into the sacred pool. Overpowered with anger, the deer-hunter (i.e. Lobha) said to the fisherman: "O wicked one, this female deer is my (game); why did you strike her with arrows?" Then the fish-killer too said to the deer-hunter: "She is my (game); there is no doubt; why are you talking (like this), O proud one (i.e. proudly)."

31-35. Then the two lucky ones, fighting with each other through anger and greed, fell into the sacred water (of Revā). At that time the great parvan, giving a great religious merit and leading to an (excellent) position, viz. Amāvāsyā (i.e. the new-moon day) arrived. All of them, bereft of muttering prayers and meditation and of truthfulness fell (into the water) during the period of the parvan, O best one. On account of the bath of the holy place, the female deer, a dog and the hunter, being freed from all sins, attained the highest position (i.e. went to heaven). O best brāhmaṇa, due to the power of the sacred place and the company of the good, the sin of the sinners would be destroyed as fire would burn fuel.

Sūta said :

36-38. By the company of the noble sages, by talking with them, by seeing and touching them, by the company of the good, formerly the sin of king Vena perished. The sin of sinners perishes by the contact of very great merit (i.e. very meritorious persons). Sin alone would spread by the company of very great sinners. Vena was stained with the sin of his maternal grandfather.

The sages said:

39-44a. Tell us in detail what the fault of the maternal

grandfather was. He is death, he is Kāla (i.e. god of death) and is Yama and Dharma. He does not harm anyone. He is well-settled in his position. All mobile and immobile worlds, influenced by their own deeds, live and die due to their own deeds, and also enjoy due to their own deeds. On the ripening of their deeds, the sinners meet the fierce one. O Sūta, it is this very meritorious Yama, who, everyday would employ or punish (beings), according to their deeds, in all the hells. The pious-minded and righteous one employs (beings) in all very meritorious deeds. No fault of his is observed (in this). Due to what fault of Mr̥tyu (i.e. Yama) was that sinful Vena born ?

Sūta said :

44b-56. That Mr̥tyu remains in the form of Kāla (i.e. god of death) as the ruler of the wicked-minded. He reflects upon their deeds. He would destroy a person, who has (done) a wicked deed, with (i.e. as a result of) that deed. Knowing his sin this Yama takes him. A righteous soul, through his merit would obtain (i.e. go to) heaven. Mr̥tyu alone, through his good messengers, unites all of them (with proper reward). He unites the blessed souls with great happiness, auspicious songs and gifts, and enjoyments. That Mr̥tyu, being angry would frighten them only with various kinds of afflictions and distresses and beat them with terrible (clubs) of wood. O noble one, his function remains in (i.e. with reference to) the deeds, and that is due to one's greed of merit. A daughter by name Sunīthā was born to that magnanimous one. Always sporting and observing the deeds of her father, she advised him who observed the good and bad deeds of the subjects. That glorious daughter of him, Sunīthā by name, sporting and surrounded by (her) friends came to a forest. There she saw an excellent distinguished son of a Gandharva, by name Suśaṅkha, with all his body charming, practising penance, and meditating on Sarasvatī, for obtaining great competence in the science of music, in spite of (i.e. even though there was) a loud and confused sound of music. Everyday she created an obstruction in his (penance and meditation). Everyday Suśaṅkha, saying "Go, go (away)", pardoned her. Though thus sent away (i.e. asked to go away) she would still cause harm to him. (Thus)

told by him, she, too, getting angry, struck him, who remained in (i.e. practising) penance.

57-62. Then that Suśaṅkha angry and overcome with wrath said to her: “O wicked, sinful one, why did you obstruct (my penance)? Great people do not beat (back) a wicked person when beaten (by him). Though abused they do not get angry. This is the restraint (brought about) by righteousness. O wicked one, you struck me who am faultless and endowed with penance.” Speaking this to that sinful Sunīthā, that pious one, ceased (to speak) and knowing her to be a female, kept himself away from anger. Then she, through sinful delusion and immaturity, spoke to that noble Suśaṅkha, who remained in (i.e. was practising) penance: “My father himself is the destroyer of the residents of the three worlds; he would always destroy the bad ones and would protect the truthful ones. There would be no fault on his part, he would behave very meritoriously.”

63-66. Saying so, she went to her father and said to him: “O father, in the forest I struck a Gandharva’s son, who was always practising penance in a secluded place and was free from desire and anger. He, the righteous one, endowed with anger and love said to me: ‘One should not beat him who beats one, nor should one make him weep, who makes one weep.’ Thus, O father, he spoke to me. Tell me the reason (for this).” O best brāhmaṇas, that righteous Mṛtyu, thus addressed, did not say anything to Sunīthā, in reply to (her) question.

67-71. She again came to the forest where that Suśaṅkha remained. Through wickedness she struck him, the best among those who practised penance, with the blows of her hands. O brāhmaṇas, the daughter of Mṛtyu beat Suśaṅkha. Then the highly lustrous one got angry and cursed her of a slender waist: “O wicked one, since you beat me, who am faultless and who remained in this forest, therefore I shall give (you) a curse. Listen, O wicked one, when, with your husband, you will lead the life of a housewife a son, full of evil conduct, censurer of gods and brāhmaṇas, engrossed in all sinful acts, will be (conceived) in your womb.” Cursing like this, he too left, and resorted to penance only.

72-75. When that glorious one had left, Sunīthā went home. With her mind burning (with anger) she told her noble father as

(to how) she was then cursed by the son of a Gandharva. Mr̥tyu listened to all that, and said: “Why did you harm him, who was practising penance and who was innocent? O (my) daughter, you have not done a proper thing in beating a truthful person.” Saying so, the righteous Mr̥tyu, reflecting upon what she had told him, became extremely pained.

Sūta said :

76-85. O brāhmaṇas, once the brāhmaṇa, the very lustrous and vigorous son of Atri went to the Nandana (garden); there he saw Indra, Pākaśāsana. He saw Indra, who was accompanied by hosts of celestial nymphs and Gandharvas and Kinnaras, who was (i.e. whose praise was) being sung by singers with seven very melodious notes, who was being fanned by beautiful women walking like swans with fragrant fans, and with chowries, who, the thousand-eyed one, shone with an umbrella (white) in colour like swans and (round) like the disc of the moon, who was adorned with all ornaments, who was engaged in sexual sports, who possessed an unlimited prowess. By his side he saw the blessed virtuous Paulomī, charming and auspicious, glorious with beauty, lustre and penance, shining with good fortune and chastity. With her that Indra enjoyed in the Nandana forest. Seeing his sport, the best brāhmaṇa Aṅga (thought): ‘Lucky is the king of gods who is surrounded by such (beings). Oh, (great) is the power of his penance, due to which he has obtained such a great (i.e. high) position. When I shall have such a son, the great support of all the worlds, I shall obtain great happiness. There is no doubt about it.’ Thus engaged in thinking he quickly came home.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

The Account of Suvrata

Sūta said

1-5. Then Aṅga, the very lustrous one, seeing noble Indra’s wealth, enjoyment of amorous pleasures and sports (thought:)

‘How shall I have a son, endowed with piety, like Indra?’ Aṅga, the best among the righteous, thinking like this, came to his own house. Bowing down and with his neck (i.e. head) bent down (in respect) he asked Atri, his father: “Who enjoys this high position of Indra by doing pious deeds? Of what merit is this the result? What deed did he do? And of what kind was it? What kind of penance did he have (i.e. practise)? Whom did he propitiate formerly? O best among the truthful ones, tell me in detail (about) this.”

Atri said :

6-8. Bravo ! O noble one, you are asking me like this (a good question). O child, listen to me, who will tell you the account of Indra. Formerly there was an intelligent, excellent brāhmaṇa by name Suvrata. He pleased Kṛṣṇa, Hṛṣikeśa, with penance. He again reached the meritorious womb of Aditi through Kaśyapa; and through Viṣṇu’s grace, he became the king of gods.

Aṅga said :

9. O you affectionate towards your sons, how shall I have a son like Indra? Tell me a means for that, O best among the wise.

Atri said :

10-17. O you highly intelligent one, listen to the entire account of that illustrious Suvrata, in brief—as to how that intelligent Suvrata formerly propitiated Hari. The lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) having observed his sincerity, devotion and meditation, gave him a great position. That Indra, sustaining the three worlds, enjoys the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile, and the (high) position, through Viṣṇu’s favour only. All this I have told you, so also Indra’s acts. O best one, Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) is pleased with devotion and sincere meditation. Hari, pleased with devotion, being delighted, gives everything. Therefore, O (my) son, having propitiated Govinda, who gives everything, who is the cause of everything, who is omniscient, who knows everything, who is the best man among all, you will obtain from him whatever you desire. He is the giver of happiness, of the highest truth, of salvation, and is the lord of the worlds. Therefore, O son, go (and) propitiate him; you will obtain a son like Indra.

18-19. He, having heard the words uttered by that illustrious sage, which contained the highest truth, and having understood the import of these words, he, having saluted that eternal one, left (the place). That noble Aṅga, having taken his leave of his father, Brahmā's son, and resembling Brahmā, reached the peak of the Meru mountain, which was full of gold and gems.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Aṅga Gets a Boon from Vāsudeva

Sūta said :

1-20. The best mountain (i.e. Meru), with its regions very bright with various gems and gold on all sides, shone like the Sun with his rays. All the meditating saints, seated on firm seats after resorting to very pleasing, cool, comfortable shades, meditated. At some places the sages practised penance; at some places Kinnaras sang (songs). Gandharvas, being delighted, (sang songs), beating time with their hands. Delightful songs were presented by them, who were engrossed in beating (and) measuring time in music, and with the seven musical notes; and with melody and closed fists. On that greatest mountain, Gandharvas, knowing the essential nature of songs, and being intent on singing, sang them, after having resorted to the shades of sandal-trees. The divine women danced there on the excellent mountain. The sound (of the recitation) of the Vedas, which destroyed sins, gave religious merit, which was divine, which bestowed great bliss, and which was very sweet, was heard on the best mountain. The excellent mountain shone with (trees like) sandal, Aśoka, Punnāga, Śāla, Tāla, and bunyan, resembling clouds. The lord of mountains shone at every place with Santānaka¹ trees, desire-yielding trees crowded with Arbha (?) trees and well-blossomed divine trees. The mountain was full of many minerals and full of heaps of gems. It was full of many wonders and of various auspicious things. It was resorted to by groups of Vedas and was full of the groups of celestial nymphs. It

1. Santānaka—One of the five trees of Indra's paradise.

shone with sages, ascetics, Siddhas and Gandharvas. It looked beautiful with elephants resembling mountains and with the roars of lions. It was adorned with Śarabhas¹, with furious tigers and cunning beasts. Everywhere it looked charming with wells, pools and tanks containing spotless water and crowded with swans and ducks. It looked beautiful with golden, white and red lotuses. The lord of mountains looked charming with groups of rivers and streams having clear water, with Śāla and Tāla trees, and with crystal forms and elephants, and with slabs of stone which were extensive, golden, divine and which resembled the sun and fire. It was adorned with the mansions of deities, and palaces (resembling) excellent mountains, and with golden staffs resembling swans and the moon. It was also decorated with pitchers, chowries and palaces. It was also adorned with hosts of gods delighted by various excellences (of the mountain). That holy, best mountain Meru shone all round with many hosts of gods, Gandharvas and bards. That great river, which is very holy, which contains sacred water, which is rich with holy places, which is crowded with swans and lotuses, and which is resorted to by ascetics and hosts of sages, has risen from it.

21-31. Aṅga, the great meritorious sage, the son of Atri, (went to) that best mountain having such excellences and auspicious on account of holy wonders. He entered a beautiful cave on the very sacred and secluded bank of the Gaṅgā. The intelligent one, free from desire and anger, sat there after having controlled all his senses, and meditated upon the pious Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, the lord who removes all afflictions and who remained in his mind. He, being attentive, full of deep meditation and with his senses conquered (i.e. controlled) always saw Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) on a seat or bed or in a vehicle or in meditation. He saw Viṣṇu in the beings—mobile and immobile. That brāhmaṇa (saw Viṣṇu) in all wet, dry and other things. In this way a hundred years passed, while he was practising penance. Seeing the best brāhmaṇa (practising penance like this), the lord of the world, with the disc in his hand, always presented before him many very fearful dangers. With that lustre of the glorious god Nṛsimha, the pious and fearless (brāhmaṇa) burnt (himself) as

1. Śarabha—a fabulous animal said to have eight legs and to be stronger than a lion.

fire burns the fuel. The best brāhmaṇa Aṅga was getting emaciated by observances and restraints; yet by means of his own lustre he appeared shining like the sun and fire. The god appeared before him who was thus deeply engrossed in penances and was meditating upon Janārdana, and said to him, "O you who show respect, choose a boon." Seeing that Hṛṣīkeśa, Aṅga, who was highly delighted, with his mind pleased, and bowing down, praised him.

Aṅga said :

32-54. O you origin of beings, O you purifier, you are the refuge of all beings; O you lord of all beings, you are the soul of beings. My salutation to you who are full of merit. My salutation to you who are of the nature of merit, who are a mystery and are beyond all qualities; to you who are merit (itself), who are the cause of merit, who are endowed with merit and are of the nature of merit; to you who are the worldly life, the cause of the worldly life and who remove (i.e. free) your devotees from the worldly existence; to you from whom the worldly life has sprung up, to you who are a mystery, and the destroyer of the worldly life. Salutation to you, who are the sacrifice, who are of the form of sacrifices and the lord of sacrifice; who are connected with the sacrificial act and the holder of the conch. My repeated salutations to (you who are) gold, who hold a disc, to you who are truth, and are of true thoughts and are full of all truth. My salutation to you who are Dharma (i.e. Piety), the cause of Dharma and the cause of everything. My salutation to you whose body is Dharma, who are a great hero and who are the prop of righteousness. My salutation to you who are a meritorious and noble son and not a son; to you who destroy illusion and delusion and who bring about entire illusion. My repeated salutations to you who sustain illusion, who are embodied and formless. My salutation to you who take up all forms and are Śaṅkara (i.e. you who bring about blisses). My salutation to you, who are Brahman, of the nature of Brahman and identical with the highest Brahman; to you who are all lustre and possess lustre. My salutation to you who possess glory, who live in glory and sustain glory; to you who live in the ocean and are immortal. My salutation to you who are a great mineral, who are fierce and are

beyond great wisdom; to you who are not cruel, who are pure and the lord of sacred things. My salutations to you, the unlimited one, the complete one, and to the sinless one. Salutation to you who are the light of the sky and are of the form of a bird. Salutation to you who are the one to whom oblations are offered, who enjoys the oblations and who are of the form of oblations. Salutation to you who are Buddha (i.e. enlightened), who are a god, and you who are ever enlightened. Salutation to you, who are the oblation offered to the gods and to the manes; to you who are the utterance svadhā (used at the time of offering oblation to the manes) and svāhā (the utterance used at the time of offering oblation to the gods), to you who are pure, who are unmanifest and glorious. Salutation to you who are Vyāsa, Indra and of the nature of the Vasus; to you who are Vāsudeva, who are everything and to you who are of the form of fire; repeated salutations to you, who alone are Hari, Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu). Salutation to the god Nṛsimha and to you who maintain righteousness. My salutation to the cowherd Govinda and to the one-syllabled one. My salutation to you who are omni-syllabled and of the nature of the Supreme Soul. My salutation to you who are of the nature of the three principles or of the nature of the five elements; salutation to you who are (of the form of) the twentyfive principles and the support of the elements. Salutation to you who are Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu or dark), who are of the nature of Kṛṣṇa and are the lord of Lakṣmī. My salutation to you who are (charming) like a lotus-petal and are the highest bliss. My salutation to you who are the supporter of all and the destroyer of sins. My salutation to you who are the very great merit and you who practise truth. O eternal one, my repeated salutations to you who are immutable and a misty heap; to you having a lotus in (i.e. rising from) your navel; to you who are the great god. O Keśava, I salute your lotus-like feet. O you root of joy, O you dear to Lakṣmī, O Vāsudeva, O lord of all, O god, O Madhusūdana, make me your slave. O Keśava, I salute your feet. Be gracious to me in existence after existence, O you who give tranquility and who have a conch in your hand. Sprinkle me with water of knowledge, who am burnt by the heat of the fierce fire of the worldly existence and by many (kinds of) anguish and agony due to the deaths of sons etc. and of kinsmen; O lord Padmanābha, be a refuge to me.

55-58. Having heard this hymn of praise of (i.e. recited by) the noble Aṅga, Hṛṣīkeśa, shining with great lustre, and with the holy Kaustubha, marked with the Śrīvatsa, presented before Aṅga his own and very superior form having the conch, the disc and the mace in his hands, (and also) a lotus in his hand, and mounted upon Garuḍa, and with all limbs of his body beautified with a necklace, bracelets, and ear-rings, and looking great, divine and spotless, and charming due to the sylvan garland.

59-70a. Having thus manifested his own form, Hari, of the nature of all gods, said to that best noble sage, Aṅga : “O blessed brāhmaṇa, listen to (these) auspicious words.” With a sound deep like (the thundering of) clouds, he spoke to the best brāhmaṇa : “I am pleased with this penance (practised by you). Choose an auspicious boon.” He, full of great joy, again and again saluted the feet of Janārdana, who was shining, looking bright, who was the lord of people, who was of a universal form, who, the lord of Lakṣmī, was pleased, and said to him : “O you god of gods, O you holder of the conch, the disc and the mace, I am your slave. (If) you desire to grant me a boon, then give me a son born in my family (i.e. of my blood). Give me a son, the protector of all the people, and one full of all lustre shining like Indra in heaven. When you desire to grant me a boon, (then) (give me) a son, who is dear to all gods, who knows the Vedas, who is well-versed in the code of conduct, who is a donor, who is endowed with knowledge, and with the lustre of piety, who is the protector of the three worlds, who is Kṛṣṇa, who protects the truthful conduct, who is the best among the sacrificers, who is a unique hero, and who is the ornament of the three worlds, who is hospitable to brāhmaṇas, who knows the Vedas, whose promises are true, who has curbed his senses, who is unconquerable, who is the conqueror of all, whose lustre is like that of Viṣṇu, who is a devotee of Viṣṇu, who performs meritorious deeds, who is born due to merit, who has auspicious marks, who is tranquil, who is endowed with penance, who has mastered all branches of knowledge, who knows the Vedas, who is best among the meditating sages, and who is like you in point of virtues. Give me such a son.”

Vāsudeva said :

70b-72. O you very intelligent one, you will have a son

endowed with all these qualities. He will support the family of Atri, and also this universe. He will also emancipate his father by means of his lustre, glory and merit; with his truthfulness he will emancipate his father (i.e. you) and his grandfather; you will reach my place, that is Viṣṇu's highest position.

73-75. The lord of gods, spoke like this to that Aṅga, O brāhmaṇa. (He said to him): "Marry the auspicious daughter of someone of virtuous power. Generate on her a son, who will be auspicious, bringing merit and dear (to you). O you very intelligent one, by my favour, he will be religious-minded, omniscient, knowing all, (that is) as desired by you." Thus giving (Aṅga) a boon Hari then vanished.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Sunithā's Story

The sages said :

1. She (i.e. Sunīthā) was cursed by that Suśaṅkha, the noble son of a Gandharva. Due to his curse how did she become (i.e. what happened to her)? What deeds did she do?

2. O best brāhmaṇa, what kind of son did she obtain due to his curse? (Please) narrate to us in detail the account of Sunīthā also.

Sūta said :

3-14a. That Sunīthā, of a slender waist, who was cursed by him, being tormented by grief, went to her father's place. She disclosed her deeds to her father, Mṛtyu, the best among the truthful and the righteous ones. He spoke to Sunīthā, his daughter, who was cursed by that magnanimous one: "You committed a sin that destroys merit and lustre. O you noble one, why did you beat him, who was very tranquil? You did that which is contrary to (the ways of) all the world. Listen, what sin is committed by him who would kill him who is free from desire and wrath,

who is very tranquil, who loves piety, who is fully engrossed in the path of penance, and is settled in the highest Brahman. His son is born wicked, and gets (i.e. accumulates) much sin. There is no doubt that he who beats a person who beats him and makes him cry who is crying, suffers for his sin (i.e. of the other person). He (alone) is tranquil, he (alone) is one who has conquered (i.e. controlled) his mind, who does not beat him (i.e. the person) who beats him. O you (my) daughter, he who has beaten an innocent person, would (thus) later beat, through delusion and in sin, even an innocent man (?). He, the sinner, who, without any reason, causes anxiety to an innocent man or would later beat an innocent man through delusion or some sin, obtains the sin produced in the body of the innocent one. If the innocent person would beat the wicked-hearted person that beats him rashly after suddenly getting up, the sin of the sinner goes to the innocent person.

14b-19a. Therefore, one should not beat even a sinner. O (my) daughter, you have done, a very wicked deed. As you are today cursed by him, therefore practise meritorious deeds. Secure the company of the good, and behave (properly). O you (my) daughter, behave taking to profound abstract meditation and knowledge. The company of the good is greatly meritorious, and causes great bliss. O (my) daughter, note that merit, well-observed, of the company of the good. Highly intelligent sages, cleansed from within and without by touching, drinking and bathing in the water, obtain perfection. All these worlds—mobile and immobile—become pure (due to the company of the good).

19b-20. Water is calm, very cold, soft for the body, causing pleasure, clear, tasty, of a meritorious power, removing dirt; you should know that the saints are like that, and should wait upon them carefully.

21. As gold gives up its impurity by its contact with fire, similarly a man casts off his sin by the contact of the good.

22-24. The fire of truth would burn brightly only with the lustre of merit. A man whose lustre blazes with truth, who is very spotless due to knowledge and very hot due to meditation, cannot be touched by men born of sin. By the contact of the fire of truth, all (one's) sin perishes. Therefore, you should, by all means, have

contact with truth. Giving up your burden of sin, resort to merit in this way.”

Sūta said :

25-26. In this way that Sunīthā, who was distressed, was advised by her father. Having saluted her father's feet, she went to a lonely forest. The devout one, giving up desire and anger and her childishness, and also abandoning tricks, malice and deceit, resorted to a secluded place.

27-28a. Her friends, endowed with grace, came there to sport. The large-eyed ones saw Sunīthā afflicted and meditating. Seeing her reflecting, they, full of anxiety, said to her :

28b-30. “O good one, full of anxiety why are you brooding? You, are causing anxiety and worry to us; tell us the cause (of your anxiety). Only one anxiety, entertained for piety (alone), is significant. The other kind of anxiety, viz. giving delight to the meditating sages in matters of piety is important. (I.e. the other kind of anxiety that is important is one which gives delight to the meditating sages in matters of piety.) (Any) other anxiety is worthless. One should not at all entertain it.

31-33. Anxiety withers the body; it destroys strength and lustre; it would destroy all happiness, and would show (i.e. bring about) loss of beauty. Anxiety would bring these, viz. thirst (i.e. desire), delusion and greed (to a person). Anxiety, when entertained, would produce sin day by day. Anxiety would show (i.e. bring about) bodily diseases, and would lead (one) to hell. Therefore, O beautiful one, behave by giving up anxiety.

34-35a. A man enjoys (or suffers) only what he has earned by means of his former deeds. A wise person should not mind them. Therefore give up your anxiety, and talk about happiness, unhappiness etc.”

35b. Hearing those words of them, Sunīthā spoke these words.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

*Sunithā's Problem**Sūta said :*

1-2a. She, the noble one, who was very much afflicted with grief, told her friends how she was formerly cursed by the magnanimous Suśaṅkha, and all that she did.

Sunithā said :

2b-5. O friends, listen now; I shall tell you something else. Seeing my wealth of beauty and excellence in age (i. e. youth) and good qualities, my father became worried about me. The very glorious one desired to give me (in marriage) to (one of the) gods or sages. Holding me by the hand, he said these words to them all : "This is my young daughter, full of good qualities and having charming eyes. Well-being to you, I desire to give her (in marriage) to a virtuous and very magnanimous (god or sage)."

6-8. At that time gods and sages heard the words of Mṛtyu. Gods, led by Indra, spoke to him, who was (thus) speaking: "This your daughter is endowed with virtues, and is a great treasure of good character; but she is defiled by one fault, viz. the curse of (i.e. given by) the sage. On her will be born a son, from whose semen a man will be (born) who will be a great sinner and the destroyer of the virtuous family.

9-14.. A pitcher that is seen to be full of the water of the Gaṅgā, becomes a pitcher (full) of liquor when polluted with a drop of liquor. Due to the sinful contact of a sinner, the family becomes sinful. If a drop of the sour gruel made from the fermentation of boiled rice would go to (i.e. would get mixed with) milk, it would later destroy (i.e. spoil) the milk and would present its own nature. In the same way a sinful son would destroy the family; there is no doubt about it. This your sinful (daughter) is (soiled) with this blemish. Give her to someone else. (Please) go." Thus was my father told by gods. My father, afflicted with the grief ~~was~~ abandoned even by the noble gods, Gandharvas and sages; and the good men also did not accept me. Thus formerly I have committed a sinful act.

15-16. Tormented by agony and grief I have just resorted to the forest. I shall practise penance only, and shall wither my body. You have well asked me the effect and the cause. The deed, following my anxiety, has also been disclosed to you.

17. Speaking thus, that Sunīthā, Mṛtyu's glorious daughter, afflicted with grief, ceased speaking; and then did not say anything.

The friends said :

18-27. O you noble one, give up the grief, destroying your body. There is a blemish in the family of an atheist. (Even) gods have resorted to (i.e. committed) sin. Formerly (even) that Brahmā told a lie in the presence of Viṣṇu. That Brahmā (though) abandoned by gods, became most adorable. O (you), look at the king of gods (i.e. Indra) who was engaged in killing a brāhmaṇa. The noble one enjoys, along with the gods (the kingdom of) the three worlds. Formerly he went to (i.e. cohabited with) Ahalyā, Gautama's wife. He, who was an adulterer, has become the lord (of gods). Hara (i.e. Śiva) committed a fierce deed like killing a brāhmaṇa. Even now he lives with the skull of Brahmā. Gods and sages who have mastered the Vedas salute that god. The Sun, full of (i.e. suffering from) leprosy would illuminate (i.e. illuminates) the three worlds. All the worlds, including the mobile and the immobile, and led by the gods, salute him. Kṛṣṇa enjoys (i.e. suffers from) the curse given formerly by Bhārgava. Candra (i.e. the Moon), who went to (i.e. copulated with) Guru's (i.e. Jupiter's) wife, has become emaciated due to that. There will be (born) a very lustrous, valorous, very intelligent son of Pāṇḍu, viz. Yudhiṣṭhira, the king of kings. For the murder of his teacher, he will tell a lie. Great sin resides in (i.e. is committed by) these great ones. There is no defect in any-one of them nor any stigma.

28-29. O you beautiful one, you are smeared with a small sin. O you of an excellent complexion, we shall oblige you. O you of charming eyes, O you auspicious one, we do not find the qualities which you possess anywhere else (i.e. in any other woman).

30-35a. O you auspicious one, the virtue of beauty is the first ornament of women. The second one is good character; and

the third one is truthfulness. The fourth one is honesty; the fifth one is piety itself. Then, O you beautiful one, sweetness is said to be the sixth one. O you young girl; internal and external purity of women is the seventh (ornament). Devotion to the father is the eighth (one). Service (to others) is the ninth one. Tolerance is said to be the tenth one, and love is the eleventh (one). O you of an excellent complexion, loyalty to husband is said to be the twelfth (one). O you young girl, you are adorned with those (ornaments); O you beautiful one, do not get frightened. We shall find out that remedy by which that highly meritorious one will be your husband; for, we are (living) for you only.

35b. The excellent friends said to her: "Do not indulge in a rash act."

Sūta said :

36. Sunīthā, who was thus addressed, again said to those friends: "Tell me the remedy by which (he) will be my husband."

37-41a. The excellent ladies of charming eyes, led by Rambhā, said to her: "You are endowed with beauty and sweetness; you would lead (your husband) to prosperity. You were frightened by a brāhmaṇa's curse. (Therefore) we have come here." They spoke to that Mṛtyu's daughter having large and charming eyes: "We shall give you, O good one, an incantation (having the power of) giving all good and alluring men knowing all tricks." Then these (ladies) gave her the powerful incantation giving happiness. (They said :) "Instantly allure him, whomsoever god (or other) you desire to allure, O good lady."

41b-46. That Sunīthā, being very happy when well-equipped with the incantation, thus wandered with her friends, and observed men. While wandering she went to Indra's paradise. (There) on the bank of the Gaṅgā, she then saw the brāhmaṇa, who was the ornament of the Atri-family, who was handsome, who was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, who resembled the sun in lustre, who was matchless in form in the world, who was, as it were, another god of love, who had god-like form, who was noble and fortunate, who bestowed bliss (on others), who had no match, who was magnanimous, who resembled Viṣṇu in lustre, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who destroyed all sins, whose valour was like that of Viṣṇu, and who was free from desire and anger.

47. Seeing him, who was handsome, the very form of penance, of a divine prowess, and who was tormenting himself (by austerities), she asked Rambhā, her good friend: "Who is this excellent, magnanimous one, remaining in heaven (i.e. possessing divine qualities)?"

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Rambhā Helps by a Suggestion

Rambhā said :

1-6a. Brahmā was born from the Unmanifest one, and from him was born the lord of created beings, viz. the religious-minded Atri. O good lady, his son, viz. this Aṅga of a noble mind, came to Nandanavana. Seeing Indra's glory excellent with graceful lustre, he too longed for a position similar to that of Indra: 'If I would have such a son endowed with righteousness, (then) my existence, endowed with fame and glory, will be very blessed.' Then he propitiated Hṛṣīkeśa with austerities and restraints. When Hṛṣīkeśa was very much pleased, he asked for a boon : "O Madhusūdana, give me a son who resembles Indra, whose lustre and valour are like that of Viṣṇu, who is a devotee of Viṣṇu, and who destroys all sins."

6b. Then he gave (him) a son possessing all such (qualities).

7-12. Since then the best brāhmaṇa looked (for) an auspicious maiden. He saw you as you are beautiful in all limbs. O you beautiful lady, go to (i.e. accept) him; from him you will have a son, who will be righteous, who will be knowing pious ways of behaviour and whose lustre and valour will be like that of Viṣṇu. All this has been told to you, since you had asked me like (i.e. about) that. There is no doubt that this one will be a suitable groom for you. That curse of (i.e. given by) Suśaṅkha also will be ineffective. O good noble lady, when from him a son propagating righteous conduct will be born, you will be happy. I am telling you the truth, (and) the truth (only). A farmer, with great sincerity, sows the seed. O respectable lady, he enjoys (i.e.

reaps) the fruit as he sows the seed. It shall never be otherwise. It would all be just like that.

13-14. This noble one is devout and possesses merit and strength; a son born from his semen will be endowed with his wealth of virtues, will be very lustrous, will be best among all human beings, will be very fortunate, of a devout disposition, and will be conversant with the principles of deep and abstract meditation.

15. Hearing these words of Rambhā, uttered affectionately and bestowing well-being, Sunīthā entertained the notion : This is the truth, the entire truth.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Sunīthā Gets Married and Vena is Born

Sunīthā said :

1-2a. O good lady, you have spoken the truth; I shall do like this. I shall allure the brāhmaṇa with this incantation, and not in any other way. Give me help so that I shall go to the meritorious one.

2b. Rambhā, who was thus addressed by her, said to the high-minded one (i.e. Sunīthā):

3-5a. “O you beautiful young lady, tell me what kind of help I can give (you).” (Sunīthā said:) “O good lady, now go to him as my messenger.” Thus she spoke to that Rambhā of charming eyes. That celestial nymph Rambhā promised (her) like this only: “I shall help you; give me instructions.”

5b-13. Due to (her) good temperament, the beautiful lady, of large eyes and possessing beauty and youth, became of (i.e. took up) a divine form through a device. She was matchless in beauty in the world, and allured the three worlds. The charmingly smiling Rambhā, lovely in an all-elegant dress, was seated upon a swing on a very auspicious peak of Meru, which had lovely

caves, which was covered with many minerals, which was adorned with various gems, which was covered with divine trees, which looked lovely due to abundant flowers, which was covered (i.e. crowded) with hosts of gods, which was resorted to by Gandharvas and celestial nymphs, which was attractive, very charming, and full of the shadows of the sandal and the aśoka trees. The beautiful lady looked lovely with the dark-blue silken garment, and with a bodice, having the colour of a bandhūka-flower, O best brāhmaṇa. The young lady, with all her limbs beautiful, had her hands engaged in (playing upon) the lute, (properly) beating the time, and was singing an excellent, very melodious song, alluring the universe. The very beautiful young woman was surrounded by her friends; and Aṅga had resorted to meditation in an auspicious secluded cave. He, free from desire and anger, meditated upon Janārdana.

14-15a. The bright one (i.e. Aṅga), hearing that very melodious, sweet and very charming song, accompanied by beating time and (proper) measure, and attractive to all beings, swerved from his meditation, as he was fascinated by that enchanting song.

15b-17. With his mind swerving due to that fascination, looking repeatedly (at her) quickly got up from his seat, speedily went there; the very glorious one, seeing her seated on a swing, and with her hand full of the neck of the lute, laughing, singing well and with her face resembling the moon, was allured by the song and (her) beauty.

18-19. The best brāhmaṇa, the son of a sage, was struck with Cupid's arrows (i.e. was overpowered by passion) due to her beauty, and with his mind perturbed and disturbed, talked through infatuation, and recoiled repeatedly. That moment only he perspired, shivered and was distressed.

20. Then Aṅga, as it were being allured by great fascination, languid, and with his mind unsteady, trembling and being afflicted, came (there).

21. Seeing that Sunīthā, Mr̥tyu's daughter, of large eyes, glorious and smiling charmingly, the noble one said to her:

22. "O you beautiful lady, who are you? To whom do you belong? Surrounded by (your) friends, for what mission have you come (here)? Who has sent you to the forest?"

23. In (this) large forest, your beautiful body is shining everywhere. Tell me (all about it) today only; be gracious to me."

24. The great sage, pierced with the arrows of Cupid, and infatuated by her fascinating device, did not grasp her actions.

25. Hearing these great (i.e. significant) words of that very intelligent one, she (just) looked at the face of her friend, and did not say anything to that brāhmaṇa.

26. Sunīthā, with a sign, set on her friend, Rambhā. Then Rambhā respectfully said to the brāhmaṇa:

27. "This noble one is the daughter of the glorious Mr̥tyu, known as Sunīthā, and adorned with the wealth of all (good) marks.

28. The young girl is looking for a groom, who is a treasure of penance, who is tranquil and restrained, who is very intelligent and well-versed in Vedic lore."

29-34. Having heard these very significant words, the great sage said to that Rambhā, the best among the celestial nymphs: "I have propitiated Viṣṇu, Hari, of the form of all gods. He has given me a boon (granting) a son, and giving all prosperity. For that, O good lady, and for having a son, I am everyday thinking of the daughter of someone of an auspicious power. And for ever I am really not finding a good bride. Let this daughter, of Mr̥tyu, whose conduct is righteous, and who is beautiful take me (as her groom) here, if she desires a husband. There is no doubt that I shall give whatever this young girl asks for. For having union with her I say that I (shall) give (even) what cannot be given." (Rambhā said:) "O best brāhmaṇa, listen, what one thing you should just give."

Rambhā said :

35-37. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the pledge which I (shall) tell now. She is never to be abandoned by you. She is your lawful wife. You have never to assume either a blemish or a merit of her; (and) for this, O best brāhmaṇa, show (us) actually (some) convincing proof. O best brāhmaṇa, give her your hand giving a convincing proof.

(He said) : "Let it be so. I have given my hand to her. There should be no doubt about it."

Sūta said :

38-45. Thus establishing a relation showing a convincing proof, he married Sunīthā by means of the Gāndharva (type of) marriage. Having given that Sunīthā (in marriage) Rambhā, with her mind delighted, took leave of her, and went to her own abode. The friends, with their minds very much delighted, went to their own abodes. When all the friends had (thus) left, Aṅga sported with his dear wife. Having generated on her a son possessing all (auspicious) marks, he named the son 'Vena'. Then that son of Sunīthā (viz. Vena), of a great lustre, grew. The intelligent one, having studied the branches of the Veda, along with archery, mastered all the lores. Vena, the son of Aṅga, abided by good manners. That Vena, the best among the brāhmaṇas, took to the behaviour of kṣatriyas. As Indra, endowed with all lustre, shines in heaven, the very intelligent one shone with his own might and valour.

46-50a. When following the period of Cākṣuṣa¹ Manu that of Vaivasvata arrived, the beings were sinking in the world without a protector of the beings (i.e. without a king). The sages, having penance as their wealth, and knowing the essence of righteousness, thought of a king knowing righteousness and well-versed in truth. They just saw Vena, prosperous and endowed with (auspicious) marks. The best brāhmaṇas consecrated him in the position of the lord of created beings. When that noble king (Vena), the son of Aṅga, was consecrated, all the lords of created beings went to a penance-grove. When they had left, Vena ruled over the kingdom.

Sūta said :

50b-57. That Sunīthā, seeing her son looking well after the entire kingdom, thought: 'Due to the prowess and the curse of that noble one, my glorious son will be the protector of righteousness.' Thinking like this, she was everyday afraid of her former sins. She would present (i.e. she presented) before her son the very meritorious essential requisites of Dharma. She would throw (i.e. she threw) light on such virtues as truthfulness etc. She said to her son like this: "O son, I am the daughter of Dharma; (and) your father knows the essence of piety; therefore, practise piety."

1. Cākṣuṣa is the sixth Manu and Vaivasvata is the seventh. Manvanantara is a period or age of a Manu. This period comprises 4, 320, 000 human years or 1/14th day of Brahmā, the fourteen Manvantaras making up one whole day.

Thus that good lady would always advise her son, Vena. He would obey (i.e. obeyed) the words, proper for (i.e. leading to the well-being of) his subjects. Thus on the globe Vena had become a king. The people lived happily. The subjects were pleased. Thus was the greatness of the kingdom of noble Vena. When the king was ruling, the ways of Dharma prevailed.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

A Heretic Meets Vena

The sages said :

1. (If) thus was the creation of the noble Vena, how is it that giving up righteous conduct he would be (i.e. became) (a man) of wicked mind?

Sūta said :

2. Sages endowed with spiritual and worldly knowledge, and knowing the truth, tell what is good and what is bad; that would never become otherwise in the world.

3. O brāhmaṇas, how can the curse, given by that noble Suśaṅkha, who was practising penance, not turn true?

4-8. I shall tell (you) all the sinful conduct of Vena. When he—a noble king knowing righteousness—was ruling, a man, having put on a guise, naked, of a huge body, with his head clean-shaved, of a great lustre, holding under his armpit a broom of peacock's feathers, and a drinking-pot made of cocoa-nut in his hand reciting (texts containing) wrong doctrines, vilifying the Vedic religion, came (there). He quickly came to (the place) where Vena was (seated). The sinner entered the court of that Vena. Seeing him having arrived (there) Vena asked him a question:

9-11. “Who are you, taking up such a form, that have come into my court? Why have you come before me who am (seated) in the court? What (kind of) dress (do you have)? What is your

name? What is your faith? Tell me (all this). What is your Veda (i.e. which Veda do you follow)? What are your practices? What (kind of) penance (do you practise)? What abstract meditation (do you possess)? What (kind of) prowess (do you have)? What are the real characteristics of your faith? Tell me all that and the truth before me.”

12a. Hearing those words of Vena the sinful man said these words.

The sinful man said :

12b-15. In vain you are ruling. You are a great fool, there is no doubt about it. I am all-in-all of Dharma (i.e. religious practices). I am most adored by gods. I am knowledge, I am truth, I am the eternal supporter. I am Dharma (i.e. religious practices), I am salvation, I am full of all gods. I have sprung from the body of Brahmā; I am faithful to my promise, and not otherwise. Know me to be the chief Jaina saint, having the body of true religion. The meditating sages, intent on (obtaining) knowledge, run to me only.

Vena said :

16. What kind of acts (do you do)? What is your doctrine? What are your practices? Tell (all this to me).

The sinful man said :

17-21. (That is my faith) where Arhats are the gods, and Nirgrantha is looked upon as the preceptor. Compassion is said to be the best way of life and in it is seen (to lie) salvation in (i.e. according to) this faith. There is no doubt about this. I shall (now) narrate the practices. (In this faith) there is no performance of sacrifices; there is no officiating at sacrifices; there is no recital of the Vedas; there is no offering of the three daily prayers; there is no penance; there is no charity; it is without (the exclamations viz.) svadhā and svāhā; there is no offering to gods or manes; there are no rites like sacrifices; there is no gratification of the manes; there is no (worship offered to a) guest; there is no offering to all the deities. The best worship is that of a Jaina mendicant, and the best meditation is that of an Arhat. This way

of life is seen in the Jaina faith. I have told you all this i.e. the characteristics of my faith.

Vena said :

22-23. (In your faith) the way of life as told in the Vedas is not seen, nor are rites like sacrifices seen; no oblations to manes, no śrāddha, no sacrifice offered to all gods, and also no charity and penance are seen. Where (then) are the characteristics of the pious way of life to be (seen)? Tell me what kind of the way of life based on compassion (you advocate).

The sinful one said :

24-32a. This body of (human) beings is nourished by the five elements. This soul is of the nature of air, so they have no association. Even as in the water there is a contact of the form of bubbles, in the same way there is a contact among the beings. The earthly state is (present) in the matter; water also remains there only; fire also is seen there; powerful wind is also seen in (these) three. The state of bubbles covering the space is then produced in water, where a very bright, excellent circle is produced. It is seen just for a moment, and just after a moment it is not seen. In the same way contact among beings is seen. At the time of death, the soul departs, and the five (elements in the body) go to (i.e. merge into) the five (gross elements). Moreover the mortals being confounded by ignorance behave with one another (foolishly). Through folly they perform śrāddha and offer oblations to the manes in the evening. O best king, where is the dead person (at that time)? Of what nature does he eat? (i.e. what is his state when he eats?). What is knowledge? What kind is the body (after death)? By whom is it seen? Tell us (all about it). (Only) the brāhmaṇas, being fed with sweet food go satisfied. To whom would the śrāddha be offered? The faith (due to which a śrāddha is offered) has no meaning.

32b-42. I shall tell you another fierce act (mentioned) in the Vedas. When a guest goes (i.e. arrives) to the house, a brāhmaṇa (kills and) cooks (the flesh of) a great bull; or O king of kings, he would feed the guest (with the flesh of) a goat. (They kill) a horse in a horse-sacrifice, and a bull in a bull-sacrifice; a man in a human sacrifice and goats in a Vājapeya sacrifice. O great

king, a great slaughter of many animals is done at a Rājasūya sacrifice. At a Puṇḍarīka sacrifice one would kill (i.e. one kills) an elephant, and at an elephant-sacrifice (they kill) an elephant. At the Sautrāmaṇī sacrifice a beast is seen to be fit for being sacrificed. Thus, O prince, listen how at rites of various forms killing of beasts of various species is laid down. What are the characteristics of gifts that are given? That food should be known as left-over, (where) sumptuous food is had, and (when) in a great sacrifice they kill those (beasts) that are extremely impure. What righteousness is seen there or what fruit is seen there where those who are learned in the Vedas have prescribed the killing of beasts? Due to that (i.e. the killing of beasts) merit perishes and the (so-called) religious merit does not give (i.e. lead to) salvation. That way of life which is without compassion is fruitless. There is no doubt that the right way of life lies there where lives of beings are protected. It is not the right way of life (or righteousness) where there are offerings to gods, manes, penance, truth, and rashness without compassion, O best king. The Vedas are not Vedas where compassion is not (prescribed).

43-52a. Even a cāṇḍāla or a śūdra, who, being intent upon the gift of kindness, would protect a life, is said to be a brāhmaṇa. But that cruel brāhmaṇa who is intent upon killing beasts, is very ruthless, sinful, hard-hearted and of a cruel mind. That Veda which is without knowledge, is said to be a Veda (only) by the rogues. Veda stands firmly there where there would be knowledge. O you very intelligent one, neither truth nor rite is seen in the merciless Vedas and Brāhmaṇas and also in the brāhmaṇas who follow the Vedas. O best king, the Vedas, void of truth are not Vedas and the brāhmaṇas who are not truthful (are not brāhmaṇas). There is no fruit of charity, so gifts also are not given. As are the characteristics of śrāddha, same are those of charity. Whatever is the faith of Jīva is the giver of enjoyment and salvation—that I shall tell you. First, one with his mind being tranquil, should show kindness. One should devoutly propitiate god Jina who (has pervaded) the mobile and immobile. With one's mind having pure thoughts, one should worship Jina alone. Salutation should be offered to that god, and not otherwise (i.e. not to anyone else). One should never salute the

feet of one's mother and father. Then what should be told about others, O best king?

Vena said :

52b-53. (They say) that these brāhmaṇas, preceptors and others, and also the rivers like Gaṅgā, are holy places giving great religious merit. Is that the truth? Tell me if you desire piety (to flourish) here.

The sinful man said :

54-60. O great king, from the sky the clouds shower water. Having floated in the water which has fallen everywhere on the ground and on the mountains, he would stand, and produce compassion everywhere. Rivers are but the streams of blemish. How have you heard (i.e. how is it told in the scriptures) that the holy places are (situated) in (i.e. on the banks of) them? O great king, ponds, lakes, seas, and mountains—the heaps of stones—support the earth. No sacred place can be situated in (or on) them. A cloud is the best (holy place) due to its (containing) water. If a bath (i.e. a dip in water) causes great religious merit, then why is it not (found) in the fish? If by bath purity is produced, then the fish are purified. It cannot be otherwise (i.e. it is quite certain). Sacred place and eternal Dharma (i.e. way of life) are to be found where Jina remains. Penance and all merit due to bath etc. is settled there. O lord of kings, Jina alone is full of everything. There is no other (Dharma) than that; that is the holiest place. This is the greatest gain. So always meditate on him; you will be very happy.

61. Censuring by (indicating) the sinful nature of the entire (Vedic) religion, the Vedas, and charity of the form of sacrifices, along with (i.e. causing) merit, the sinful one advised Aṅga's son in various ways.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The End of Vena's Reign

Sūta said :

1-2. Vena, thus advised by that very sinful Jina, and deluded by him, attained to a sinful attitude. Abandoning the Vedic faith and rites of a truthful conduct, he saluted the feet of that very wicked one.

3-5a. There was cessation of good sacrifices, and also of the Vedas. Religious practices full of holy scriptures (i.e. as told in the holy scriptures) did not proceed at that time. As a result of his (bad) rule, the world became full of all sins. When that king ruled, there were no sacrifices, no (recitations of) the Vedas, no excellent purport of the holy texts, no charity and no study, O brāhmaṇas.

5b-9. Thus there was the cessation of religious conduct, and great sin proceeded uninterruptedly. Though warded off by Aṅga, he very much acted otherwise. The wicked-minded one saluted neither the feet of his father nor of his mother. (He did) not (salute) the feet of any brāhmaṇa also. (He thought:) 'I alone am valorous.' Though warded off by his father and by his mother, the wicked-minded one did not perform auspicious, meritorious (acts) like giving gifts at a holy place. The very glorious one (lived) for a long time according to his own ideas. They all thought: 'For what reason has he become a sinner? The son of Aṅga Prajāpati is a bane to his family.'

10. The religious-minded (Aṅga) again asked the daughter of magnanimous Mr̥tyu: "O dear one, tell me the truth: Due to whose fault is he born (like this)?"

Sunithā said :

11-13. O you highly intelligent one, [the daughter (of Yama) formerly only told Aṅga her own account and her merit and faults: (She said:)] in my childhood I committed a sin towards the magnanimous Suśaṅkha. I have not done anything else. The angry one cursed me: "Your progeny would be wicked." Thus, I think, O glorious one, this (Vena) has become wicked due to that (curse of Suśaṅkha).

14-15. The very lustrous one, having heard this, went to a forest with her. When the glorious one went to a forest along with his wife, the Seven Sages then approached Vena. Calling him they thus spoke to (him) the son of Aṅga :

The Sages said :

16-17. O Vena, do not act rashly; you are the guardian of the subjects. You yourself have put all this world and the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile on the righteous path, O glorious one. Give up evil deeds, and perform auspicious deeds.

18a. When they had spoken like this, Vena laughed and said :

Vena said :

18b-20a. I alone am the highest (form of) religion; I alone deserve to be worshipped; I am eternal; I am the supporter; I am the protector; I alone am the import of the Veda; I am religious; I am the ancient, very holy, Jaina religion. O brāhmaṇas, by means of your actions, resort to me, who am of the form of religion.

The Sages said :

20b-24. The three castes viz. brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas are twice-born.¹ This (i.e. the Veda) is an ancient sacred text meant for all the castes. The beings behave according to the Vedic practices; therefore they (continue to) live. You are born in the family of Brahman. (So) you are a brāhmaṇa only. Then you, who had performed valorous deeds, were made the king of the earth. O best king, brāhmaṇas live happily due to the religious merit of the king. They perish due to his sin. Therefore practise righteous deeds. O king, you honoured and practised righteous deeds; but (did) not (do) the deeds of (i.e. proper for) Tretā and Dvāpara-yuga.

25-30. When Kali (-yuga) sets in, all men, deluded by sins, will act after having resorted to the Jaina faith. Men will abandon Vedic practices, and will commit sins. There is no doubt that the

1. Dvijātayaḥ—Men of any of the first three castes of the Hindus.

Jaina faith is the root of sin. O best king, the fall of those men, who are heaps of sins, is brought about by this great delusion. Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), the destroyer of all sins, will be (appearing) for their destruction and for nothing else. Taking the form of his liking he will restrain (them) from sins. When sins will have thus accumulated, he, the god will be (appearing) as Kalki¹ for the destruction of the Mlecchas; there is no doubt about it. Give up the behaviour of (i.e. proper for) Kali (-yuga) and resort to merit. Behave truthfully; become the guardian of your subjects.

Vena said :

31. I am the best among the wise; I have known everything here. He who behaves in a different way will certainly be punished.

32-37a. All the magnanimous sons of Brahman got angry with that wicked-hearted king who was talking too much. When the high-souled brāhmaṇas were angry, king Vena, through the fear of a curse from the brāhmaṇas, entered an ant-hill. Then the angry sages looked for Vena everywhere. Knowing that the king who had fled, was well-settled in an ant-hill, the brāhmaṇas, forcibly brought (out) the cruel and wicked (king). Seeing the sinner the sages were well-composed. Getting angry, they churned the left hand of the king. From it sprang up a very short, terrible barbarian, whose complexion was dark-blue, whose eyes were red, who had arrows in his hand, and held a bow (in his hands).

37b-41. He became the king, supporter and the protector of all sinful Niṣādas, especially of the Mlecchas. O highly intelligent one, seeing that sinful one, the sages also churned the right hand of that noble Vena. From it sprang up very intelligent and very powerful and noble king of kings, viz. Pr̥thu, who milked the earth. By the power of his merit, and by the favour of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), Vena, having enjoyed the position of a sovereign emperor, went to Viṣṇu's heaven. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu.

1. Kalki—The tenth and last incarnation of Viṣṇu in his capacity of the destroyer of the wicked and liberator of the world from its enemies.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

*On Gifts and Worthy Recipients of Gifts**The sages said :*

1. O you best among the truthful ones, tell us in detail, how Vena casting off his sin went to heaven.

Sūta said :

2-6a. O best brāhmaṇa, by the contact of the merit of the sages, by their concurrence, the sin went out of his body as a result of the churning of his body. Then that Vena of a righteous mind obtained eternal knowledge. O brāhmaṇas, free from desire and anger, he practised penance for a full hundred years in the hermitage of the sage Tṛṇabindu, which destroyed sins, and (which was situated) on the right bank of Revā. O glorious ones, god (Viṣṇu), the holder of the conch, disc and mace, was pleased with the sinless king due to his severe penance. Being pleased with him, he said to him: "I am pleased. Choose an excellent boon."

Vena said :

6b-7. O god, if you are pleased with me, give me an excellent boon: I desire to go, by your power, with this body, and along with my father and mother, to your abode, to the highest abode of Viṣṇu, O god of gods.

Śrī Vāsudeva said :

8. O king, where has that great infatuation, by which you were deluded, gone? You were caused to fall on the path of darkness by greed united with infatuation.

Vena said :

9-10a. O lord, I was deluded by the sin which I had formerly committed. Therefore (please) emancipate me from this very fierce sin. Tell me through your grace what (i.e. which hymn) I should mutter or recite.

The lord said :

10b-15. Well, O blessed king, your sin has perished. By means of your penance you have become pure. So I shall tell you (what) merit (is). O dear, formerly Brahmā had asked me as (i.e. what) you have asked. I (shall) tell you all that I had told him. When once, Brahmā staying in the lotus sprung from (my) navel was engrossed in meditation, Viṣṇu (i.e. I) appeared before him for granting him a boon, O you of a good vow. Desiring a good state (i.e. salvation), he asked him about a hymn, of a great religious merit, destroying sin, and called Vāsudeva. O glorious one, he (i.e. I) taught him the hymn, best among all hymns, called Vāsudeva very much pleasing to Viṣṇu, and giving all happiness to men who always recited and muttered it.

Viṣṇu said :

16-19. This entire world is pervaded by me of an unmanifest form. Therefore sages devoted to Viṣṇu call me Viṣṇu (i.e. one who pervades). I should be respectfully known to be that Vāsudeva, in whom the beings live, and who lives in the beings. Since, at the end (of the world) the lord leads the beings to the unmanifest one, therefore, he (i.e. I) should be known, by those who seek his (i.e. my) refuge, by the name Saṅkarṣaṇa. With the desire 'Let me be many', I take up any form I intend (to take up). Therefore, I should be known as Pradyumna by those who desire (to have) sons.

20-25. In this world I am not restrained by anyone except the lords of all, viz. Hara and Keśava, by means of the prowess of deep and abstract meditation; therefore I have (the epithet) Aniruddha. To the world, I, possessing spiritual and material knowledge, am known as Viśva. Being awake and full of reflection, I am possessed of self-consciousness. Full of the movements of the world and possessed of sense-organs and form I am (called) Taijasa (i.e. bright); I am in the state of sleep when I am without understanding and action. When I am the presiding deity I move (everywhere) occupying all. I am supposed to be unconcerned with the world when I am in the state of deep sleep. As Turiya (i.e. in the fourth state) I am without any modification and void of properties. With my form reflected everywhere I am

unattached and (am just) like a witness. I am the individual soul still sticking to the worldly defilements; I am consciousness and joy; I am full of consciousness; and have the form of consciousness. I am eternal, immutable; I am of the form of Brahman; know me to be Brahman only.

The lord said :

26. Speaking so to Brahmā about his own form formerly, Viṣṇu vanished. He too knowing his universality, in a moment became self-possessed.

27. O king, you too are pure due to the birth of Pṛthu only. Still, O you of a good vow, propitiate the lord with this hymn.

28a. Viṣṇu, being pleased, said to him: “O you, who give respect to others, choose a boon.”

Vena said :

28b-29a. O Viṣṇu, give me the best refuge; (please) protect me from the sin. I have sought your refuge. Tell (i.e. show) me the cause (i.e. way to) the best state (i.e. beatitude).

Viṣṇu said :

29b-39. O you blessed one, formerly only the noble Aṅga had propitiated me, (and) I had granted him a boon. O you illustrious one, O you best brāhmaṇa, O you prince, you will go to the best heaven of Viṣṇu by means of your own deeds. O noble one, just ask for a boon for yourself. O illustrious Vena, listen to the account that took place formerly. Formerly the glorious Suśaṅkha, getting angry, gave a curse to your mother, Sunīthā, in her childhood, O king. Then I, who had known (Aṅga's) mind, and who desired to emancipate you, gave a boon to Aṅga: ‘You will have a good son.’ O you who love virtues, having thus spoken to your father I will, having sprung up from your body, protect the world. I remain on the earth as Indra shines in heaven. The sacred text: ‘Oneself is born as (one's) son’, is true. So, O dear, you will get the highest position as a result of my boon. For getting the (best) position (i.e. salvation), O king, O hero, give a gift; I (am the one), who in the form of the sinful naked one, spoke to you, to cause you deviate from righteousness;

otherwise the words of Suśāṅkha would have become untrue. I myself am injunction and prohibition both. I am the one who gives the fruit (to one) according to one's deeds, who is beyond comprehension and who insists on virtues.

40-46a. (Giving) a gift is the highest, the best. It is the cause of everything. Therefore you give gifts. Merit proceeds from (giving) gifts. Sin perishes due to (the giving of) gifts; therefore, do give gifts. O best king, perform sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. Give gifts of land etc. to brāhmaṇas. Due to (giving) good gifts enjoyment is obtained, glory is obtained; fame takes place (i.e. is obtained) due to good gifts and happiness is secured through good gifts. A man obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven by means of (giving) gifts, and there enjoys the fruit (of his gifts). When the time of the maturity of a good gift that is given through faith arrives, O best one, the man (i.e. the giver of gifts) would go to a sacred place—this is also the fruit of (his) religious merit. To him, who, keeping faith in me, gives a great gift to a worthy brāhmaṇa, I give everything and whatever he desires with (i.e. in) his mind.

Vena said :

46b-48a. Tell me about the (proper) time of (i.e. for giving) a gift. What are the characteristics of the (proper) time (for giving a gift)? Being gracious to me, O lord of the world, if you have compassion for me, tell me in detail the nature of a sacred place, and also the good (i.e. proper) characteristics of a worthy recipient, and the procedure of (giving) a gift.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said :

48b-57. O king, O great lord, I shall tell you the time for regular and occasional charity and also for the optional one, and for making daily and occasional gifts which would lead to the fourth (goal of life, i.e. salvation). At the time of sunrise, sin perishes everywhere. Very fierce darkness destroys men. This sun, my portion, is thought to be the treasure of lustre by day. Sins, burnt by the lustre of him only, are reduced to ashes. O king, what can be said about that which increases the religious merit of him who even gives water to my rising portion (i.e. the

rising sun)? When an auspicious time comes, if a person, after having bathed and worshipped his parents and gods gives, according to his capacity and with his mind purified by faith, gifts of food, water, fruits, flowers, garments, tām̐būla, ornaments, gold, and gems etc., he has unending merit. O king, he, who would also offer water dedicated to me at midday and afternoon, has unending merit. Like this he regularly gives food, drink, sweets, ointment, sandal, flowers, camphor etc. along with garments and ornaments, (which) gives enjoyments and happiness. This is said to be the usual time (i.e. time for regular charity), auspicious for those who desire to give gifts or offer worship.

58-71a. Now I shall tell you about the excellent occasional (charity). There is no doubt that one should give gifts at all the three times. He, who desires his own well-being should not pass a day void (of gifts). O king due to the power of the time at which something is given, a man (becomes) very intelligent, full of great power, rich, virtuous, learned, wise and far-seeing. I keep the excellent man away from food for a fortnight, a month, or a day—that is, as long as he has not given food. One who has not given an excellent gift has eaten his own excrement. Being displeased (with such persons) I generate in their bodies a disease, which keeps off all enjoyments, which gives them great trouble, which is accompanied by weak digestion, and which causes fever and suffering. He who has not made a gift (of food) to Brahmins and deities, three times, and has himself eaten sweets, has committed a great sin. O great king, he should thus purify his body by a severe expiation, and also by fasts withering up the body. As a cobbler cleanses the hide in the bowl with exudations from trees and expands it, in the same way I certainly purify a sinner, by proper use of herbs, and also by means of astringent and bitter medicines; (thus I do) in the form of a physician, with hot water and heating, and in no other way; there is no doubt about it. Other people enjoy his excellent, auspicious enjoyments as desired(?) What can (even) a powerful man do if he has not given an excellent gift? I torment him through the form of a great sin. O king of kings, if the sinners, through selfishness, have not given the regular gifts with a mind purified with faith, then with terrible means I consume them.

Vāsudeva said :

71b-75. O best of men, I shall explain to you the occasional time (i.e. times for making occasional gifts) and the merit (obtained by giving such gifts); listen attentively and with a good mind. O king, when it is the new moon day or the full moon day or the Sainkrānti day, or Vyatīpāta or when it is Vaidhṛti Ekādaśī, or when it is the full moon day in Māgha or Āṣāḍha, or Vaiśākha or Kārtika, or when the new moon day falls on Monday, or on the anniversary days of the Manu-age etc., when it is the day on which the elephant's shadow (falls towards the east), or it is a day called pitṛkṣaya—all these are explained (by me) to you, O best king.

76-83. I shall tell you the fruit of the gifts that are given on these (occasions). O best king, listen. To the man, who devoutly gives (a gift) intended for me to a brāhmaṇa, I give, without hesitation, a house, happiness, heaven and salvation and many (other things). There is no doubt about this, O great king. I shall (now) explain to you the optional time (i.e. time for optional charity) for giving a gift which is fruitful. The best sages have told about the auspicious time for all vows in honour of gods etc., and also for giving gifts. O king, I shall also tell you about the time leading to prosperity. Of all the sacrificial rites the nuptial one is the best; O king, so also the time when the rite of the birth of a son, his tonsure-ceremony or thread-ceremony is performed; so also the time of the installation of the palace-flag or of deities; so also that (of the fixing ceremony) of the site of wells, pools, lakes, houses, is called (the time) leading to prosperity, when the mothers are worshipped. At this time (a man) should give gifts which bring about all (kinds of) success. O best king, I have just told you the time leading to prosperity.

84-104. (Now) I shall tell you something else which removes affliction due to sin. When the time of death has come, a man, knowing (that this) death is (imminent), should give a gift, causing comfort on (his) way to Yama, O best man. O great king, I have told you the times called regular and occasional ones, and also those that lead to prosperity. I have (also) told you the time of death. I have told (you about) these times which give fruits of one's deeds. O king, (now) I shall tell you the

characteristics of a sacred place. Among excellent holy places this Gaṅgā shines. (Others that are) mentioned are the holy (rivers) Sarasvatī, Revā, Yamunā, Tāpī; and river Carmanvatī, (and also the rivers) Sarayū, Ghargharā, and Venā destroying all sins, Kāverī, Kapilā and the big (river) Viśvatāriṇī, (and also) Godāvarī and Tuṅgabhadrā, O king. (The river) Bhīmarathyā is declared always to cause fear to the sinners. Other excellent rivers are Devikā, Kṛṣṇagaṅgā etc. (For offering gifts) on auspicious occasions there are many holy places of (i.e. on the banks of) these (rivers). Rivers, whether (they flow) through a village or a forest, are purifying everywhere. At these places acts like bath, charity etc. should be performed. O best ones, when the name of a holy place (on the banks) of those (rivers) is not known, the utterance of the (my) name should be done by saying: 'This is Viṣṇu's holy place', O king. O prince, a devotee should utter (the name of) me at the sacred places and (while presenting gifts) to gods. He gets the fruit of his merit due to (the utterance of) my name. O best king, at the time of bathing at unknown excellent holy places, and (offering presents) to unknown deities, one should just utter my name. O best king, the Creator has made these rivers the mothers of the all-meritorious sacred places, and they are (to be found) everywhere on the globe. O king, a man should not take bath etc. here and there (i.e. anywhere). Due to the grace of the excellent holy places, one gets an inexhaustible fruit. The seven oceans only are of the nature of sacred places and are very meritorious. O king, the lakes like Mānasa etc. are declared to be like them only. Streams and ponds are also said to be of the nature of sacred places. There is no doubt about it. (There are) O great king, (certain) very small rivers. A sacred place is said to exist in them (i.e. on their banks), so also in all ditches excepting (temporary) wells. On the surface of the earth, mountains like Meru are also of the nature of holy places. A sacrificial place, a sacrifice well-put (i.e. performed) in a fire-chamber, and also the place where a śrāddha is offered, is pure like that. Similarly a temple, a sacrificial chamber, a chamber where Vedas are studied (is pure). In the houses a cow-pen, possessing merit, is (said to be) the best. A sacred place exists there, where the performer of a Soma-sacrifice would be (present) and also a grove where the meritori-

ous *Aśvattha* stands (is a sacred place). A sacred place exists there where there would be a *palāśa* or an *udumbara* tree or a *bunyan* tree; and also at a place where other sylvan marks (are present).

105-107a. These are said to be sacred places, and also father and mother; (the place) where a *Purāṇa* is being recited, or the one where (one's) preceptor resides (is also sacred). There is no doubt that that place where a good wife lives is a sacred place. The Place where a good son stays is a holy place—there is no doubt about it. These are said to be sacred places; and also a king's abode (is a sacred place).

Vena said :

107b-108a. O best god, O *Mādhava*, being gracious through compassion tell me the characteristics of a worthy person to whom a gift should be given.

Vāsudeva said :

108b-127. O very intelligent king, listen to the good (i.e. important) marks of a worthy recipient, to whom a gift should be given by the glorious ones purified by faith. A *brāhmaṇa* endowed with (i.e. born in) a good family, devoted to the study of the *Vedas*, tranquil, restrained, one having practised penance, especially pure, intelligent, wise, engrossed in the worship of deities, truthful, of a great religious merit, *Viṣṇu*'s devotee, and learned, knowing religion, free from greediness, and avoided by heretics, is said to be a worthy recipient. O best man, O great king, other worthy recipients are these: sister's son—the best man, endowed with qualities like these; daughter's son; son-in-law having similar dispositions; also, O best man, a preceptor who is initiated. These are worthy recipients, fit for presenting gifts. One should avoid a *brāhmaṇa* who possessed conduct as laid down in the *Vedas* (yet) is not content. Also one should avoid a one-eyed or very dark-blue (*brāhmaṇa*), (a *brāhmaṇa*) who has black teeth, or has dark-blue or yellow teeth. O king, one should avoid a *brāhmaṇa* who has slaughtered a cow, who has very black teeth, who is a barbarian or is licentious or is short of a limb or has an extra one; also a leper or one having bad nails,

or bad skin; also a bald-headed brāhmaṇa, O great king. One should not give a gift to a brāhmaṇa, even if he is like Brahmā, if his wife is engaged in improper (acts). O you highly intelligent one, a gift should not be given to a brāhmaṇa who is conquered by (i.e. under the thumb of) his wife, and also to him who is a traitor to his own school of the Vedas (Śākhā). O king, a gift should not be given to a diseased brāhmaṇa, or who eats the dead (i.e. meat eater). A gift should not be given to (a brāhmaṇa who is) a thief even though he is like Atri. A gift should not be given to a brāhmaṇa who is not content. One should also avoid a brāhmaṇa (doing rites) relating to a dead body. A gift should not be given to (a brāhmaṇa who is) very obstinate, and especially to a brāhmaṇa who is dishonest. O lord of kings, a brāhmaṇa, following Vedic practices, but void of good conduct, would not be proper at (the offering of) a śrāddha, or (giving) a gift. Now I shall tell you about the gift which is fruitful and meritorious. Faith is produced by association with a holy place and worthy recipients and (practising charity at an auspicious) time. There is no religious merit like faith, there is no happiness like faith for beings in the worldly existence, O king. A man should remember me with faith, O best king; a king should give even a small gift into the hand of a worthy recipient. He obtains an unlimited fruit of such a gift (given) according to the proper procedure; he would be happy by my grace.

CHAPTER FORTY

The Fruit of Occasional Charity

Vena said

1-2. O god, I have heard from you the fruit of regular charity. By your grace (i.e. be gracious and) carefully tell me that fruit which is the fruit of occasional charity. I am not getting great satisfaction; my faith prompts me to hear it.

Viṣṇu said :

3-8a. O best king, I shall explain to you (gifts given called) the occasional. Listen to the fruit of the gifts given to worthy recipients by a person with faith, on a great parvan day. O best king, he, the best man, who gives an elephant, a chariot or a horse (to a brāhmaṇa) becomes the best king, accompanied by servants, in a holy country, O great king; there is no doubt about this. The religious-minded, powerful and very intelligent one becomes a very lustrous king and is unconquered by all beings. O great king, he, who gives a gift of land or a cow when the great parvan (day) arrives, would become the lord of all enjoyments. One should give a gift to a very meritorious brāhmaṇa with great care.

8b-11a. I shall tell you the characteristics of great gifts which a man gives at a sacred place on a parvan (day) : he becomes a king. He who gives a secret gift (to a brāhmaṇa) at a holy place on a parvan (day), quickly has an imperishable attainment of treasures (i.e. obtains imperishable treasures). When a great parvan (day) comes, (a man should give) a great gift with a garment and gold to a brāhmaṇa at sacred places.

11b-29a. O king, I shall tell you (about) the auspicious fruit of that gift : (to him) many very virtuous sons, proficient in the Vedas, long-lived, having progeny, and endowed with glory and merit are born. Many (such sons) are born. O you very intelligent one, ample wealth (also comes to him). He gets happiness and religious merit. He becomes religious. When the great parvan (day) arrives, a (man), having gone to a holy place with great effort, should present a golden cow to a glorious brāhmaṇa. O you very intelligent one, I shall tell you about the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by giving) that gift. O great king, the giver of a tawny cow enjoys all pleasures. He lives there as long as Brahmā would live. O king of kings, I (shall) tell you about the fruit and enjoyment of (i.e. due to) the gift of a cow given after adorning her, furnishing her with gold and with garments, ornaments and decorations. Ample glory full of gifts and enjoyments is produced. It is said that such a man (i.e. he who gives gifts) becoming a master of knowledge, would become a devotee of Viṣṇu. He would reside in Viṣṇu's world as long as the earth

would remain. He, who, after going to a sacred place, would give an ornament to a brāhmaṇa, sports with Indra after having enjoyed many pleasures. He, who, endowed with faith, gives to the best brāhmaṇa, a deserving recipient, food along with land when a great parvan (day) arrives, having valour equal to that of Viṣṇu rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha. Giving (i.e. he who gives), according to his desire, gold along with garments to a brāhmaṇa for peace, he, resembling fire, would live happily in heaven. He should fill a big golden pitcher with ghee. He should adorn it with garments and garlands and cover it with (a) silver (lid). He should furnish it with a garland of flowers and make it adorned with a sacred thread. () highly intelligent one, worshipping it, consecrated with Vedic hymns, he should (then) worship it with sixteen pure articles of worship. Then well-adorning it, he should present it to a glorious brāhmaṇa. He should then give sixteen cows with bell-metal udders, along with garments; (he should) also (give) four (cows) and a gift (to a brāhmaṇa) along with gold. He should also give twelve cows adorned with garments, ornaments and decorations to a separated (living in a lonely place?) brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt about this. O prince, such and other gifts (should be given). Having properly found a sacred place and (the proper) time, and a brāhmaṇa's residence, he should give (gifts) with faith. That would lead to great religious merit. There is no doubt about it.

Viṣṇu said :

29b-46. A gift should be arranged (i.e. given) dedicating it to Viṣṇu. A man inspired by the feeling of love for that gift gets a fruit like that. There is no doubt about this. Now I shall explain good fortune. By giving the gift which proceeds (i.e. is given) in sacrifices etc., and even by having faith in (giving it), a man has increase in his intellect and does not get unhappiness, O best brāhmaṇa. The religious-minded one, while alive, enjoys pleasures properly. That donor, having obtained a divine position, enjoys pleasures of Indra. He takes his family to heaven for a thousand kalpas. I have thus explained (gifts) leading to good fortune. Now among the (gifts) I shall tell about (the gift to be given at the time of death). Knowing that the end of the body

(i.e. death) has come near, and being afflicted by old age, he should give a gift. He should not entertain (any) hope about any one. (He should not entertain thoughts like:) ‘What will happen to my sons, other relatives and friends in my absence after my death?’ A man deluded by infatuation for them, does not give anything. He, with his mind confused, dies; friends and relatives weep (for him). All of them, afflicted by grief and by false attachment, resolve (to give) gifts, and reflect upon salvation. When he is dead, and when the false attachment is over, they, of greedy minds, forget the gifts and never give them, O great king. The one, O great king, who is dead, is extremely unhappy on the path to (the abode of) Yama, is overcome with thirst and hunger, and afflicted by gifts. O best king, to whom do sons and grandsons belong? To whom does the wife belong? In this worldly existence none belongs to none (else). Therefore gifts are given. O best king, O you highly intelligent one, a wise man should himself give food, drink, tām̐būla, water, gold, a pair (of) garments, an umbrella, many water-vessels with water, varied vehicles and carriages, various kinds of perfumes and camphor. If he would desire (if he desires) much happiness he should give (to a brāhmaṇa) shoes that give comfort on the path to (the abode of) Yama. O great king, by (giving) these gifts a man goes happily along Yama’s path.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Story of Sukalā

Vena said :

1. Tell me how the son (or) the wife (or) the father (or) the mother is a holy place. Tell me also in detail how one’s preceptor is a holy place.

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

2-8. There was a great city (named) Vārāṇasī along with (i.e. on the bank of) Gaṅgā. In it lived a vaiśya by name Kṛkālā.

His wife, named Sukalā, was very chaste, devoted to her husband, always engaged in religious practices, and loyal to her husband. Her limbs were auspicious. She had a good son and she was charming and auspicious. She spoke the truth, she was always pure, she had a lovable form, and was dear to her husband. She, endowed with these qualities, was fortunate, and performed good deeds. The vaiśya (i.e. Kṛkālā) was an excellent man; he knew various religious practices, was wise and virtuous. He was always intent upon listening to the Purāṇas and religious practices as told by the scriptures. With faith he set out, with the caravan of brāhmaṇas on a pilgrimage, meritorious and auspicious. He proceeded on the religious path (of the pilgrimage). The chaste wife (i.e. Sukalā), being stupefied by her love for her husband, said (these) words to her husband.

Sukalā said :

9-19a. O dear, I am your religiously wedded wife, and practise merit with you. Waiting (i.e. looking) for the path of (i.e. followed by) my husband, I propitiate the god i.e. my husband. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall never give up your proximity. Resorting to your shadow, I shall practise the excellent mode of behaviour called loyalty to my husband, which destroys the sins of women and gives them a good position. The woman, who would be solely devoted to her husband, is called meritorious. Except the husband, no other holy place befits young women, and no other holy place gives them heaven or salvation. O best one, a woman should look upon the right foot of her husband as Prayāga, and the left one as Puṣkara. Merit is produced by taking bath with the water (falling) from his feet. It is like taking a bath at Prayāga or Puṣkara. There is no doubt about it. The husband is full of all holy places. The husband is full of all religious merit. All that fruit—the religious merit, which an initiated man gets after the performance of sacrifices, is obtained by a wife through serving her husband. She obtains, through serving her husband that fruit which would accrue to one by having had pilgrimage to excellent holy places like Gayā. I am telling it in brief. Listen to me who am telling it. For them (i.e. for women) there is no other duty than serving the husband. Therefore, O dear one, I, helping you and giving you pleasure, shall, by

resorting to your shadow (i.e. by following you), come (with you). This will not be otherwise.

Viṣṇu said :

19b-29a. Kṛkala, having considered her beauty, character, virtue and devotion and having again and again given a thought to her delicacy (thought): 'If like this (i.e. as she says) I shall take her (with me) along the difficult path causing great grief, her beauty will wither due to being shaken by cold and heat. Her body, of an excellent complexion, is like the interior of a lotus. It will be dark due to the cold stormy gale. The path is rough and has (i.e. is full of) stones. Her feet are very delicate. She will meet with severe pain; therefore she is unable to go (i.e. I cannot take her). What will be her plight, when her body would be encompassed by hunger and thirst? This woman of a beautiful body is my support. (This) woman of a beautiful face is the abode of my pleasure. She is always dear to my life. She is always the abode of religious merit. When this young woman will perish, I shall (also certainly) perish in this world. This one is always my livelihood. She is the ruler of my life. I shall not take her to the forest (and) to the holy place. I shall (just) go all alone.' The glorious Kṛkala thought (like this) for a moment. O best king, she knew (i.e. read) the thought in his mind. The glorious one again said to her husband who had started: "O best one, listen, men should not leave (back) their innocent wives. O you highly intelligent one, this is the root of Dharma (duty, righteousness) of a man. Realising this, O illustrious one, now take me (with you)".

Viṣṇu said :

29b-32a. Having heard all those many words uttered by his beloved (wife), Kṛkala laughed and again said to her : "O dear one, the wife who is religiously obtained is not to be abandoned. O you of a beautiful face, he, who has abandoned his well-behaved and religious wife, has even given up the Dharma of ten constituents.¹ Therefore, well-being to you, O dear one, I shall never abandon you".

1. Daśāṅga Dharma—The ten constituents of Dharma as mentioned in the Vāmana Purāṇa (14.1-2) are: harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, charity, forbearance, restraint, quiescence, not demeaning oneself, purity and penance.

Viṣṇu said :

32b-50a. Having thus spoken to her, and having repeatedly advised his wife, he went with the caravan without her knowledge. When thus that glorious Kṛkālā had left, the lady of an auspicious face did not at all see her husband Kṛkālā, of meritorious deeds, at the auspicious time of the worship of deities and at (other) auspicious time. Weeping, and very much afflicted, oppressed by grief and sorrow for her husband, she quickly got up and asked her friends. (She said to them:) “O you illustrious ones, have you seen that Kṛkālā, the lord of my life? He has gone somewhere. You are my relatives. O you glorious ones, if you have seen that magnanimous, very intelligent, meritorious, omniscient, truthful and wise Kṛkālā of me (i.e. my husband), (then) tell me.” Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) her, they said to the very intelligent one: “O you auspicious one of a good vow, your husband Kṛkālā has, on the occasion of a pilgrimage, visited a sacred place. Why do you weep? Having visited a great sacred place, he will come (back), O you beautiful one.” That Sukalā of a charming speech, thus addressed by the intimate persons, again went home, O king. That devout Sukalā wept piteously in agony. (She said:) “Till my husband comes, I shall sleep on a bed on the ground. I shall not eat ghee, oil, curd and milk.” She gave up (eating) salt, and also (chewing) tāmḃūlā. O king, she also gave up (eating) sweet (things) like jaggery etc. (She said:) “Till my husband returns I shall eat once a day or will not eat anything at all. There is no doubt about this.” Thus she was full of grief; she wore a single braid of hair; she put on one bodice (only), and was unclean. She also remained with only one garment (on her person). She gave out sounds like ‘hā hā’, sighed, and was extremely afflicted. She was parched up by the fire of separation; her body (had become) black; and she became unclean. Thus being unhappy, very much emaciated, and perturbed, and weeping day and night, she did not get sleep at night. O king, broken (down) by grief, she (even) did not feel hungry. Then (her) friends came there, and asked Sukalā. (They said:) “O Sukalā, beautiful in all limbs, why are you weeping now? O you of a beautiful face, tell (us) the cause of your grief.”

Sukalā said :

50b-56a. That my righteous husband has gone for (obtaining) religious merit. He is roaming over the earth for pilgrimage. That my lord has gone after leaving me who am faultless and sinless. I am a chaste woman of good behaviour, always meritorious and loyal to my husband. That (my) husband intent on getting (i.e. visiting) a sacred place, has left me and gone. Therefore, O friends, being extremely afflicted by separation (from him) I am grieving. When a very cruel husband (like mine) leaves his dear wife and goes (away), it is better (for the wife like me) to destroy my life (i.e. to commit suicide); it is better to eat poison; it is better to enter fire; it is better to destroy (my) body. O friends, It is better to end my life; but forsaking the husband is not better. I am unable to put up with the ever-terrible separation from him. O friends, I am always afflicted by that separation.

The friends said :

56b-60. Your lord, your husband, who has gone on a pilgrimage, will come (back). You are unnecessarily drying up your body, you are grieving in vain. O young lady, you are tormenting yourself to no purpose; you are uselessly giving up pleasures. Drink drinks, enjoy (the fruit of) what you yourself have given before. Whose is the husband? (i.e. to whom does the husband belong?) To whom do the sons, relatives and kinsmen belong? In this mundane existence nobody belongs to anybody else. One has connection with none else. (People) eat, enjoy. O young lady, that is (just) the fruit of the worldly existence. When a being is dead, who would enjoy or see its fruit? O young lady, what (people) drink, enjoy is the fruit (that is got) from the worldly existence.

Sukalā said :

61-83. Whatever you have said is not approved by the Vedas; but that woman, who, separated from her husband, always lives all alone, would be a sinful one. Good people do not honour her. In the Vedas she is always said to be with her husband. A relation is produced due to the power of religious merit.

In the scriptures the husband is always described as the sacred place for women. She should always invoke him by means of speech, body and deeds. Intent upon truthful thoughts, she should always mentally worship him. The side of the husband—(especially) his right side—is always a great holy place. When a woman, having resorted to him, lives in the house, she gets the fruit of the gifts which he gives and the merit (he collects) when he performs a sacrifice, and the fruit that he gets (by bathing) at Vārāṇasi in Gaṅgā, or at Puṣkara, or at Dvārakā or at Avanti, or Kedāra at (the temple of) Śiva; (and) not that woman who always performs sacrifices. O friends, such a fruit she never obtains. (By resorting to her husband) the woman of an excellent complexion always obtains a beautiful face, good fortune in the form of a son, bath, gifts, decorations, garments, ornaments, good fortune (in the form of her husband being alive), form, lustre, glory, fame and merit. There is no doubt that she gets all (this) through the grace of her husband. When a woman, when her husband is alive, practises another mode of life (than the one that is prescribed), (all that) becomes fruitless, and she is called an unchaste woman. On the globe (i.e. the earth) the youth, beauty and form of women is certainly said to be for the husband alone. A wife is said to be one who has good sons and good reputation. There is no doubt that when the husband is pleased in the existence, the wife is pleasing to the sight. If on the globe there would be a wife without (i.e. segregated from) her husband, how can she have happiness, beauty, glory, fame and sons on the earth? She experiences great misfortune and unhappiness in the worldly existence. She would always be sinful and would behave unpleasantly. When her husband is pleased with her, all the deities are pleased. When her husband is pleased, sages, gods and men are pleased (with her). The husband is the lord, the husband is the preceptor, the husband is the deity along with other deities. O prince, the husband is a holy place, and (is) sacred for the wives (i.e. the wife). He is also her sentiment of love, ornament, form, complexion and fragrance. She puts on an elegant dress, ornaments (etc.) except on the auspicious parvan days; she shines with elegant dresses and ornaments when her husband is (with her). Without the husband she is like milk in the mouth of a serpent. The glorious, charming

and auspicious wife practises good vow for her husband (only). If a woman puts on an elegant dress (etc.) when her husband is dead, all her beauty, complexion (etc.) is reduced to the form of a dead body. People call her a prostitute on the earth. Therefore, listen, that woman who desires great happiness on the earth, should never remain without her husband. The husband is described in the scriptures to be the highest Dharma of the wife. Therefore, a wife should not abandon that eternal Dharma. This, I know, to be the Dharma. How would (my) husband forsake (me)? In this connection, O friends, an ancient account is heard. It is the meritorious account of Sudevā, that (i.e. listening to which) destroys sins.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Ikṣvāku Goes Ahunting

The friends said :

1. Who is that Sudevā about whom you talked? Tell us as to how she behaved. You have told (about her). Tell us the truth.

Sukalā said :

2-7a. The great, glorious king, Manu's son, Ikṣvāku by name, lived in Ayodhyā. He knew the rules of conduct; he was exclusively devoted to religious ends; he knew everything, and he honoured gods and brāhmaṇas; his wife was ever meritorious and devoted to her husband. With her he performed many sacrifices and (visited) various holy places. Sudevā, devoted to truthful conduct, was the daughter of Vedarāja, the brave and illustrious king of Kāśī. King Ikṣvāku married her. Sudevā was beautiful in all limbs, and was devoted to the vow of truth. With her, his beloved, the best king, the meritorious leader of people, enjoyed.

7b-17. Once that great king went with her to a forest. Having reached a forest (on the bank) of Gaṅgā, he always enjoyed hunting, (by) killing lions, boars, elephants and buffaloes. In front of him, who was (thus) sporting, a boar, adorned with (i.e. accompanied by) a large herd of boars and (his) sons and grandsons, arrived. His only beloved female hog remained by his side. With (other) boars and hogs she surrounded him only. The hog, seeing the king of kings who was difficult to conquer and who was engaged in hunting, remained very courageously with his wife and by his sons, grandsons, elders and young ones after having taken the shelter of a mountain. O great king, knowing the great slaughter of those beasts (in the forest), the hog said to his sons, grandsons and wife : “O darling, the very powerful and brave lord of Kosala, Manu’s son, is enjoying hunting, and is destroying many beasts. There is no doubt that the great king, after seeing me, will come here. I have certainly no danger to my life from other hunters; (but) the king, seeing my form, will not forgive me. O dear one, there is no doubt that he, the very lustrous one, full of great joy, with arrows in his hand, holding a bow, accompanied by dogs and surrounded by hunters, will kill me.”

The female hog said :

18-19. O dear one, whenever, in this great forest, you see many hunters equipped with many weapons, you give up your great courage, power and valour, and with your heart dejected through great fear, run away, along with these my sons and grandsons. (Now) seeing this lord of kings and the best of men, what will you do? O dear one, tell me the reason.

20-32. Hearing her words, the boar, the king of hogs, gave the (following) answer to her: “O dear one, listen why I am afraid of a great hunter and go away. Hearing the (sound of) hogs, the great hunters, who are sinful and cunning, commit evils in the inaccessible caves of the mountain. They all are always wicked, always conceive many sins, and are born in the families of sinners. I am scared of dying at their hands; (for) though I die (after being shot by them), I shall again go to a sinful (existence). O darling, scared of an untimely death, I shall go away to a mountain or a mountain-cave. This king, greater than the world, a king of the nature of Viṣṇu, has come.

O dear one, on the battlefield I shall fight with valour and bravery with the glorious one. If, by means of my own lustre I shall conquer the king, I shall enjoy incomparable fame on the earth. (If I am) killed in the battle by that best hero, I shall go to Viṣṇu's heaven. The lord of the earth will be highly satisfied with the flesh and marrow of my body. Due to him the deities of the good worlds will be gratified. This one, with the thunderbolt in his hand, has come. O beautiful one, when I meet with death at his hands, it will be a gain and excellent fame for me. Due to him I shall have glory on the earth and in the three worlds; (and) I (shall) go to Viṣṇu's world. I was not scared like this; I went agitated, (so) I went to the mountain-peaks. I went there as I was afraid of a sinful (hunter), O dear one; (and) on seeing (this king practising) piety, I have remained (here). I do not know my former sin, committed in another (i.e. former) existence, by the accumulation of which, I went to (i.e. was born in) the species of hogs. I shall (now) wash the former, terrible accumulation of sins with the water of hundreds of very sharp and whetted arrows. O you female hog, giving up your love for me, and taking with you our sons, grandsons, daughters and children in the family, go to the mountain, Give up your folly (i.e. foolish love) for me. This Viṣṇu has come. By his hand (i.e. killed by him) I shall go to that highest position of Viṣṇu. Fortune also has laid open the gates of heaven for me. I shall go to the best heaven."

Sukalā said :

33. O friends, having heard those words of the magnanimous hog, his beloved, with her heart sinking, then spoke.

The female hog said :

34-51. The herd, of which you are the lord, (shines) being adorned by sons, grandsons, friends, brothers and other kinsmen and relatives. The herd, adorned by you only, shines. O you glorious one, what will be the condition of this herd without you? O dear one, due to your power only these roaring boars, my young sons, roam on the mountain. Fearless on account of your lustre, they eat well the bulbs and roots. Due to your lustre,

they are not very much scared of lions and men in inaccessible places, forest-bowers, villages and cities and on this mountain, as they are protected by your lustre, O you very valorous one. Abandoned by you, all these young sons of me will be afflicted, confounded and senseless. All these young ones will never see (i.e. have) a happy course after going (from here). A beautiful woman does not at all look charming without her husband. (Even though she is) decorated with divine, golden ornaments, garments, food, clothes, father, mother, brothers and sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law and others, she does not shine without her husband, as the night without the moon, (or) a family without a son (does not shine), (or) as a house without a lamp never shines. Similarly, O you, who cut off (i.e. remove) the pride (of your enemies), the herd does not at all shine without you. As a man does not shine without (good) behaviour, (or) an ascetic does not shine without knowledge, (or) as a king does not shine without (good) counsel, in the same way this (herd) does not shine (without you). As a boat full (of goods) does not (go on well) in an ocean without a fisherman, (or) as a caravan does not (shine) without its leader, similarly this (herd) does not (shine without you). As an army does not shine without a general, similarly this army of hogs (does not shine) without you, O you highly intelligent one. It will be helpless like a brāhmaṇa without (the study of) the Veda. Having entrusted the responsibility of the family to me you are going (to fight). Knowing that death is easy (i.e. would come easily) how are you having such a pledge? O dear lord, I shall not be able to sustain my life without you. O you highly intelligent one, with you alone I shall enjoy heaven, earth or even hell. I am telling you the truth and the truth only. O lord of the herd, we two—you and I—taking the sons and grandsons and the excellent herd (with us) shall go to an inaccessible place with a big cave. One goes to fight (only) after abandoning (i.e. being prepared to abandon) one's life. Tell me now what gain will there be in death (i.e. dying at the hands of the king)?

The boar said :

52-60a. You do not know the excellent way of life of the brave. Now listen to it. If a warrior desiring to fight with another warrior, goes to him (and says) : 'Fight with me, I have come

(here) to fight (with you)', (and if the man) does not give (i.e. is not ready to have) a fight with (that) other man through desire, greed or delusion, then, listen, O dear one, he would dwell in the Kumbhīpāka hell for a thousand yugas. There is no doubt that it is the highest duty of kṣatriyas to fight (when challenged to fight). If the fight fought by him after going to the battlefield is won by him, he enjoys great glory and fame. If he, extremely fearless due to his valour, is killed while fighting, he obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the brave and enjoys divine pleasures. O dear one, listen, he would dwell in the world of the brave for twenty thousand years, and during that period he is honoured with the practices of gods. There is no doubt. Here comes the brave son of Manu, asking for a fight. I must certainly give it. The welcome guest asking for a fight, and of the form of the eternal Viṣṇu has arrived. O auspicious one, I must offer him a reception in the form of a fight.

The female hog said :

60b-61a. O dear one, how shall I (be able to) see your valour when you would fight with the magnanimous king ?

61b-66. Saying so, and hurriedly calling her dear sons, she said (to them) : "O sons, listen to my words. The welcome guest in the form of the eternal Viṣṇu asking for a fight, has come. I have to go where this (my lord) will go. As long as (this my) lord, your protector, remains here, you go away to the inaccessible opening of a mountain-cave. O (my) children, live there happily, avoiding skilful hunters. I must go there only where he (i.e. my lord) will go. This your eldest brother will protect the herd. All these (your) uncles will protect you. O my good sons, leaving me (here), go away, all of you."

The sons said :

67-68. This best mountain is full of many roots, fruits and much water. There is no fear for anyone. Life is happy. You have both, all of a sudden, uttered these, fearful (words). O mother, tell us the reason for all this.

The female hog said :

69-70. This very terrible king, of the form of Kāla (i.e. god

of death) has arrived. Longing for hunting, he sports in the forest by killing many beasts. He is the very powerful and unassailable son of Manu, named Ikṣvāku. O my good sons, this (god of) death will kill (you). My good sons, go away.

The sons said :

71-73. He, who goes (away) after abandoning his mother and father is wicked-hearted. He goes to a very terrible and fearful hell. He who, after drinking the holy milk of his mother, becomes shameless and spiritless, and goes (away) leaving his mother and father, goes to a pussy hell, stinking with the bad smell of insects. Therefore, we shall leave (our) father here only, but shall take our mother (with us).

74-75. In this way depression of spirits for the sake of Dharma and Artha (moral duty and worldly interest) overcame them. All of them full of power and lustre remained after having grouped themselves into an array. Full of daring courage and energy, and with valour, they, roaring and sporting, saw (there) the king's son.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

The Boar Gives a Tough Fight to Ikṣvāku

Sukalā said :

1-8. Thus those boars stood up for fighting. The hunters stood by the king standing before them. O best king, the great hog resorted to the mountain-peak. He stood after arranging his great herd in an array. The tawny, fat, plump-bodied, irresistible hog having large fangs and mouth, roared very fearfully, O king. The great king saw them resorting to the groves of śāla and tāla. Hearing those words of them the brave son of Manu (said) : “Seize the brave hog, kill him who is proud of his strength.” Thus the hero, the brave son of Manu, spoke to them. Then all the hunters, fascinated by the rapture of hunting became ready

and furnished with armours, and proceeded with the dogs. The great and very mighty king was full of great joy. Mounted upon a horse, he was ready with his army having four constituents. He came to the bank of Gaṅgā on the best mountain Meru, full of gems and minerals and adorned with various kinds of trees.

Sukalā said :

9-19. (He came to the mountain) which best mountain, having the heap of the rays of the sun, was very lofty and high, had reached the sky itself, was beautified by many elephants that moved (on it); which shone with pure drops of water, resembling pearls, (and caused by) waves and ripples on the banks, rising from the pure stream of the Gaṅgā due to the crowds of people. The best mountain with its white slabs of stone washed everywhere, was endowed with excellent beauty. Surrounded (i.e. covered) by gods, Cāraṇas, Kinnaras and Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas, bebies of celestial nymphs, sages, best elephants, Vidyādharas the mountain shone with (trees) like śrikhaṇḍa, candana, sarala, śāla, tamāla, rudrākṣa, and desire-yielding trees giving divine powers. It was variegated with minerals of various kinds. It shone with aerial cars, variegated with various gems, with golden staffs and wives (i.e. women). It shone by the groves of coconut trees and divine betal-nut trees. It was adorned with flowers of divine white lotuses, bakula, and decorated with pieces of plantain trees, (also) with campaka-flowers. The mountain was decorated with reddish ketaka-flowers, and also the extensions of many creepers and with lotuses. It was adorned with beautiful flowers of many colours and with various trees. It was full of divine trees and crystal-slabs. It shone with the meditating saints, best meditating saints who had attained divine powers and who lived in its caves; and also with charming streams and many fountains. The mountain shone with the confluences bristling with the streams of rivers. The lord of mountains looked beautiful with deep lakes, small pools, having pure water and with peaks standing together. It was adorned with śarabhas, tigers and herds of deer. That lord of mountains always shone with highly intoxicated elephants, buffaloes and the ruru deer, and also with many divine substances.

20-22. Manu's son, the brave lord of Ayodhyā, (named)

Ikṣvāku, (was there) with his wife and the army having four constituents. In front (of him) the brave hunters and the fast dogs were going to the place where the brave, strong boar (remained) with his wife. He remained, after having resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā on the Meru-land, protected by many old and young hogs.

Sukalā said :

23-27. The delighted hog said to her very dear wife : “O dear one, see, the mighty lord of the Kośala country has come. The king is having the sport of hunting with me as the target. I shall just have the battle delighting gods and demons.” Then the very lustrous king, the archer with arrows in his hands, who was delighted, said to (his wife) Sudevā, of a truthful behaviour : “O darling, see the very powerful, roaring hog, accompanied by his attendants and irresistible for the hunters. O dear one, today only I shall kill him with good, sharp arrows. The very brave one will come to me only to fight (with me).”

28-31. The pleasing, brave (king), speaking thus to his wife, said to the hunters : “O very brave ones, urge on the hog.” The brave ones, having power, lustre and valour, and roaring, ran fast. All of them went to the hog with the speed of wind. The foresters pierced the hog of a brave form with volleys of sharp arrows and various weapons and missiles.

Sukalā said :

32-35. Arrows and javelins were discharged by the hunters; the arrows (discharged by them) showered on the mountain as clouds would shower on the earth. Struck by (hunters) giving strong strokes, the hog, the protector of the herd, who had gone to fight, was completely vanquished by hundred (of hunters). With his sons and grandsons he would destroy (i.e. he destroyed) his enemies. The hunters struck by his fang in the war fell down. Due to his speedy whirlings the hands and feet of a steady (person) dropped down. The hog saw the roar of (i.e. the roaring) hunter coming to him; and the lustre on his face was destroyed when struck with his fang. He went to the place where the king was. He (i.e. the king) did not want to fight. The lordly hog very much resisted and frightened the lord of the Ikṣvākus and was

angry. Delighted with fighting, he desired to fight with Ikṣvāku (king) in the forest.

36-43. The hog skilled in fighting again desired to fight (with Ikṣvāku). The angry hog, shaking the earth with the front part of his mouth, sharp teeth and claws, and proudly making the humkāra sound, struck the sinless king. O king, finding him to have the valour like that of Viṣṇu, the son of Manu was thrilled with joy. The divine king, seeing the valour of the boar regarded him like Yama. Thinking that he was the enemy of gods in the form of a hog, and seeing the very powerful and huge opposing army, he suddenly collected (his army) for the destruction of the boar. He sent elephants, speedy chariots and hunters holding arrows and swords along with (missiles called) bhuśuṇḍi and mallets and having nooses in their hands. They were delighted and aimed at him. The horses and elephants that had gone to him, though warded off, remained (there only). At places he was seen, at places he was not seen. At times he would show (i.e. cause) fear, at times he would crush the horses. The hog, invincible in the battle, and with his eyes red due to anger, crushed the brave soldiers and made an inviolable sound. The brave lord of Kośala, seeing that boar, fighting, unconquerable in war, of a huge body and giving out a sound (i.e. thundering) like the clouds, roared; moved on the battlefield; and the brave one illumined the heroes with his own lustre. The fangs in his (i.e. the hog's) mouth shone and flashed like lightning. The son of Manu saw the hog in that condition, and pierced him with sharp arrows, and each one of the rest was pierced by his relatives (i.e. fellow-warriors).

44. The king said : "O (my) armies (i.e. my soldiers), why should you, who are brave, not seize him through your prowess? (Just) fight there with him with (your) whetted and sharp arrows."

45-59. Hearing the words of that noble one who was angry, all the soldiers stood together to fight. Many thousands of warriors, struck in all directions, and pierced the hog in battle, who had remained on the battlefield. On the battlefield, he was pierced with volleys of arrows by certain huge excellent warriors. The mighty ones hit the hog difficult to conquer in battle with the strokes of discs and throws of bolts. Then the angry hog having

bravely cut off the nooses, remained in the battlefield. He went forth along with great boars. Then the brave hog, wet with the streams of blood, struck with his mouth and cut off the horses and elephants of the brave (soldiers). Angrily he struck the brave footsoldiers with the sharp fore-part of his fang. Being angry he struck the trunk of an elephant and being delighted, hit, with the nails of his toes, the warriors that were struck (down). Then all the hogs and hunters, with their eyes red with anger, resorting to fighting, fought with one another. The boars were killed by the hunters, and many hunters were killed by the boars. Being struck and red with blood, they dropped on the ground. The boars, giving up (i.e. at the cost of) their life, killed the hunters, and they fell on the battlefield. There the boars died and dogs gave up their life (i.e. died). Here and there, the hunters that were dead (i.e. that were killed), lay on the ground. The king, with the strokes of his sword, killed many boars. Some boars fled away; some were killed; some, being frightened, resorted to inaccessible places, bowers and interiors of caves, O best king. Some hunters, pierced by hogs with the tips of their fangs, and some, cut off into pieces, died and went to heaven. On all sides snares, nooses, traps and tubular organs of the body had fallen here and there. The hog, proud of his strength, remained only with his wife and five or seven grandsons (ready) to fight. The female hog again spoke to that hog, dear to her :“O dear one, with me and these children move (to a safe place).”

60-77a. The pleased hog said to his very dear wife, who was afflicted : “Broken (like this) where shall I go ? (Now) there is no place (for me) on the earth. When I run away, the herd of boars will perish. A hog drinks water by (remaining) between two lions; (but) a lion does (i.e. can) not drink water by (remaining) between two hogs. Thus excellent power is observed in the species of boars. Therefore I shall kill (the enemies); when broken I shall go (away). O you glorious one, I know piety causing many auspicious results. When a man, who is fighting, flees, leaving the holy battlefield through greed or fear, he would be a sinner. There is no doubt about it. He (who) is delighted at seeing the array of sharp arms, dives into the divine river and goes to the other end of the holy place. He goes to Viṣṇu’s world, and would, emancipate the men (of his family). When now that

(fight) has come by, how should I, being broken, go (away from it)? Listen to the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets), who, on seeing the battle, crowded with weapons, and giving delight to great heroes, is delighted and goes forth (to fight). For him a great (i.e. sacred) bath in Bhāgīrathī is had at every step. O dear one, (now) listen (to the description of him), who, fleeing from the battle through greed, goes home. He would manifest his mother's blemish, and is called a woman. O dear one, here (i.e. in a battle) are present sacrifices and holy places. Here (i.e. in a battle), gods of great prowess, sages, Siddhas and Cāraṇas witness (things creating) delight. All the three worlds are present there, where the heroes present themselves. The inhabitants of the three worlds watch him who has fled from the battle(-field), and curse and again and again laugh at the shameless sinner. King Dharma (i.e. Yama) would put him to pain (i.e. inflict pain upon him). There is no doubt about it. He, who faces (the enemy) and would drink blood from his own head (i.e. whose head would bleed while fighting), obtains the fruit of performing a horse-sacrifice and goes to Indra's heaven. There is no doubt that when the brave one conquers his enemies in a battle, he enjoys glory and many pleasures, O you beautiful one. When, unsupported (i.e. all alone) he, facing (his enemy), gives up his life, he would go to the highest place, and enjoys a divine maiden. Thus I know piety; how should I flee (from battle) and go (away)? There is no doubt that on the battle-field I shall fight with this courageous Ikṣvāku-king, the son of Manu. O you beautiful one, take these young ones with you, and go. Live happily."

77b-82. Hearing the words of him, she said : "I am bound by your bonds, called the sentiment of love, and which are the playthings of joy, O dear one. O you, who remove the pride (of others), with my sons I shall cast my life in front of you." Thus the two desiring the good of each other, and having well conversed with each other, decided to fight, and observed the enemies, (and) the very intelligent, brave Ikṣvāku, the lord of Kośala. As the cloud thunders in the sky in the rainy season, he roared along with his beloved and would challenge (i.e. challenged), with the tips of his hoofs, the excellent king. The noble one saw the roaring hog, endowed with valour. The courageous

king, with a horse's speed, moved forward facing him (i.e. the hog).

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Boar Dies Fighting

Sukalā said :

1-2. Seeing his own irresistible army completely vanquished by him (i.e. by the hog) who was difficult to be stopped, the king got angry with the cruel, unbearable hog. He, mounted upon a horse, and taking a bow and an arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, speedily moved in front of him.

3-7. When the lord of the herd of boars saw the king, the killer of his enemies, mounted upon the back of a horse and endowed with excellent valour, he went forth to him on the battlefield. The best hog, when struck with a sharp arrow of (i.e. by) the king, went to the soles of the feet of the horse. With a quick mind (i.e. decision) he overstepped him with a very sharp speed. The horse was afflicted by the hog. The hog did not go to (i.e. fall on) the ground. The horse, with his movement checked, and struck on the face, fell down on the ground. Then the king just went to (i.e. got into) a small chariot. He roared with sounds of (i.e. befitting) the species of a hog. The hog, who was in the midst of the battlefield, was speedily struck with a mace by the Kośala-king seated in his chariot; and then giving up his body, he just went to the excellent abode of Viṣṇu.

8-11. When the lord of hogs after fighting with the king in the battle, fell on the ground after being struck (by the king), best gods showered excellent flowers on him. On him a great heap of flowers was accumulated and the fragrance was as it were of the Santānaka flowers. Gods, being fully pleased, showered on him sandal with saffron. Being pondered over by the king, O king, he became one having four hands. He had (on his person) divine garments. His form was divine, and with his lustre he shone as the sun (shines). When, he being greatly honoured by the king of gods and (other) gods, went to heaven in a divine car,

he, casting his former body here only, again became the lord of Gandharvas.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

The Female Hog Fights Back

Sukalā said :

1. Then all the hunters with nooses in their hands went to the female hog. Also the brave, fearful, terrible (dogs) came (to her).

2-8. Seeing her dear (husband) killed along with the family in the great war, the female hog took her four children (i.e. young ones) and remained (there). (She thought:) 'My husband got what he had thought (i.e. desired). He is honoured by sages and gods. The noble one has gone to heaven by means of (having performed) this act. I too shall go along the same path to heaven. The lord (i.e. my husband) waits (there for me).' Having well determined (like this) she thought about her sons: 'When my four sons, sustaining (i.e. continuing) our race live here, the noble, very brave hog also will have (the best position in heaven). By what means shall I protect my sons?' Thus being engrossed in thinking, and seeing the narrow passage on the mountain, she tried to find out an extensive (i.e. wide) path to go out. Having made up her mind about her sons, O great king, she said to those sons who were very much confused: "O sons, as long as I am (alive), go (away) quickly."

9-11. Out of them the eldest son (said): "How shall I with a strong desire to save my life go away abandoning my mother? How pitiable is my mother's good life? I shall retaliate my father's enmity. I shall overpower (my) enemies in the battle. He, who takes the three younger brothers to a mountain-cave by abandon-

ing the father and the mother, is of a sinful mind. He goes only to hell crowded with crores of worms.”

12-15. She, very much afflicted, said to him: “O son, how shall I, the great sinner, go by abandoning you (here)? (i.e. I shall be a great sinner if I abandon you here.) Let my three (younger) sons (only) go away (from here).” (Then) the three younger sons only went into the interior of the forest. When they were just witnessing, the two (i.e. the mother and the eldest son) again and again, roaring due to their lustre and great strength, went to the battlefield.

16-18. Then the hunters, having the speed of wind, came (there). O king, the three (younger sons) were sent (by her) along the difficult path; and the two—the mother and the (eldest) son, remained there by blocking the path. Then the hunters, holding swords, arrows and bows came there and struck (them) with javelins, sharp discs and pestles. Keeping his mother at the back, the son fought with them. He struck some with his fang; he hit some with his mouth. He also struck with the tips of his hoofs. The brave ones fell in the battle. The hog fought in the battle. The noble king saw him.

19-23. Knowing that he was brave like his father, the very lustrous, brave son of Manu, with arrows in his hand went in front of him. Struck by the noble (Ikṣvāku) king with a sharp crescent-shaped arrow, and with his chest pierced, he fell on the ground (i.e. the hog fell dead on the ground). She became very insensible due to (the death of) her son; she herself went towards him. O king, some brave hunters, hit by her with the strokes of her mouth, fell on the ground, and some fled (away) and some died. Then the female hog causing to flee (that) great army with her fang, appeared as (if) a female destructive deity, causing great fear, had sprung up.

24-27a. Then the queen said to him who resembled the son of the lord of gods: “O king, she has killed your large army. Tell me the reason why you are ignoring her, O dear one. To her the great king said: “I shall not kill this female (hog). O dear one, the deities have indeed seen a great sin in killing a female. Therefore one should not kill a woman. Nor shall I send anyone (to kill her). O beautiful one, I am afraid of committing a sin by killing her.”

27b-31. Speaking thus, the king, the lord of the earth, ceased (to speak). A hunter by name Jhārjhara saw that female hog, creating a havoc amidst them, and irresistible even to excellent warriors. He pierced her with a very speedy and sharp arrow. She, with the arrow stuck into her (body), and covered with blood, endowed with the majesty of valour and looking charming, was hurrying. She again struck that Jhārjhara even with her mouth. Struck with a sharp sword by that Jhārjhara who was falling, she was rent asunder. Panting (heavily) due to (exertion of) the fight, she fainted, and (though) alive on the ground, she was overpowered with great grief.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

The Story of Raṅgavidyādhara

Sukalā said :

1-3a. Seeing the female hog, who loved her sons, panting and fallen (on the ground), Sudevā, who was full of pity, went to her, who was afflicted, and having (first) sprinkled cold water over her face, she then sprinkled holy water over the entire body (who was) afflicted and resplendent with fighting. She (i.e. the female hog) spoke to her who was sprinkling.

3b-4. She spoke to the beloved (wife) of the king in a melodious human voice: "O respectable lady, may you be happy. When you sprinkled (holy water) over me, the heap of my sins left (me) by your contact and by my seeing you."

5-7. Hearing these great (i.e. significant) words (uttered) with a wonderful expression on her face (the queen said:) "I see a wonder, that you uttered words (like a human being). This one is born in the species of an animal, and clearly and elegantly speaks excellent Sanskrit with vowels and consonants (distinctly spoken) to me. She has done an excellent bold act with joy and (causing) amazement." Then the magnanimous (queen) who was there, said (these) words to her husband:

8. "O king, see, this extraordinary one who, though belon-

ging to a species of beasts, speaks great (i.e. excellent) Sanskrit, as a human being would speak.”

9. Hearing that, the king, best of all the learned ones (said): “This (her speech) is wonderful and the expression on her face is (also) wonderful, which I have neither seen nor heard before.”

10. Then the king spoke to that Sudevā, who was very dear to him: “O dear one, ask the auspicious one as to who she might be.”

11-14. Hearing (these) words of the king, she (i.e. the queen) asked the female hog: “O good one, who are you? It is a great wonder that though born in a species of beasts you speak human language which is elegant and full of knowledge. Tell me your former acts. (Tell me) also about the noble warrior, your husband. What is the very valorous act that he did, due to which he has gone to heaven? Tell us all about you and your husband’s former life.” Saying so, the magnanimous beloved (wife) of the king ceased speaking.

The female hog said :

15-23a. O good lady, if you are asking about the life and former deeds of me and this noble one, I shall tell all that to you. This highly intelligent one is a Gandharva, skilled in singing. His name is Raṅgavidyādhara, and he is well-versed in all branches of knowledge. Pulastya, the very lustrous best sage, possessing brilliance, having resorted to the best mountain Meru having beautiful caves and streams, practised penance with a truthful mind. The Vidyādhara went there by his own will, O great lord. Resorting to that great mountain, he practised singing, which was accompanied by tunes and beating time, O you of a charming smile. Hearing his song, the mind of the sage was distracted from meditation. He said to that Gītavidyādhara (or Raṅgavidyādhara), who was singing (there): “O learned one, by your very sweet, divine, holy song sung to beating time and measure, even gods are allured. This is not otherwise (i.e. it is quite true). O you of a good vow, due to your song, having (observed) the time in music, a sentiment and modulation, my mind has gone away (from) meditation. Therefore, leaving this place, (please) go to another spot.”

Gītavidyādhara said :

23b-28a. Music is like spiritual knowledge; (then) why should I go to another place? I have never caused any unhappiness to anyone. I have always given happiness to people. All deities are pleased by means of this singing. O brāhmaṇa, even Śiva, delighted with the sound of a song, is brought (over here). Singing is said to be full of all emotions. Singing gives joy. All sentiments like that of love set up by singing, appear charming. The four excellent Vedas are elegant because of singing. All the deities are delighted because of singing, and not by anything else. You are censuring just that singing only, and are sending me away like this. O noble one, in this (in doing so) your injustice (i.e. injustice done by you) is noticed.

Pulastya said :

28b-35a. Today you have spoken the truth only. The meaning of a song gives much religious merit. O you very intelligent one, listen to my words; give up your pride. I am not condemning singing. I am honouring singing. It is not otherwise (i.e. I am not condemning it). The lores are fourteen¹; together they bring about feelings. They bring success to beings through steady mind (i.e. if their minds are steady). By thinking about one (object only) penance and sacred hymns are highly successful. The great group of the organs of sense is, in my opinion, fickle. There is no doubt that leading the mind away from meditation, (i.e. even after the mind is taken away from meditation), it (again) very much takes the self to objects of sense. For this reason only, sages go to that place for the accomplishment of penance where there is no sound, no (beautiful) form or no young woman. This your singing is holy and gives great pleasure. We (i.e. I) would not look helplessly on it (since we are unable to prevent it), so, O hero, we (i.e. I) cannot remain in (this) forest. You (please) go to another place, or we (i.e. I) shall go.

Gītavidyādhara said :

35b-40. The noble one by whom is conquered the powerful group of the organs of sense is called a victor, a yogī, a brave one,

1. Vidyāḥ caturdaśa—The fourteen lores are: Four Vedas, six Aṅgas, Dharma, Mīmāṃsā, Tarka or Nyāya and the Purāṇas.

a sādḥaka (one engaged in penance, spiritual practice). O you very intelligent one, he, who is not distracted from his meditation on hearing a sound or seeing a form, is a courageous (person) who accomplishes penance. Since you are void of lustre and conquered (i.e. overpowered) by organs of sense, you will not have the power to affront my singing even in heaven. All void of valour leave the forest. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, this region of the forest is common to gods and all beings, it is as much mine as it is yours. There is no doubt about it. How (should) I go abandoning this excellent forest? You may go (or) you may stay. Whatever is to happen will not be otherwise.

41-44. After having heard these words of Gītavidyādhara, the intelligent sage thought : 'Doing what would merit accrue (to me).' Having forgiven him, the best brāhmaṇa went to another place. Always taking a posture suited to profound and abstract meditation, the righteous-minded (sage) practised penance, after giving up desire and anger, and also infatuation and greed. Thus Pulastya, the best meditating sage then remained like this, controlling all organs of sense along with his mind.

Sukalā said :

45-52. When that noble, best sage Pulastya left, that Gītavidyādhara also, ordained by destiny, thought : 'Due to my fear (i.e. fear caused by me) he is not to be seen for a long time. Where has he gone? Where does he live? What does he do and how does he do (it)?' Knowing that that son of Brahmā (i.e. Pulastya) was adorning (i.e. living in) a secluded (spot) in the forest, he (i.e. Gītavidyādhara), in the form of a hog, went to his excellent hermitage. O beautiful lady, having seen the eminent brāhmaṇa seated upon a seat, and obscured by lustrous flames, he disturbed him. With a wicked act he would certainly attack (i.e. he attacked) the brāhmaṇa with the tip of his mouth. O great king, he (i.e. Pulastya) knowing him to be a beast, pardoned him for his wicked act. He urinated before him, dropped his excrement before him, danced and sported before him, fell and again rose in front of him. O king, knowing him to be a beast, the sage let him go. When, once, he, again went (there) in the

same form, he laughed a loud laughter. He also wept there and sang melodiously.

53-54. O king, having (once) seen Gītavidyādhara like that, and having seen his acts, the meditating saint (thought): 'This might not be a hog.' He knew (i.e. recalled) his account: '(He) had disturbed me, but I had let him go taking him to be a beast. He is wicked and very cruel.'

55. The highly intelligent, best sage, realising that glorious one to be the meanest Gandharva, got angry and cursed him:

56. "Since, in the form of a hog you are disturbing me like this, therefore, O you great sinner, go to (i.e. be born in) the sinful species of a hog."

57-62. (Thus) cursed by that brāhmaṇa he went to god Indra; and O you beautiful lady, he, trembling, said to the glorious (god): "O thousand-eyed one, listen to my words. I have carried out your mission. That best sage, who was practising a severe penance, has been disturbed and agitated by me (rendering non-efficacious his penance). I have been cursed by that brāhmaṇa. My divine form is destroyed. O Śakra, protect me who am thus reduced to the existence of a beast." Knowing the account of that Gītavidyādhara, Indra went with him and said to the sage: "O you the best one of those born of a divine power, you who know divine faculties, grant favour, O lord. O best sage, pardon this (hog) and free him from your curse." Thus requested by Indra, the brāhmaṇa, with his mind pleased said:

Pulastya said:

63-65a. O lord of gods, on your word I should pardon (him). O great king, a very powerful son of Manu will be (born). (His name will be) Ikṣvāku; he will be righteous-minded, and a protector of all religions. When this (hog) will meet his death at his (i.e. Ikṣvāku's) hands, he will get (back) his own body. There is no doubt about this.

The female hog said:

65b. I have told you all this account of the hog. Now I shall also tell my (own account). With your husband, listen to it. (I shall.)

also (tell you about) the terrible sin I had committed formerly (i.e. in my former existence).

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Story of Vasudatta and His Daughter Sudevā

Sukalā said :

1. Sudevā, whose entire body was beautiful, said to the female hog: “How is it that you, who are born in a species of beasts, speak Sanskrit?”

2. Tell me wherefrom you had such great knowledge. O you auspicious one, how do you know the account of your husband and of yourself?”

The female hog said :

3-7. Due to my being a beast I was enveloped by delusion, O you of an excellent complexion; and struck with swords and arrows, I fell on the battlefield. I was overpowered by swoon, and was unconscious, O you of an excellent face. O beautiful lady, with your pious hand you sprinkled (water on me). When my body was sprinkled over with the holy water by your hand, swoon left me and disappeared. As the darkness disappears due to lustre (i.e. light), similarly, O auspicious one, my sin disappeared due to your having sprinkled (over my body). O you of a charming body, by your favour I obtained old knowledge (i.e. knowledge of previous existence). O you auspicious one, I realised that I shall reach a holy position.

8. Listen, I shall narrate my former account. O you auspicious one (I shall tell you) what great sin, I, a sinner, had (formerly) committed.

9-12. In the great country called Kalinga, there was a city by name Śrīpura, which was full of all accomplishments, and was inhabited by (the people of) the four castes. There lived a certain brāhmaṇa, known as Vasudatta, who was always engaged in the duties of a brāhmaṇa, and always devoted to truthful acts. He knew the Vedas; he was erudite; he was pure, virtuous and rich.

He was full of (i.e. he had ample) wealth and grains, and was adorned (blessed) with sons and grandsons. O you auspicious lady, I am his daughter adorned (blessed) with brothers and sisters, kinsmen, relatives, ornaments and decorations, O you of a beautiful face.

13-17. My very intelligent father named me Sudevā. O you highly intelligent one, I was always dear to my father. I was matchless in beauty; and like that (i.e. like me) there was none in the (whole) world. I, of a charming smile, was puffed up with the pride of my beauty and youth. I was a maiden very beautiful and adorned with all ornaments. Seeing me, all the people—all relatives of my class (i.e. caste) solicited me in marriage, O you of a beautiful face. I (i.e. my hand) was solicited by all brāhmaṇas; (but) my father did not give me (in marriage to any brāhmaṇa). O you glorious one, the highly intelligent one (i.e. my father) was deluded through his affection (for me). That my magnanimous father did not give me (to anyone in marriage).

18-21. Youth with (all its accompanying) feelings set upon me, O you young lady. Seeing my beauty like that, my mother, being greatly afflicted, said to my father: "Why do you not give (our) daughter (in marriage to a brāhmaṇa)? O glorious one, give this daughter (in marriage) to a good, magnanimous brāhmaṇa (for) she has (now) attained youth." The best and excellent brāhmaṇa, Vasudatta, said to (my) mother: "O you noble one, listen to my words. O you of an excellent complexion, I am deluded by great fascination for (our) daughter.

22-23. O auspicious one, listen, I shall give my daughter to that son-in-law, who would be a householder. This Sudevā is dear to me like my own life. There is no doubt about it." Thus my father Sudatta spoke (to my mother).

24-27a. (There was a brāhmaṇa, who was) virtuous, pure, born in the family of Kauśika, and was well-versed in all lores, and was endowed with the qualities of brāhmaṇas. Seeing him, who did not have father and mother, who was endowed with the study of the Vedas, and who was reciting (them) melodiously, and seeing the form of him, who had come to (our) door for alms, my very intelligent father said : "Who are you? Tell me now your name; (tell me about your) family, lineage, your practices."

27b-29. Hearing (my) father's words he said to Vasudatta (my father) : "I am born in the family of Kauśika. I have, mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. My name is Śivaśarman. I do not have father and mother (i.e. I am an orphan). I have four other brothers, who have mastered the Vedas. I have thus told you (about) my family, and about the practices of my family."

30-35. Thus everything was told to my father by Śivaśarman. O you blessed one, when an auspicious time, date and the star of the deity presiding over marriage arrived, I was given (in marriage) to that brāhmaṇa by my father. With that glorious one I stayed alone in my father's house. Being very much deluded by the great wealth of my father and mother and pride, I, a sinner, did not serve my husband. O you auspicious one, I never shampooed his body through love or affection or (pleased him) with (sweet) words. A sinner that I was, I always looked at (i.e. treated) him cruelly. O auspicious one, due to my contact with unchaste women, I reached their condition. I did no good to my mother, father, husband and brothers. I went here and there.

36-38. Seeing such wicked behaviour of me, my husband, through his love for his father-in-law (and mother-in-law) my very intelligent husband did not say anything to me. I, a great sinner, was however, warded off by (the members of) my family. All those (members of the family like) my father and mother, knowing the character and goodness of Śivaśarman, were afflicted by my sin (-ful acts).

39-46. Seeing my wicked acts, my husband went out of the house. He left the country and the village and went (away) from it. When my husband had gone, my father was full of anxiety, and was afflicted with grief as one would be afflicted with a disease. My mother said to her husband (i.e. my father) who was afflicted with grief: "What for is your worry, O my dear (husband)? Tell me your worry." "O pleasing one, the brāhmaṇa, (our) son-in-law, has abandoned (our) daughter and gone. This one is of a sinful conduct, merciless and performs sinful acts. The very intelligent Śivaśarman has been forsaken by this one (only). The highly intelligent brāhmaṇa, O dear one, due to his courtesy towards our entire family and me, does not say anything at all to Sudevā. He lives peacefully and the intelli-

gent, learned man does not condemn or censure Sudevā moving wantonly. This wicked Sudevā will destroy (our) family. O you housewife, leaving her, I (shall) go.”

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

47-65. . O dear one, today you have understood the virtues and the vices of (our) daughter. She has now been spoiled because of your affection and love for her. One should fondle one's son till he is five years old. O dear one, one should always nourish him with the idea of training him (even) through affection also, by giving him bath, coverings, food, (other) eatables, drinks. There is no doubt about this. O dear one, one should urge the son in (i.e. to acquire) virtues and true learning. A father is always free from affection for the sake of teaching virtues (to his son). O dear one, affections take place (i.e. should be shown) in the protection and nourishment (of the son). (A father) should never describe his son as virtuous. Everyday he should censure him. He should always talk to him (with) sternness, and should afflict him with (harsh) words, so that the son, intent upon (acquiring) learning, will pursue true knowledge. Even through a device used to correct his pride, he leaves his sin far away. Perfection in learning and virtues is produced (in him). A mother should beat her daughter, and a mother-in-law should beat her daughter-in-law. A preceptor should beat his pupil. Thus they acquire perfection, not otherwise. A wife should flog her husband, a king should punish his minister. A soldier should beat his horse, and the elephant's driver should beat him. O lord, by means of being beaten and being protected, they are prepared with a thought for training. O lord, along with the good brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, you yourself have forever spoilt her. In the house she was made undisciplined (i.e. was not checked); therefore, O you highly intelligent one, she is spoilt. O dear one, listen to my words: The father should keep his daughter in his house till she becomes eight years old. He should not keep a strong (i.e. grown up) one. Both the parents get the (fruit of the) sin which a daughter, living in her father's house, commits. Therefore an able (i.e. a grown up) daughter is not kept in his house (by the father). She should get nourishment in the house of him to whom she is given. She, living there, should devoutly

win over her virtuous husband. The family becomes famous; the father lives happily. The husband suffers due to the sin which she, living there (i.e. in the husband's house) commits. Living there, she always prospers with sons and grandsons. O dear one, the father obtains fame due to the good qualities of his daughter. Therefore, O dear one, one should not keep in one's house one's daughter with her husband (i.e. a married daughter). O dear one, in this context there is an account that is so heard: O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you the account of the hero Ugrasena, the eldest Yadu, as it took place, when the great twenty-eighth Dvāpara yuga arrived. Listen to it with a concentrated mind.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

The Story of Padmāvatī

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

1. In the charming region of Māthura, in (the city of) Mathurā, lived the best Yādava king, the killer of his enemies, and well-known as Ugrasena.

2-7. The king knew the meaning and essentials of the whole religion; he knew the Vedas; he was learned and powerful; he was a donor, an enjoyer, an appreciator of virtues and a virtuous one. He, the intelligent one, ruled (over Māthura) and protected his subjects justly. Thus was that very lustrous and valorous Ugrasena. In the holy country of Vidarbha there lived a dignified (king named) Satyaketu. His glorious daughter, having eyes like lotuses and face like a lotus, and devoted to truthful behaviour, was Padmāvatī by name. That (Padmāvatī, the) daughter of the Vidarbha (-king) was endowed with feminine qualities and by means of her virtues based on truthfulness, she shone like another one born from the sea (i.e. like Lakṣmī). Ugrasena (the king) of the Māthura country married her, of beautiful eyes. O glorious one, with her the valorous one enjoyed himself happily. Being very much pleased with her qualities, he became happy with her (i.e. in her company).

8-9. The lord of the Māthura (country) was infatuated by her, due to her affection and love. The lucky Padmāvatī had become dearer to him than his own life. He did not eat without her, and sported with her (only). He did not at all enjoy any great pleasure without her.

10-12. O best brāhmaṇa, thus the best ones became affectionate towards each other, loved each other and gave great pleasure and joy to each other; and the glorious king of kings, Satyaketu, remembered his daughter Padmāvatī. Her mother (also) was very much afflicted. That king of Vidarbha (i.e. Satyaketu) respectfully sent his messengers to the brave king Ugrasena, O best brāhmaṇa.

13-18. The messenger said (these) words to the great king Ugrasena: "The brave lord of Vidarbha greeting you with devotion and affection, tells (i.e. informs) about his well-being, and inquires about your (well-being). O great king, Satyaketu has asked (i.e. requested) you like this : '(Please) send my daughter (to me) to see (so that I can see) her.' O lord, if you have regard for his love and affection, then send that glorious Padmāvatī, who delights you. O great king, he is very anxious and uneasy." Then, O best brāhmaṇa, having heard (these) words, the best and glorious king Ugrasena, due to love and affection for that magnanimous Satyaketu and through generosity, sent his dear wife Padmāvatī (to her father's —Satyaketu's—house).

19-27. That Padmāvatī, sent by him, was full of great joy, and went to her own former house. The charming and auspicious one saw (i.e. met the members of her) family led by her father. And she, devoted to truth, saluted her father's feet. O best brāhmaṇa, the great king, the lord of Vidarbha was full of great joy, when Padmāvatī had arrived (there). Greeted with presents and other respectful considerations, with garments, ornaments and decorations, Padmāvatī lived happily in her father's house. She lived with her friends without any apprehension. As before she at that time rejoiced in the chamber, tank and also in the palace. Having as it were become a young girl again, she stayed (there) without bashfulness. O brāhmaṇa, she always behaved without bashfulness with her friends. She, the glorious, loyal wife, full of great joy, knowing that the happiness obtained in the

father's house is difficult to be obtained in the father-in-laws's house, sported (there). Wondering longingly 'When (again) could there be enjoyment like this' the beautiful lady everyday longed for sport in the groves with her friends.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Padmāvati Succumbs to Gobhila's Fraudulent Approach

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

1-9a. O you glorious one, once on the best mountain she saw a beautiful grove, adorned with groups of plantain-trees, with the śāla trees, tāla trees, tamāla trees, coconut trees, with big betelnut trees, mātuliṅga (i.e. citron) trees, orange trees, and charming jambu trees, with auspicious campaka trees and pāṭala trees that had blossomed, and also with kuṭaka and bunyan trees; it was full of aśoka and bakula trees, and was adorned with various other kinds of trees. She saw that holy mountain with trees that had blossomed. Everywhere it appeared beautiful, as it was full of many kinds of minerals. She also saw an excellent lake full of holy water on all sides, shining with fully developed lotuses and other fragrant golden lotuses, with white lotuses and fully developed red lotuses, with blue lotuses, white lotuses and with water-fowls, with other aquatic birds, and was full of various minerals. The lake was white all round, and was full of groups of many kinds of birds. The mountain was graced everywhere by auspicious and sweet cooings of cuckoos and was everywhere agreeable due to the sounds (produced) by madhura trees. It looked lovely by the excellent humming of the bees.

9b-13. The princess saw the mountain like this, charming and excellent, and the lake beautiful all round. Padmāvati, the daughter of the Vidarbha-king, while playing and engaged in sporting in water, and on the bank of the lake with her friends, saw that auspicious forest full of flowers everywhere, and laughed and sang sportively due to fickleness and powerful feminine nature. O brāhmaṇa, that beautiful lady, thus sporting in that lake moved happily.

Viṣṇu said :

14-15. The best demon Gobhila, the servant of Kubera, endowed with all enjoyments, was going in a divine aeroplane along an aerial path (i.e. in the air). At the time he saw the fearless, broad-eyed daughter of the Vidarbha-king.

16. She, the best of all women, the dear wife of Ugrasena, matchless in beauty in the world, shone beautifully in all her limbs.

17-25. (He thought:) 'Might she be Rati, (the spouse) of Cupid, or (Lakṣmī) the dear (wife) of Hari, or goddess Pārvatī or Śacī (the wife of Indra). No other woman like her, the best among women, is seen on the globe. The beautiful woman shines with her beauty and arts as the beautiful full moon shines among the stars. This woman with a charming smile (shines) as a swan in lakes. Oh, how beautiful does her form appear ! Oh, what an amorous gesture ! Who is this charming woman having beautiful round breasts? To whom does she belong?' The demon Gobhila thought like this about (that) beautiful Padmāvatī. O brāhmaṇa, for a moment he thought as to who she was and to whom she belonged. With superior knowledge he knew that she was the daughter of the Vidarbha-king. There was no doubt about it (in his mind). She was the wife of Ugrasena, devoted to her husband. She stood by her own power, and was not easily attainable even by men. Ugrasena, who has sent this young lady to her father's house, is a great fool. He is unfortunate. How would the (king) of a fraudulent mind ever live without her? Or is the king impotent that he would leave (i.e. he has left) her?

26-28a. Seeing her he instantly became enamoured. 'This chaste lady is difficult to be secured even by men. How can I go (near her) and enjoy her? Lust afflicts me very much. If I shall go without enjoying her, then I shall die today only. There is no doubt about it; since lust is very powerful.'

28b-35. Being anxious like this, Gobhila observed mentally (i.e. thought to himself). Taking up an illusory form of king Ugrasena, the demon Gobhila fully became as the great Ugrasena was in point of gait, voice and language; and putting on garments and apparel (like Ugrasena) and being of the same age, and

putting on divine flowers and garments and having besmeared his body with divine sandal, and with his entire body (rendered) handsome as was the lord of Māthura, and thus being full of (i.e. exactly like) Ugrasena, and being equipped with great trickery and (fine) figure and handsomeness he remained on the top of the mountain, after having resorted to the shadow of an aśoka tree. Seated on a slab, the wicked-minded one with the neck of the lute (in his hand), was singing a melodious song, enchanting the universe. The wicked-minded one, enamoured of her beauty, sang a song equipped with the beating time, measure and execution, and adorned with the seven notes. O brāhmaṇa, he, seated on the mountain-top was full of great joy.

36. That beautiful Padmāvatī, who was in the midst of her friends, heard that melodious song, equipped with beating time, measure and the musical time.

37. 'Who is this pious one that is singing a song which gives great pleasure, which is full of fine execution and endowed with all ideas?'

38-42. The princess with curiosity went there with her friends and saw the mean demon Gobhila in the garb of the king, wearing divine flowers and garment and with his body besmeared with divine sandal, with all his limbs decorated with ornaments, seated on a spotless slab, resorting to (i.e. in) the shadow of an aśoka tree. The loyal wife Padmāvatī (thought): 'When did my glorious lord, the king of Māthura, and devoted to religious practices, come, after having left far behind his kingdom?' When she was thinking (like this), the sinful one called her hurriedly: "O my darling, come on." She was amazed and was doubtful as to how her lord had come (there).

43-46. She was ashamed, was afflicted, and then hung down her face (and thought:) 'I am sinful, of a bad conduct. I have turned fearless. There is no doubt that the glorious one will be just angry with me.' When she was thinking like this, that wicked one too hurriedly called her: "O my darling, come on, O dear one, O you of an excellent face (i.e. beautiful one), separated from you I cannot sustain my life; and life is very dear to me; I am longing for your love; I am greatly unable to leave you."

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

47-48. Thus addressed, she, full of bashfulness, saw the handsome one. Then the demon Gobhila, having embraced that virtuous Padmāvatī, the daughter of Satyaketu, took her to a secluded place, and fully enjoyed her as he desired.

Sukalā said :

49-54. The beautiful one did not find the mark (known to her) on his testicle. Taking up her garment, she became afraid and afflicted. Angrily she spoke (these) words to that mean Gobhila: "Who are you of the form of a demon, who are acting wickedly and who are merciless?" O king, she, with her eyes full (of tears) due to grief, trembling, and oppressed with the burden of affliction was bent on cursing him: "O you wicked one, having come (here) in the guise of my husband, you have destroyed my excellent chastity—my best virtue. Having wailed melodiously, you have destroyed my existence. (Now) see my power; here (i.e. now) only I shall give you a very fearful curse." She, who desired to curse Gobhila, spoke like this.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Padmāvatī Is Grief-stricken

Sukalā said

1-12. Hearing her words, Gobhila said (these) words: "Tell me the reason for which you desire to curse me. By what blemish am I defiled that you are ready to curse me? O auspicious one, I am a demon by name Gobhila, a warrior of Paulastya (i.e. Rāvaṇa). I act like a demon, I know excellent lore. I know the meaning of the Vedas and branches of knowledge, I am also skilled in arts. All this I know. (Now) listen about my demonish behaviour. I enjoy per force the wealth and the wives of others, and do so in no other way. Listen, we demons properly follow

the demonish ways and do so knowingly. I am telling you the truth (and) the truth (only). Everyday we observe the loopholes of brāhmaṇas. By (putting in) difficulties we destroy their penance; there is no doubt about this. Finding a loophole in the brāhmaṇas we destroy them, O respectable lady. There is no doubt about this. O you of a beautiful face, listen. We destroy a sacrifice in honour of gods, (other) sacrifices and religious rites. There is no doubt about this. There is no doubt that we live by keeping far away excellent brāhmaṇas, the god Lord Nārāyaṇa, and a chaste, illustrious lady of a good mind and devoted to her husband. O respectable lady, demons cannot bear the lustre of a good brāhmaṇa, of glorious Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), and of a lady loyal to her husband. The demons, the best evil spirits flee away due to the fear of a chaste lady, of Viṣṇu and of a good brāhmaṇa. I am roaming over the earth, according to the way of life of a demon. Why do you desire to curse me? What do you think my fault is?"

Padmāvatī said :

13-14. You alone have destroyed my dharma (chastity) and good body. O sinner, I am a chaste, pitiable, and virtuous woman, loving my husband. I remained on my own (i.e. followed my own) course (of life). You have defiled me through deceit. Therefore, O wicked one, I shall certainly burn you too.

Gobhila said :

15-16. If you agree I shall explain to you the way of the life of even a brāhmaṇa, who has kept the sacred fire. O princess, listen. Offering oblation (to fire), he should not leave the fire-chamber. He alone is one who has kept the sacred fire and who offers sacrifice everyday.

17-18. O you of an excellent face, I shall also tell you about another (thing)—the way of life of a servant. O respectable lady, he is called a meritorious servant, who is always pure in mind, deeds and speech, who always obeys (his master) and remains behind and in front of him.

19-20. That virtuous, learned and eminent son, who protects his father and especially his mother by his mind (i.e. willingly),

by his body and his actions, has (the merit of) a bath in Bhāgīrathī everyday. He who does (i.e. behaves) in an opposite manner, is undoubtedly a sinner.

21-24a. I shall also narrate to you another excellent vow (in honour) of the husband. O you beautiful lady, listen. That lady alone, who everyday renders service to her husband by good words, mind (i.e. willingly) and actions, and she, who is pleased when her husband is pleased, she, who would not abandon her angry husband, she who does not find fault with him, and she who is contented (though) beaten (by him), and she who always stands in the forefront in all the deeds of her husband, is called a woman devoted to her husband.

24b-28. A father, though fallen, or full of many blemishes, or affected with leprosy or who is angry, is never to be abandoned on any account by his sons. Those sons (who) indeed serve their father or mother, go to the highest heaven. That is the highest place of Viṣṇu. The servants who in this way wait upon their masters go to the heaven of the lord through the grace of the master. A brāhmaṇa (who) does not abandon (keeping) fire, goes to Brahmā's heaven. A brāhmaṇa, who abandons (keeping) fire is called the husband of a śūdra woman. There is no doubt that a servant, by deserting his master, would be plotting against his master.

29. A brāhmaṇa should never give up (keeping) fire, a son should never abandon his father, and a servant should never desert his master. I am telling the truth (and) the truth (only).

30-34. Those who go away leaving (these), go to the ocean in the form of hell. If, O respectable lady, a woman desires her welfare here (i.e. in this world), she should never desert her husband who is fallen, diseased, languid, affected with leprosy, or who is void of (i.e. unable to do) all acts, and whose accumulation of wealth has been lost. A woman who would leave her husband and go and desire to work for someone else here (i.e. in this world), is looked upon as an unchaste woman and is fully excommunicated. People call that woman an unchaste one, who, through fickleness, enjoys pleasures and decorates herself when her husband has gone to (some other) village. Thus I know the dharma (which is) also approved by the Vedas and the sacred treatises.

35-45. There is no doubt that I shall tell you the entire reason about this, viz. as to why at the beginning the creator created demons, goblins and evil spirits. Brāhmaṇas, demons, fiends, goblins, have, O beautiful lady, studied all that is said about dharma. Demons know all (that), but do not practise it. Demons, void of knowledge, do (all acts) without the (proper) rite. Men abandoned by (i.e. not practising) rites go (i.e. act) unjustly. They (i.e. demons) are created for disciplining them (i.e. such men); and not for anything else. We discipline those mean men, who perform (various) acts without proper rites by severely punishing them. You have done a terrible and very cruel act. Why, abandoning your state of a housewife, did you come here? And with your own mouth (i.e. you yourself) are saying that you are a lady loyal to your husband! But that your loyalty to your husband is not seen through your action. Leaving the husband, why have you come here? Decorating yourself, putting on ornaments and (attractive) dress, and (thus) being shameless, you are staying here. O sinful one, tell me why, for what purpose, you have done (this). Being fearless and wanton, you are living in the mountain-forest. Listen, I have subdued you, a sinner, with a great (i.e. severe) punishment. Behaving impiously, you, a wicked woman, have abandoned your husband, and come (here). Where is your loyalty to your husband? Show that before (i.e. to) me. You are indeed an unchaste woman, who have deserted your husband. When a woman occupies a separate bed (i.e. does not occupy the same bed as her husband does), she is looked upon as unchaste.

46. Your husband is at a distance of a hundred yojanas. Where is your loyalty to your husband? You are behaving like an unchaste woman.

47-48a. O you shameless woman, O you cruel one, O you wicked one, facing me (i.e. to me) what (will) you say (now)? Where does your penance exist? Where is your lustre? Where is your power? Show me, today only, your power, valour and prowess.

Padmāvatī said :

48b-52a. O you mean demon, listen. My father brought me here from my husband's house through affection. What sin is

there? I, who am devoted to my husband, have come (here) leaving my husband not through lust, or greed, or delusion or hostility (to him). You yourself, taking the guise of my husband, have deceived me. I went forth to you, taking you to be (the king of) Māthura. O you mean demon, (now) when I know you to be (a demon) using tricks, I shall reduce you to ashes just with one hum-sound.

Gobhila said :

52b-56a. Blind human beings do not (i.e. cannot) see. Now listen. How do you, bereft of the eye of dharma know me now? Listen; when a desire for (visiting) your father's house arose in you after you had stopped thinking about your husband, then, your eye of wisdom in your heart had evidently perished. (Now), with your eye of wisdom lost, how do you recognise me on the earth (i.e. here)? To which wife mother, father, brother, kinsmen and relatives belong? (i.e. none of them is related to her). In all (these) places (i.e. in the places of all these), the husband alone (remains); there is no doubt about this.

56b-58a. Saying so, and laughing loudly, the mean demon Gobhila (again spoke:) "O you unchaste woman, listen. Today I have no (cause of) fear from you. What would happen by means of your curse? You are unnecessarily trembling. Resorting to my house, enjoy pleasures as you like."

Padmāvatī said :

58b-59. Go (away), O you of wicked acts. What are you, being shameless, talking? I have (always) lived as a chaste woman, devoted to my husband. O you great sinner, if you talk (shamelessly) like this, I shall burn you.

60-62. Saying so, she sat on the ground in a secluded place. Gobhila said to her who was afflicted with great grief; "O you beautiful one, I have deposited my germ into your womb. From it will spring up a son who will agitate the three worlds." Speaking like this, the demon Gobhila then left.

63. When that demon of wicked acts and sinful behaviour had gone, the princess, full of great grief, wept.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Padmāvati Returns to Her Husband's Place

The wife of the brāhmaṇa said :

1-2. When that wicked-hearted Gobhila of a bad conduct had left, Padmāvati, being full of great grief, wept. O best brāhmaṇa, hearing her weeping, all her beautiful friends asked the princess.

3-4. (They said :) “Well-being to you, why are you weeping? Tell us your story (i.e. what you did). Tell us where the great king, your (husband) the lord of Māthura, who had invited you by addressing you (as) ‘O dear one’ is”. Weeping again, again she spoke with grief.

5-6. She told (them) everything that had taken place through error. They took her who was weeping and was extremely afflicted to her father's house. Then the damsels told (the account) in the presence of (i.e. to) her mother. Hearing that the queen (i.e. her mother) went to her husband's mansion.

7-10a. She told the account of her daughter to her husband. Hearing it, the king was extremely grieved. Giving her a vehicle, clothes etc. he sent her, along with attendants, to Mathurā. She went to the mansion of her dear (husband). The father and the mother concealed the blemish of their daughter, O best brāhmaṇa; but the righteous-minded Ugrasena, seeing Padmāvati who had arrived, was glad, and again quickly said these words to her:

10b-11. “O you beautiful lady, I cannot live without you. You are very lustrous; O dear one, you are always dear to me due to your virtues, character, devotion, truth and qualities like devotion to your husband.”

12. Ugrasena, the lord of men, the best king, speaking (like this) to dear wife Padmāvati, enjoyed in her company.

13-16. The fierce foetus, causing fear to all the worlds, grew. Padmāvati knew the cause of that foetus. Night and day she thought about it growing in her womb: ‘What is the use of this one, destroyer of the worlds, being born? Now I have nothing to do with this wicked son.’ Everywhere she enquired about a herb that would cause abortion. The lady, secured (i.e. tried to

secure) a great (i.e. effective) herb for abortion. Everyday she adopted many remedies for abortion.

17-21. The foetus, fearful to all the worlds, grew. Then the foetus said to his mother, Padmāvatī: “O mother, why do you trouble yourself by (using) the herbs everyday? (The span of) life increases due to religious merit, and life becomes short due to sin. (Beings) live or die according to the ripening of their deeds. Painful foetuses depart, while others, that are immature (i.e. not properly developed) die as soon as they are born on the earth. Some others are endowed with youth. All children, old men, young men, being under the sway of vital power, die and (i.e. or) live according to the ripening of their deeds. There is no doubt that medicinal herbs, formulae and deities are only a means.

22-24. You do not know me—what kind of (foetus) I am. Formerly you have seen and heard about the very powerful (demon) Kālanemi, who is a very mighty (demon) among the demons, causing fear to the three worlds. In the great war between gods and demons I was formerly killed by Viṣṇu. To finish enmity with (i.e. to take revenge on him, I have come to your womb. O mother, do not act rashly and do not exert yourself everyday.”

25-31a. O best brāhmaṇa, speaking thus to his mother, he ceased (speaking). His mother then gave up her exertion, (but) became very much afflicted. When ten years had passed, he grew. Then he became very lustrous, and that Kāṁsa became very powerful, who harrassed the people, the residents of the three worlds; and who, killed by Vāsudeva, went to (i.e. obtained) salvation. There is no doubt about it. Thus O dear one, I have heard like this. Whatever will happen, will happen. I have told you what has been determined in all the Purāṇas. The daughter, who lives in her father's house, perishes. O dear one, a daughter should not have longing for staying in her father's house. Abandoning this wicked one, a great sinner, be composed. Great sin and terrible grief would be obtained (by us if we keep her here). O dear one, enjoy with me, that leads to felicity in the world.

The female hog said :

31b-41a. That best brāhmaṇa, hearing these words contain-

ing good advice, decided to forsake (his daughter). He then called me. He gave me everything like garments and decorations (and said to me). "O good one, listen. Due to your bad conduct, that best, intelligent brāhmaṇa went (away). O you wicked one, O you of a bad conduct in the family, go there where your husband is. There is no doubt about this (i.e. this cannot be otherwise); (or go to) the place which you like. Do as you are advised." O you glorious one, after my father had said like this, I, a shameless woman, abandoned by my father, mother and (other) members of the family, quickly went away, O you beautiful lady. O you good lady, I did (i.e. could) not secure a comfortable abode. People reproached me saying, '(Oh) this unchaste lady has arrived.' Void of the pride of my family, and wandering (here and there), I went from (my father's) country, to a holy Śiva-temple in Saurāṣṭra in the Gurjara-country. It was a city full of prosperity and known as Vanasthala. Listen, O queen, at that time I was very much oppressed by hunger. Taking a potsherd in my hand I started begging. Being extremely afflicted I entered the gates of householders. People saw my form and reproached it. They did not give me alms, (saying) 'this wicked one has come (here)'. I thus obtained proper food with difficulty, and was entirely oppressed with poverty.

41b-43. While wandering, I saw an excellent house, surrounded by a high rampart, with a chamber for (the recitation) of the Vedas, which was crowded with many brāhmaṇas; it was full of wealth and grains, and was adorned with male and female servants. I entered that beautiful house, affluent with glory.

44. That house which was auspicious all round was the house of that Śivaśarman only. Sudevā, afflicted with grief, said: "(Please) give (me) alms."

45-47. The best brāhmaṇa, Śivaśarman, heard the words: "Give (me) alms". That righteous-minded, very intelligent Śivaśarman, smiled and said to his beautiful wife Maṅgalā by name, who was of the nature of Lakṣmī: "O dear one, this enfeebled one has come to (our) door for alms. O auspicious and dear one, being full of great pity, call her and give her food. She has come to me after having recognised me."

48-50. Maṅgalā said to her dear husband: "I shall give her food dear to (i.e. liked by) her." Speaking like this to her

husband Maṅgalā, endowed with auspiciousness, again fed me, the weak one, with sweet food. That righteous-minded, great sage Śivaśarman said to me: "Who are you that have come here? To whom do you belong? On what mission do you roam everywhere over the earth. Tell me."

51-53. Having thus heard the words of my glorious husband, I, the sinner, recognised him by his voice. When I saw my husband, I hung down my face through shame. Maṅgalā, beautiful in all limbs, said to (our) husband: "Tell me who she is, (since) on seeing you she is ashamed. Please favour me and tell me who she might be."

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Sudevā Goes to Heaven

Śivaśarman said :

1. O Maṅgalā, if you are now asking, then listen to (my) words. O you of an excellent face (i.e. O you beautiful one), know that for which you have asked (me).

2-5. O you of charming eyes, this miserable one who has now come in the form of a beggar, is the daughter of the brāhmaṇa Vasudatta. O good one, this one is Sudevā, my wife, always dear to me. Leaving her (father's) country for some reason, she has come (here). O you beautiful one, she is scorched by grief due to me and separation from me. Recognising me, she has come to you in the form of a beggar. Realising this, O good one, you, desiring what is very dear to me, should show her good hospitality. There is no doubt about it (i.e. you should certainly show her good hospitality).

(The female hog said :)

6-14. Maṅgalā, who looked upon her husband as a deity, and who herself was extremely auspicious, was full of great joy on just hearing the words of her husband. O you beautiful one, she made (arrangements for) my bath, clothes and food. O you

good one, I, devoted to my husband, was adorned by her, dear to her husband, with golden ornaments decked with jewels. O queen, I was graced by her with respect, bath and food. I was (also) respected by my husband. In my heart there was endless, very poignant grief, fully destroying my life. I observed her respect for me; in the same way (I noted) my affliction. I had terrible anxiety due to which my life departed (i.e. was about to depart). I, a sinner, committing bad acts never gave a good answer to this best brāhmaṇa. I did not wash his feet, nor did I shampoo his body, nor did I give the glorious one (company) in solitude. How shall I, of a wicked resolution, talk to him? Then at night I fell there into the ocean of grief. When I was thinking like this, my heart burst; then O beautiful lady, my life, leaving my body, departed.

15-27a. Then there came brave, fierce messengers of Yama who held maces, discs and swords. O you illustrious one, I was, bound by them with chains binding strongly. I, who was weeping and who was very much afflicted, was taken by them to Yama's city. Being beaten with mallets I was harassed along the difficult path. Being reproached by them I was ushered into the presence of Yama. The noble and angry Yama looked at me. I was thrown into a heap of ashes; I was thrown into a heap of hells. An iron figure of man was made; it was heated in fire, and it was hurled on my breast for having deceived my husband. I was very much tormented with various troubles; I was burnt with the fire in hell; I was thrown into an oval vessel and on mud and sand. I was cut with blades of swords and dragged by a machine used for raising water. The noble one hurled me on Kūṭaśālmali trees. I fell into pus, blood and feces, full of insects. O princess, the same magnanimous one thus threw me into all poignant hells full of trouble. I was torn up with saw, and was very much struck with darts. O princess, I was also hurled into other hells; I was thrown into hollows like wombs, and into a painful narrow passage. That lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama) threw me into hells. Reaching (i.e. being born in) the species of goats, I experienced very terrible pain. I went to (i.e. was born in) the species of jackals and again that of a bitch; (then) I was born as a hen, a cat and a rat.

27b-32a. Thus that Yama threw me into different species,

and I was troubled in all births. O princes, he himself made (i.e. created) me a female hog on the earth. O you glorious one, there are many kinds of holy places in your hand. O you of an excellent complexion, you yourself sprinkled that (holy) water on me. O queen, O beautiful lady, by your favour, my sin has vanished, O you of an excellent face, by the lustrous religious merit of you only. Knowledge is produced in me. Now emancipate me, who have fallen into the hell-like peril. When (i.e. if) O queen, you do not emancipate me, I shall again go (back) to a terrible hell. O you illustrious one, protect me who am experiencing grief. Due to sinful thoughts I suffered. I am wretched, I am without a shelter.

Sudevā said :

32b-33a. O auspicious one, now tell me what good deed I have done that would give rise to religious merit, by which I would emancipate you.

The female hog said :

33b-39a. This illustrious Ikṣvāku-king, the son of Manu, the very wise one, is Viṣṇu, and you are Lakṣmī, not otherwise (i.e. and none else). O you auspicious one, you are devoted to your husband; you are glorious; you are a loyal wife; you are always chaste; you are full of all holy places; you are dear; O queen, you are full of everything and are always full of all gods. You alone are a great loyal wife in the world; you who have day and night rendered service to your husband, are dear to the king. O beautiful one, if you (desire to) do what I like, give me your merit earned by the service to your husband, even for a day. You are my mother, you are my father, you are my eternal preceptor. I am sinful, of wicked acts, given to falsehood and without knowledge. O glorious one, emancipate me. I am afraid of being beaten by Yama.

Sukalā said :

39b-40a. Having heard like this, she saw the king and said to him: "O great king, what do (i.e. should) I do? What does this beast say?"

Ikṣvāku (king) said :

40b-41a. O auspicious one, with your merit emancipate this one who is unhappy, helpless and gone to (i.e. born in) a sinful species. It will be very righteous.

41b-47. That very charming and auspicious lady Sudevā, when addressed like this, said “O you beautiful lady, I have given you (my) merit for a year.” When the queen uttered these words, just at that moment the hog became endowed with beauty and youth, adorned with a divine garland, got a divine body covered with lustrous flames, was rich with the beauty of all ornaments, and adorned with many jewels. She had a divine form, besmeared with divine sandal. The good one got into a divine aeroplane, and went into the higher region. She saluting the queen with her neck bowed down (in respect for the queen) then said: “O you magnanimous one, well-being to you; O beautiful lady, due to your favour, I, being free from sin, am going to the holiest and auspicious heaven.” O best one, listen, having thus saluted her, Sudevā went to heaven. I have (thus) told you all this as told by Sukalā.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Sukalā's Sickening Description of the Body

Sukalā said :

1-2a. Formerly, at that time I thus heard (about) the Dharma from the Purāṇas. How shall I, of a sinful resolve, enjoy pleasures without my husband? I cannot sustain my life with (i.e. in) my body without that husband.

Viṣṇu said :

2b-9. She thus narrated the excellent, great Dharma of the chastity of a wife; and those friends, excellent women, having heard the very meritorious Dharma for women, giving a great position (i.e. salvation) to women, praised that glorious Sukalā

devoted to virtue. O king, all brāhmaṇas, gods and all virtuous women call her to mind due to her prowess caused by love for her husband. Indra, the lord of gods, having given a great (i.e. serious) thought to the firmness of Sukalā, and he, the lord of gods, having well pondered over her great devotion (thought): 'I shall certainly shake her fortitude and her love for her husband.' The lord of gods hurriedly recalled to mind god Cupid. He, the fish-bannered (god), holding his flowery bow came there. The very powerful one was seen to be accompanied by his beloved Rati. Joining the palms of his hands, he said to the thousand-eyed (Indra): "O you lord, O you eminent one, O you who cut off the pride (of your enemies), why have you remembered me now? With all your heart give me an order today."

Indra said :

10-11a. This illustrious Sukalā is greatly devoted to her husband. O god of love, listen, give me an excellent help. Move away (swerve) this glorious Sukalā, auspicious due to religious merit, (from her devotion).

11b-20. Having heard those words of Indra, he said to him: "Let it be so, O thousand-eyed god; there is no doubt that I shall gladly help you." Cupid, of great lustre, and difficult to be conquered (even) by sages, having said so (spoke again:) "O god, I am capable of conquering gods, ascetics and best sages; then what to say of this woman, who has no strength in her body (i.e. who is weak)? O god, I always live in the limbs of women. (I live) in the foreheads, eyes, on the tips of their breasts, in their navels, waists, backs, buttocks, vaginal area, lips, teeth, middle parts (of their bodies); there is no doubt about this. I live everywhere; in their limbs and minor limbs. O god, a woman is my abode. I always live there. Living there, I slay all men; there is no doubt about this. A woman, weak by nature (and) tormented by my arrows, on seeing a handsome and virtuous (person like her) father, mother, or other kinsman or relative, and being struck with my arrows, is disturbed; there is no doubt about it. She does not even think of the consequence. O lord of gods, the vulva, and also the tips of the breasts of women, throb. They do not have patience. O lord of gods, I shall undoubtedly ruin Sukalā."

Indra said :

21-23. O mind-born (god), I shall become (i.e. turn myself into) a handsome, virtuous, wealthy man; and through curiosity I shall disturb this woman. O you dear to Rati, (I shall disturb her only through curiosity; and) not through longing for her, nor for frightening her, nor through cupidity, nor through infatuation, nor again through anger. (I am telling) the truth (and) the truth (only). How can I see her true devotion to her husband? Going from here I shall turn her (away from her vow). The cause for that would be the infatuation (caused) by you.

24-29. Having thus ordered the god of love, the king of gods brought about a change in himself (i.e. took up a different form), became handsome and virtuous, made his body graceful by ornaments, was endowed with all possessions and all pleasures and amusements, and possessed all generosity. He would show (i.e. he showed) his sportive movements, handsomeness, virtues and sincerity at the place where, O king, that respectable woman, the dear (wife) of Kṛkālā, stayed. But she did not at all look at the man possessing the wealth of handsomeness. O king, Indra would (follow her to) see her wherever she went. The thousand-eyed god looked at her only with a longing mind and with all expressions of lustful acts. Wherever the woman went—into a crossway, along a path or to a holy place, the thousand-eyed (god) saw her.

30-32. The female messenger sent by Indra went to Sukalā; and having smiled she said to the glorious Sukalā: “O (great are) your truthfulness, courage, charm and forbearance. In the world there is no other beautiful woman resembling a form like that of this one. O auspicious one, who are you? Whose wife are you? He, whose virtuous wife you are, is blessed and meritorious on the earth.”

33-37. Hearing her words the high-minded lady said (to her:) “(Kṛkālā) the religious-minded one, lover of truth, was born in the vaiśya caste. I am telling you the truth: I am the dear wife of that intelligent and veracious Kṛkālā. That my very intelligent, righteous-minded husband has gone on a pilgrimage. O glorious one, listen; three years have passed since he, my lord, left (for the pilgrimage). Since then I have been afflicted without

(i.e. due to separation from) the magnanimous one. Thus I have told you all this my account. Tell me who, that ask me ('who I am'), you are."

38-51a. Hearing the words of Sukalā, the messenger spoke again : "O good one, you are asking me like this. I shall tell you everything. O you of an excellent complexion, I have come to you for (i.e. on) some mission. Listen (as) I shall tell you; and having heard, know it accurately. O you of a beautiful face, your merciless husband has gone after abandoning you. What will you do with him, the sinful one, who does harm to his beloved, endowed with a good conduct? What, O you young lady, have you to do with him, who has gone (away) and is alive or dead? What will you do with him? You are thus grieving in vain. Why do you destroy your divine body, lustrous like gold? O you auspicious one, O you glorious one, a man does not get any pleasure except children's sports, when childhood is attained by him. In old age, unhappiness comes (to him), and old age completely destroys his body. O you beautiful lady, he gladly enjoys all pleasures in youth. As long as youth lasts, men enjoy all pleasures and enjoyments. A man enjoys as he likes. He enjoys pleasures as long as youth lasts. What will you do, O good lady, when youth has gone? O respectable lady, no occupation succeeds when old age comes (to him). An old man constantly thinks, (but) does not (i.e. cannot) easily do any job. O young lady, bridge is constructed after water has gone (i.e. flowed). In the same way, O auspicious lady, the body would be (useless) when youth has passed. Therefore, enjoy happily; and drink sweet wine. O you of charming eyes, these arrows of Cupid are burning your body. This handsome and virtuous man has come. O you of an excellent complexion, this best man, who knows everything, who is virtuous and wealthy, is ever full of love for you."

Sukalā said :

51b-60. The soul does not have childhood; in life there is no youth. He (i.e. the soul) does not have old age. He (has) accomplished (everything); he grants good divine attainments. He is immortal, unaging, pervading (everything), (has) well accomplished (everything), and is best among the omniscient

ones. Himself being desireless,¹ he fulfils desires, and lives in the world in the form of the soul. The formation of the body is seen to be like that of a house. As the body is (weak) due to old age, so is a house with a thread. One should effect it with the heaps of many sticks and collections of pieces of wood, with clay and water also. Besmeared with variegated (objects) by plasterers, a (piece of wood) becomes agreeable. A house first bound by a thread gets a form; and they themselves everyday maintain it by smearing it. The house constantly rocked by wind gets dirty. This is said to be the middle period of the house. It would lose its form, and the master of the house would smear it. The lord of the house, by his own desire, would make the house beautiful. O messenger, the youth of the house is said (to be like this). After a long time due to the heaps of sticks it becomes old. They lose their positions, and move to the tips of the roots. It does not (i.e. is not able to) stand the burden of the smearing, and stands (only) with a prop.

61-70a. O messenger, listen, this is said to be the old age of the house. The lord of the house, seeing the house falling, would leave it. To enter another house he goes away quickly. Like that are the childhood, youth and old age of men. In childhood, he, being of the form of a child, would act senselessly. He would even decorate his body with garments, ornaments and jewels, and also with smearings with sandal (-pastes), and others produced from *tāmbūla* etc. The body becomes young, and he becomes very handsome. He would nourish his exterior and interior with all juices. Being nourished like that he becomes strong. Due to the juices, fresh and excellent, increase in flesh takes place. O king, the limbs also become extended and corpulent. The minor limbs also take their own form due to the intake of juices also. The teeth, lips, breasts, arms, waist, back, both the hands and the soles of the feet (also) similarly develop. Due to these two (i.e. juices and flesh) the limbs develop. They become beautiful due to the juices and flesh. O messenger, due to these forms, a mortal becomes one dependent on juices. A mortal is called handsome in the world. Due to what would he be liked?

1. The analogy occurring in verses 53, 54, 55, 57 etc. is not sufficiently clear; also the description in vv. 94, 95, 101b etc. is not clear (Tr.).

70b-78. O messenger, this body is the store of feces and urine. The impure, shameless body always exudes (sweat). O you auspicious one, what is (the use of) describing its beauty? It is like a bubble on water. Till he is fifty years old, he remains strong. Then after that, day by day, he loses (his strength). His teeth become loose, and his mouth has a flow of saliva. He would not (i.e. is unable to) see with his eyes, and does not (i.e. cannot) hear with his ears. O messenger, he is not able to make any movement with his hands and feet. Being afflicted with old age, the body becomes unfit. The juice, dried up with the fire of old age, withers. O messenger, he becomes unfit. Who desires handsomeness? As an old house perishes—there is no doubt about it, in the same way the body becomes weak in old age. Everyday you are describing that beauty has come to me (i.e. I am beautiful). Due to what am I endowed with beauty? Who desires my beauty? Due to what (i.e. in what way) is the man for whom, O messenger, you have come to me—as one goes to an old house—powerful? On account of what are you praising (me)?

79-97. O messenger, now tell me, what did you see in my body? There is nothing here (i.e. in my body) which is short or extra as compared to his body. There is no doubt that as he is, so you are, so also I am. Who would not have beauty? On the earth there is no one (who is really) handsome. All heights end in a fall; O auspicious one, trees and mountains are devastated by time. Beings are like them (only), not otherwise. O messenger, the divine, pure soul, formless (and yet) having a form, is present everywhere, in all immobile and mobile objects. The pure one lives (everywhere) as one (and the same) water remains in (many) pots. On the destruction of the pots, it becomes one. You do not know (this). This soul also becomes just one on the destruction of bodies. I have always seen this form (only) of those who live in the world. Speak like this, after knowing him for whom you have come here. (Tell him:) you should show me something new about the body that is afflicted by a disease, and covered with cough, if you desire to enjoy me here. Blood drops from the body, and he is removed from his position. There is unsteadiness in all the joints of the body and remaining within he singly perishes and would give up his own form. Quickly the condition of feces takes place (i.e. food quickly turns into feces)

and (the body) would be (i.e. is full of) insects. He would then give up his own form painful like that. Listen, it later becomes full of bad odour due to insects. Then lice or worms are produced there; there is no doubt about this. The worm causes boils and terrible itch. The louse would produce disease, and would disturb the entire body. The itch scratched with the nail-tips is abated. Similarly hear about copulation (enjoyed) by them. There is no doubt that a mortal enjoys drinks and feasts on abundant supply of food. It is taken to the place of digestion by the breath (called) Prāṇa. O messenger, all that food taken to the place of digestion is covered there, and the wind (called Apāna) would make the feces fall (out of the body). The liquid which has become vigorous there, becomes red (blood). Being free from dirt and of a pure vigour it goes to Brahmā's place. Being dragged by the wind (called) Samāna, and taken by that very wind, he does not obtain a place. The semen remains unsteady. In the skulls of beings five (kinds of) insects live. Two of them live at the root of the ears, and (two) at the place of the eyes. Having the size of the small finger, they have red tails, O messenger. Having the (white) colour of butter, they have black tails. There is no doubt about this.

98-109. O good one, listen to their names being narrated by me: The two, named Piṅgalī and Śṛṅkhalī, remain at the root of the ears. The two Capala and Pippala remain on the tip of the nose. The two others, Śṛṅgalī and Jaṅgalī remain inside the eyes. There is no doubt that there are one hundred and fifty (varieties) of insects like that. All they remain at the border of the forehead and have the size of a mustard. All (these) carrying diseases deform (the body); there is no doubt about it. O messenger, listen, a pair of hair remains in his mouth. Know that the destruction of beings takes place just at that moment. There is no doubt about it. The vigour falls in the form of a fluid. There is no doubt about it. He drinks the vigour with his mouth, and by that becomes inebriated. It remains unsteady in the middle part of the palate. There remain (the two vessels of the body called) Idā and Piṅgalā and the artery called Suṣumnā. Due to the great power of it only, there is indeed the itch for sex in the cage formed by the net of arteries, in the case of all beings. O messenger, the organs of generation of the male and also of the female

throb. Then the male and the female, being inflamed with passion, unite. The body (of the male) is rubbed with the body (of the female). Due to coitus a momentary pleasure is produced. Then again a similar itch is (produced). Such a condition is indeed observed everywhere, O messenger. Go to your own place. There is nothing new about it. I have nothing new, nor do I do anything new. This is certain.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Sukalā Gets Prepared For the Showdown

Viṣṇu said :

1-4. When the female messenger was thus addressed by that Sukalā she went (to Indra). Indra, having understood those significant and truthful words of her, well spoken in a brief manner, and having perceived her boldness, courage and knowledge (thought:) ‘Who, (even) being a woman, would speak on the earth, words that are of the form of (i.e. endowed with) propriety and that are well-ordered and washed with the water of logic? This magnanimous one is pure and of a truthful nature. There is no doubt that she is capable of bearing the yoke (i.e. responsibility) of all the three worlds?’

5. Due to this Jīṣṇu (i.e. Indra) thought and said to Cupid: “With you I shall go to see that beloved (wife) of Kṛkālā.”

6-7. Cupid, proud of his power, replied to the thousand-eyed (Indra): “O lord of the gods, let us go (to the place) where the chaste lady is (staying). Having gone there, I shall destroy her self-respect, power, strength, courage, truthfulness and loyalty to her husband. Of what account is she (to me), O lord of gods?”

8-9. Having heard (these) words of Cupid, the thousand-eyed (Indra said:) “O Cupid, listen. Excessive talking is of no use. She is quite strong with true power. Due to religious rites she is quite firm. This Sukalā is unconquerable. Your valour is (of) no (use) there (i.e. against her).”

10-13. Hearing this, and getting angry, Cupid said to Indra:

“I have destroyed the power of sages and deities. Of what measure (i.e. how much) is her power (about which) you are telling me? You just see (i.e. in your very presence), I shall destroy the woman. As butter, on seeing (i.e. in the presence of) the lustre of fire, would melt, similarly I shall melt her with my form and lustre. Now certainly great mission has come up for me, who am going there. Why do you condemn my lustre (capable of) destroying the three worlds?”

Viṣṇu said :

14-17. Having heard the words of Cupid (Indra said:) “O Cupid, I know, (even) if you raise (i.e. augment) your courage, you cannot subdue her of a holy body, meritorious due to her virtue, and behaving piously. Going from here (with you) I shall observe your strong power.” With the archer (i.e. Cupid) and with the female messenger Rati, he again went to that chaste lady, who of a great merit was (all) alone and attached to her husband’s feet, as a meditative saint would place his heart (in meditation) and make it free from uncertainty. The glorious fish-bannered god (i.e. Cupid) made (i.e. took up) a form, extremely wonderful, endowed with an unlimited lustre, alluring the chaste lady, adorned with blue (garments) and full of objects of enjoyment. Also Indra (took up a similar form).

18-24. Seeing that great man, of many amorous sports and wandering like this, full of desires, the wife of the glorious Vaiśya did not highly think of him (who was) endowed with a handsome form and (was an) appreciator of merits. The nature of that chaste lady had become endowed with truth, as water going to a lotus-petal, gets the name ‘pearl’. ‘The female messenger, whom he had formerly sent, told (me) about this appreciator of merits. This one would show in various ways his sportive form and his nature. How far this very intelligent and mischievous lover, knowing my nature would live? (Now) my body is a vacuum, and is instantly free of movements and is as good as dead. The subjects of the village of the body, have, after performing the acts called good acts, fled away. Cupid has endowed him with charm, greater than, equal to or superior to my charm. I shall talk in a wonderful way to him, who longs for me, in such a

way that he, dancing with his own knowledge, powerful and endowed with joy, dies.'

25. Thinking like this, that great chaste lady, binding her firmly with the string of truth entered her own house to know his mind definitely.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Indra Tries to Dissuade Kāma

Viṣṇu said :

1-3. Knowing her mind, the lord of gods said to Cupid standing before him: "O Cupid, she, who is well-equipped with the armour of meditation with truth as its soul, cannot be conquered by you. With a desire to conquer, and taking in her hand the bow called piety and an excellent arrow named knowledge, she has stood on the battlefield, like a hero proud of his valour, to fight (with you). (This is her) valour only. Now do (i.e. show) your valour. She is today capable of conquering you in the battle. What is going to happen should be thought just now.

4-5. Here only the glorious Śiva had formerly burnt you, who had opposed him. O Cupid, as a result of that evil (act of yours), you had become bodiless. (This is) just the truth. O Cupid, you had formerly obtained a horrible fruit in accordance with the deed you had performed. Certainly you will obtain a very contemptible birth (i.e. will be born in a very contemptible species). Here only you will be told (like this) along with this chaste lady.

6. Those wise men who, in the three worlds, entertain enmity with the magnanimous, have as its fruit, sin accompanied by misery and destroying their form.

7-14. O Cupid, having proclaimed ourselves to this chaste lady, and having urged her (to continue her pious acts), we shall go. Formerly due to my contact with a chaste lady I obtained a sinful, unbearable fruit. You know this account (that) I was cursed by that Gautama also. I became one having the scrotum

of a ram for ever, and you went away, leaving me there. The power of the lustre of chaste women is matchless. (Even) the creator or the sun (also) is not able to bear it. The curse formerly pronounced by the sage (-husband) of Anasūyā would (continue to) preserve this contemptible form (of you). (The chaste lady) having stopped the forcible, rising sun, very bright with lustre, stopped the curse of Kaundinya pronounced by Nāṇḍavya. Atri's wife was truthful and chaste. She made the three gods her sons. O Cupid, have you not formerly heard that chaste women are always purified by sacred rites. Sāvitrī was the daughter of Dyumatsena. She brought back here only the life of Satyavān, Aśvapati's good son, from Yama. Chastity of women is thus well known. Who would touch the flame of fire? Or, who, except a fool, would, tying stones round his neck, (try to) cross the ocean with his hands? Or who would (try to) subdue a chaste woman who is free from attachment?" When Indra thus spoke words of prudence for instructing Cupid well, he, Cupid, having heard (these) words said to the lord of gods.

Cupid said :

15-18. By your order I have come (here). Having given up patience, goodheartedness and manliness, you are telling me about her (something), which lacks energy and is full of great fear. When I shall entertain bad thoughts, O lord of gods, my fame in the world will perish. Subdued by her people will describe me, who bring about marriages to be without self-respect. The hosts of gods, demons, sages, and saints with austerity will instantly laugh at me (saying:) 'This fearful Cupid is subdued by a woman.' Therefore, O lord of gods, I shall go with you and shall destroy her power, self-respect, lustre and fortitude. O Indra, why are you (then) afraid here (i.e. in this matter)?

19-23. Having thus addressed the lord of gods, and having held his bow and flowery arrow, he said to Rati, standing before him: "Acting deceitfully you should go the vaiśya's wife Sukalā, who is meritorious, who remains in (i.e. practices) truth, who knows piety and appreciates virtues. O darling, going from here do the work, helpful (to my mission), as told (by me). (Please) obey-(me)." Having thus spoken to Rati, he again called Rati, standing near. (He said:) "Do this excellent job for me; subdue

her through great affection. (Act in such a way) that this beautiful woman would fall in love with Indra on seeing him. O friend, listen, by all means win her over with all miraculous powers; O friend, go quickly and effect an illusory grove, having the form of (i.e. resembling) Nandana-garden, full of flowers, abounding in fruits, and resounding with the cooings of the cuckoos and the hummings of the bees.”

24-25. Having called the brave Elixir of Life, the very gratifying Flower-juice, endowed with sweet virtues, and sent him according to his wish along with Wind etc. engaged in their own duties and ordering the great army, infatuating three worlds, Cupid went with the lord of gods, to that great chaste lady, to allure (her).

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Satya & Dharma Come to Sukalā's Help

Viṣṇu said :

1-11a. Cupid, with the lord of gods, started to go to Sukalā to bring about a genuine destruction of her. At that time Satya (i.e. Truth) said to Dharma: “See, O very intelligent Dharma Cupid's misdeed. I create (i.e. have created) a great place, an excellent house, of the nature of an abode, causing (i.e. giving) happiness, and called Satya (truth), Supriya (very dear) and Sudeva (with good deities), for the sake of you, the righteous and magnanimous one, and for my sake. This wicked Cupid, of a blundering mind, and of an inimical nature, would go to it and certainly destroy that excellent house of us. There is no doubt that a Brāhmaṇa with penance as his wealth as the husband, a very pious chaste woman, and a very truthful king, are, O Dharma, my abodes. There is no doubt about it. You would reside there where I am nourished with prosperity. Puṇya (i.e. Merit) comes there and sports with Śraddhā (i.e. Faith). Kṣamā (i.e. Forbearance) accompanied by Śānti (i.e. Tranquility) comes to my abode. Real Dama (i.e. Restraint), and Dayā (i.e.

Pity) and Sauhārda (i.e. Good-heartedness), Nirlobha (i.e. Absence of greed), along with Intelligence are there where I live. Śuci Svabhāva (i.e. Pure Nature) (stays) there only. These are my kinsmen. Non-stealing, Harmlessness, Endurance and Prosperity have come to my house. O king Dharma, listen to my blessedness. Service of preceptors and elderly persons, Viṣṇu accompanied by Lakṣmī, gods led by Agni, come to my house. Jñāna (i.e. Knowledge) accompanied by Brilliance, that would illumine the path to salvation (has come to my house).

11b-14. I always live with these in chaste women, religious persons, and in all good people that are of the form of my house. Along with you I just live with the family about which I told you. They, who are virtuous and of a good nature, have been made my abode by the Creator. O magnanimous one, I move comfortably and at will. The lord, the master of the three worlds, the three-eyed one, having the bull (viz. Nandi) as his vehicle, lives, with Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī), in his own form in my house.

15-20. This, then, is the essence of the worldly existence, of the form of a house, of a lordly nature—an abode called Śaṅkara. That is destroyed by Cupid. This Cupid formerly subdued, after having taken resort to (i.e. the help of) Menakā, the magnanimous Viśvāmitra, practising excellent penance. That wicked Cupid led the chaste, loyal Ahalyā, the dear, auspicious wife of Gautama away from great truth. All sages, knowing the genuine Dharma, many chaste women—all these my abodes were burnt by the fire of Cupid. He is irresistible, unbearable, (all-) pervasive, and very harsh to great truths. He is looking for me (saying:) 'Where does Truth stay?' Knowing me (i.e. finding out my abode) he, the archer, with arrows in his hands, comes; and the sinful one would destroy my house with fires.

21-25. All those having bits of sins, who are cruel, who have resorted to heretics, who are malevolent in mind, will enter the house of Satya. Subdued by the generals of the army who are untruthful and by that Chadman (i.e. Dishonesty), the sinner would ruin (and) strike (my) house with sinful weapons. 'The wicked, very powerful Cupid will strike me like this. Burnt by his lustre I shall be a non-entity. I desire (to have) a new house called the woman looking upon her husband as her king. This one, good and auspicious, is the dear (wife) of the meritorious

Kṛkālā. This wicked (Cupid) is intent on burning that house called Sukalā.

26-30a. How is it that the mighty thousand-eyed (Indra) does not know (i.e. remember) his former account (i.e. what happened to him) on account of Cupid? He became one having the scrotum of a ram due to his attachment to Ahalyā. The lord of gods (i.e. Indra), who had remained there (i.e. in Gautama's hermitage), had perished on seeing the manliness of the sage and due to the outrage of a chaste woman, as a result of Cupid's fault. He suffered a terrible curse, and was full of great grief. This thousand-eyed (Indra), along with Cupid, is eager to strike this Sukalā, Kṛkālā's dear wife practising meritorious acts. O Dharmarāja, O very intelligent one, act in such a way that this Cupid would not come (to her) with Indra. You are the best among the intelligent ones."

Dharmarāja said :

30b-33a. I shall lessen the lustre of Cupid and bring about his death. I have found out one remedy. You may (please) examine it now only. This very intelligent Prajñā moving in the form of a bird, may tell (i.e. announce), from the sky, the auspicious arrival of (Sukalā's) husband. She, due to the prowess of the omen, and with her mind steady, would certainly not be ruined by the wicked.

33b-35a. He (then) sent Prajñā. She went to the house of Sukalā. Making a great sound she shone like one who had been seen (i.e. favoured) by gods. Then she was worshipped and honoured with incense, lights etc. Sukalā asked the brāhmaṇa: "What would she (i.e. does she) say to me?"

The brāhmaṇa said :

35b-36. The steady one announces the arrival of your husband, O blessed one. He will arrive within seven days. This will not be otherwise.

37. Hearing these very auspicious words, she at once became very glad. (She thought that) her virtuous, dear husband, knowing righteousness, had arrived.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

The Trap Is Laid For Sukalā

Viṣṇu said :

1-3. Rati, taking up the form of a chaste lady, went to the house of the charming loyal wife. She (i.e. Sukalā) the blessed one, endowed with a truthful nature, respectfully spoke to her (i.e. Rati). Rati, the chaste lady, well-honoured with very auspicious words, smiled and spoke to Sukalā, words full of deceit, alluring all and containing a truthful topic: “(Please) listen, my husband, my lord, who is very strong, who appreciates virtues, who is wise and learned, who is endowed with greatness, who has a holy name, left me who am more (i.e. very) sinful and has gone away.”

4-5. Sukalā, due to her feminine nature, after having heard all that she (i.e. Rati) said through agreeable words, took her to be of a very pure nature, and said to her: “O beautiful lady, why did your lord abandon your beautiful form and go away? Today tell me the truth about your good husband. You, endowed with meditation, who have come to my house, and being of the nature of my friend, are doing everything for me.”

6-10. Rati said: “Listen to the real account of my lord. O dear one, I was always engaged (in giving him) what he desired, and thus appeased him. To carry out the auspicious words of my good lord, I did everything attentively. I am of an extremely good disposition, virtuous and worthy of him through my rendering service to him who is supreme for me in this world. This is the fruit of my former (deeds) which appears now only, and due to which my husband has thus gone away after abandoning me, who am luckless. O friend, I do not (i.e. cannot) sustain my life and my body. How do shameless women live well without their husbands? In the scriptures, a husband is described to be the beauty, decoration, good fortune, happiness and wealth, and not otherwise (i.e. and none else).”

11-14. She (i.e. Sukalā) having heard all that Rati said, and looking upon it as the truth, believed her talk. That magnanimous Sukalā, devoted to her husband, and confiding (in Rati), again spoke to her words describing her acts. She

told in brief all her former account. "Since the husband, intent upon gaining religious merit, has gone on a pilgrimage, our grief is very true, and so is our suffering, O you virtuous lady." Having (thus) cheered up the chaste lady, Rati advised her.

Sūta said :

15-22. Once that Rati said to Sukalā : "O friend, see the pleasing wood adorned by divine trees. There is a very auspicious sacred place, destroying sins. It looks charming due to the spreading out of many creepers, and good flowers. O you of an excellent face, we too should go (there)." Hearing that Sukalā entered, with Rati, that divine forest, resembling Indra's garden. It was having flowers of all seasons, and was resounding with calls of hundreds of cuckoos; it was full of the music of bees' sweet hummings; it was full of the auspicious sounds of propitious birds; it shone with trees like the sandal and with fragrances. It was full of all pleasures and with the spring-creeper and the spring season. It was put up to allure Sukalā. With her she (i.e. Rati) entered the wood, pleasing to all. She saw the auspicious (grove) giving pleasure (but) did not know the fraudulent intention (of Rati), when, O lord of men, she saw the divine wood with her (i.e. Rati).

23-26a. Shining with his divine form, Indra also went to that place. Cupid also came there along with that messenger. (Indra) being the lord of all enjoyments, and full of amorous sports, called Cupid and said to him: "This Sukalā has come. O glorious one, strike her standing before you and brought by Rati through trickery near you. If you have valour show it today. Do it certainly."

Cupid said :

26b-27a. O you thousand-eyed (Indra), show your charming form, endowed with amorous sport, so that I shall strike (her) with (my) five arrows.

Indra said :

27b-28a. O fool, where is your valour with which you afflict people? Now you desire to fight after taking my support.

Cupid said :

28b-36a. Formerly only that trident-holder, Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva), the god of gods has snatched away my form. My body does not exist. Listen, when I desire to strike a woman, I manifest my form by resorting to a male body. O thousand-eyed (Indra), I shall now execute the mission by resorting to (the body of) a man. When a lady is repeatedly thinking about the form of a man (i.e. about a man) not seen before, I excite the man by resorting to him. In the same way, I shall certainly excite this one of the form of a woman (i.e. I shall certainly excite this woman). There is no doubt about it. O lord of gods, I got the name 'Smara' as I was thought of. Seeing her I shall, (being) like that, resort to the (particular) colour, object or form. My lustre would repel what is to be repelled by means of its brightness, and by resorting to the form of a woman it would allure (even) a strong-minded man; and resorting to a man (-form) I shall secure this woman for you. O Indra, I am formless. I would resort to my (original) form (and) resorting to your body I shall secure her as desired (by you).

36b-38. Having thus addressed the lord of gods, Cupid too, who was the friend of the Spring Season and who had flowers as his weapons, having resorted to the body of that magnanimous (Indra), was eager, looking, with his eyes, at the target of his arrows—the chaste, very meritorious wife of Kṛkālā—to strike her.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Sukalā Wins

Viṣṇu said :

1-2. Prompted by Rati, Sukalā, the beautiful wife of the vaiśya entered the beautiful grove. The chaste lady saw all the charming grove and then she asked her friend. (She said:) "O friend, to whom does this excellent, very meritorious, divine and

charming grove, which is furnished with all excellent pleasures, belong?" Sukalā joyfully asked her friend (Rati).

Kriḍā (i.e. Rati) said :

3. This grove is endowed with all divine qualities of well-known inherent properties and decorations of flowers and perfumes; it is full of flowers and desired fruits; see, it is of (i.e. it belongs to) Cupid.

4-12. Having heard these words, and full of great joy, and observing the great account of the wicked Cupid, she smelt the fragrance carried by wind. (In it) wind, endowed with fragrance, blew naturally, in such a way that his (i.e. Cupid's) arrow very easily entered her nose; but that (Sukalā) of an excellent face (i.e. beautiful) did not smell the fragrance of the flowers; nor did the very chaste lady enjoy the excellent pleasures. The delightful friend of Cupid, vanquished (by her), was ashamed, and having turned away his face, fell on the ground with bits of leaves. Juice, of an excellent brightness, and decorated with flowers and shoots, fell on the ground from ripe fruits. The flower-juice, of a melancholy nature, fallen from the fruits, was eaten (i.e. drunk) by bees, as a dead man (is eaten up) on the battle-field. Being (thus) eaten (i.e. drunk) by bee, it flew in a stream. It flew slowly only; the birds laughed at it. With many notes, full of joy, they happily roamed (in the grove). The birds happily remained on the mountain in the forest. He, who had resorted to a mean course, was vanquished by Sukalā.

13-14. Cupid's wife Rati, accompanied by Prīti, went to Sukalā, and, with a smile, said to her: "O auspicious one, well-being to you; welcome to you; enjoy happily; your spotless form, delightful to the eyes, is liked by the magnanimous Indra. When you desire (something), tell (me); I shall certainly bring it."

Sūta said :

15-19. Seeing and hearing the two ladies (viz. Rati and Prīti) talking, she said (these) good words: "My very intelligent husband has gone away, taking with him my pleasure. I am united with my husband at the place where he remains. My desire (remains) there, so also my love. This body is without a prop." Both Rati and Prīti, having heard what (Sukalā) said, were

ashamed. Being ashamed, they went to the place where the very mighty Kāma stood. They said to the great hero of a great might, who had drawn his bow, who had resorted to Indra's body (and therefore) who was visible to the eyes: "O you highly intelligent one, she is invincible. Give up (trying) your valour (against her). The magnanimous chaste lady always longs for her husband (only)."

Cupid said :

20. O respectable lady, if she looks at the form of this magnanimous Indra, then I shall certainly strike her.

21-24. Then that lord of gods, of a great form, who had put on a (different) garb, endowed with all pleasures, decorated with all ornaments, wearing divine flowers and garments, (with his body) smeared with divine sandal, and accompanied by that Rati, very sportively and quickly went to that place where the lady looking upon her husband as a deity (i.e. the lady loyal to her husband) stood. He spoke to the magnanimous Sukalā, behaving truthfully: "Formerly I had sent a messenger to you. Why, O auspicious one, do you not show regard for me, who have betaken myself to you?"

Sukalā said :

25-28a. Well-being to you. I am protected by the magnanimous sons of my husband, and by companions; so I am not at all alone. From whom (then) do I have fear? I am protected by brave men everywhere. I do not have much time to talk. I am engaged in my duty towards him. O you very intelligent one, why do you not feel ashamed of dallying with me while your eyes are trickling (i.e. while you are old). Who are you that have come here, and are not afraid even of death?

Indra said :

28b-29. I saw you having come into the grove; but you told me about the brave sons of your husband. How can I see them? Show them to me.

Sukalā said :

30-34. The pious-minded, magnanimous one, whose entire piety is firm, who is always devoted, who is powerful with love,

having established Truth as the chief of his own group (of allies), and placing him (to protect me) along with qualities known as Courage, Resolution, Fate and Intelligence, always protected me. Dharma thus always protects me with the pure qualities of restraint. See, Truth, along with Tranquility and Forbearance, has come to me. Knowledge, who is very powerful and very famous, will never desert me. I am bound with firm bonds of his qualities. He has just come to my vicinity. All (the qualities) like Truth etc. had been now made my protectors. All (qualities like) Piety, Gain and Restraint, Knowledge, Valour protect me only. Why do you solicit me against my will? Who are you, being fearless, that have come here with a female messenger? Truth, Piety, so also Merit and Knowledge etc. are very powerful and are the companions of my husband. They protect me in the house.

35-37. I am always having protection, and am solely devoted to Restraint and Tranquility. Even the lord of Śacī (i.e. Indra) himself is not able to win me over. Even if that powerful Cupid comes, I am always furnished with the armour of truth, and not by anything else. There is no doubt that his arrows would be futile. The great warriors like Dharma (i.e. Piety) etc. will kill you only.

38-39. Go away, run (away); now do not stand here. If you stay (here), though warded off, you will be reduced to ashes. I shall just burn you, as fire would burn wood, and in no other way, when you look at my form without (i.e. in the absence of) my husband.

40-43. Hearing (these words) (uttered by her) in the presence of even Cupid, the thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra said:) "See her valour. Fight with your valour (with her)." O great king, all those, Indra and others, being afflicted with fear of the great curse, went to their respective places, as they had come. When all of them had gone, that Sukalā, devoted to her husband, and endowed with merit, came to her own house, thinking of her husband (only). That lady, looking upon her husband as her god, then came to her own house, endowed with merit, full of (the merit of) all sacred places and all sacrifices.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

*Religious Observances Without One's Wife Are Fruitless**Viṣṇu said :*

1-2. Having finished (i.e. having visited) all sacred places, Kṛkālā, full of great joy, started for his house along with the leader of the caravan. He always thought like this: 'My worldly existence is fruitful. My dead ancestors, when gratified will go to heaven; not otherwise.'

3-5a. Just then having bound his grandsires (Dharma) spoke to him: "You do not have excellent religious merit." (Dharma) of a divine form and of a huge body said (these) words to Kṛkālā: "You do not have the fruit of (your visits to) holy places. In vain have you exerted. You alone are happy (i.e. you have not gratified your dead ancestors etc.); (therefore) you do not have excellent religious merit."

5b-7. Hearing like this, the vaiśya, viz. Kṛkālā, was afflicted with pain. (He said to Dharma:) "Who are you that are talking like this? Why are my grandsires bound? Due to the effect of what fault (of mine are they bound)? (Please) tell me the reason of it. Why do I not have the fruit of (my visits to) the holy places? How is my pilgrimage not (fruitful)? If you know, then tell me everything clearly."

Dharma said :

8-19. The entire fruit of the religious merit of him, who, leaving (behind) his pure and most meritorious wife, goes (on a pilgrimage), becomes worthless, not otherwise. All the religious deeds of him, who, leaving (behind) even his wife who is devoted to a pious conduct, who is meritorious, who is engrossed in the vow of loyalty to her husband, who is virtuous, who loves merit, goes to (holy places to) perform religious rites, are done in vain. Not otherwise. In the house of him, whose meritorious and very chaste wife has qualities like being devoted to all (good) practices, being worthy, being intent upon accomplishing moral merit, being devoted to her husband, always loving knowledge gods of great prowess always stay; and his dead ancestors, living in his house, desire bliss. There (i.e. in his house) are present

auspicious rivers like the Ganges and Seas; (and) not at any other place. He, in whose house lives his chaste wife, entirely devoted to truth, has (the credit of having performed) sacrifices; cows and sages (live there), and at no other place. Due to the conduct of his wife all these sacred places and various religious merits (stay) there, and at no other place. The stage of householder is produced (i.e. is possible) due to the contact of a meritorious wife. Highest moral merit is (obtained) from the stage of a householder. There is no such stage on the earth. O vaiśya, the house of a householder is meritorious, is endowed with truth and religious merit, is full of all holy places and is attended by all gods. All beings live (only) after resorting to the stage of a householder. I do not see any other excellent stage (of life) like that. The man in whose house the sacred fire is maintained to the accompaniment of sacred hymns, all gods live, all old practices are followed, gifts are given (is blessed).

20-34. Similarly the house of him who is without a wife, becomes a forest. (In his house) sacrifices are not accomplished (i.e. performed) and various gifts (are not given). Any great vow of a man without a wife is not fruitful. So also no religious rites and no meritorious deeds (are fruitful). To accomplish religious merit there is no holy place like a wife. Listen to the way of the life of a householder. There is no other Dharma in the three worlds (like that of a householder). A man has a house where his wife lives, whether in villages or in a forest. She is the means of all moral merit. There is no holy place like a wife; there is no happiness like a wife. There is no religious merit for the emancipation and well-being (of the husband) like a wife. O you mean man, you go (i.e. you had gone) leaving (behind) your righteous and chaste wife. Leaving (i.e. when you leave) your house and proper course of conduct, where does the fruit of your moral merit remain? When (i.e. since), without her (i.e. in her absence), you offered a śrāddha, therefore, due to that fault only your grandsires are bound. You are a thief; these (grandsires) also are thieves who, being very greedy, enjoyed the food offered by you without her (i.e. in her absence). I shall tell you about the religious merit of a good son, who, full of faith, offers a śrāddha, with (i.e. in which) a piṇḍa (is) offered by his wife. As men are satisfied with drinking nectar, in the same way the dead ancestors are satisfied

with a śrāddha. I am telling you the truth and truth only. A wife is the owner of the stage of a householder. O fool, you have deceived her. You have committed a theft. These your manes, who ate without her (i.e. in her absence) are great thieves. The dead ancestors eat with a pleased mind the food resembling nectar which the (son's) wife prepares with her own hands. With that only they are gratified and become pleased. Therefore, the religious practices of a man do not succeed without his wife. There is no holy place like a wife giving men a good position (i.e. leading them to salvation). The religious practices carried on without (i.e. in the absence of) the wife would become fruitless.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Sukalā's Story Ends

Kṛkālā said :

1. O Dharmarāja, now tell me in detail how I would have final beatitude and how my dead ancestors would be liberated.

Dharma said :

2-6. O you noble one, go home. She (i.e. your wife) is experiencing grief without you. Inform your wife, Sukalā practising piety, (of your arrival). Having gone home, offer śrāddha with her hands. Win over the best gods by remembering the holy places. You will have the salvation obtained through pilgrimages to holy places. He who desires to accomplish religious merit without his wife (i.e. all alone), loses (the fruit of) the stage of the householder and would wander alone in a forest. He is unsuccessful in the world, (and) the deities do not respect him. The sacrifices become successful (only) when the housewife remains in the house. All alone (i.e. without his wife) he is not able to accomplish (the fruit of) piety and worldly prosperity.

Viṣṇu said :

7-11a. Having thus spoken to the vaiśya, Dharma left as he had come. That religious-minded Kṛkālā also proceeded to his

house. The intelligent one reached his house and saw that chaste wife (of him). The intelligent one reached his own abode along with the leader of the caravan. Seeing her husband, well-versed in Dharma, who had arrived, she performed very auspicious and meritorious (rites) on the arrival of her husband. The religious-minded one told her what Dharma did. The magnanimous one, having heard her husband's words causing delight, and having praised the words of Dharma, agreed with him.

Viṣṇu said:

11b-16a. Then that vaiśya Kṛkālā remaining in the chamber of the (idol of the) deity (in his house) devotedly offered, with her, a śrāddha, giving great merit. The dead ancestors, gods, Gandharvas and sages came there in aeroplanes and praised the high-souled couple. I (i.e. Viṣṇu), also Brahmā and the great lord (i.e. Śiva) with the goddess (Pārvatī) and all (other) gods with Gandharvas arrived (there). I, Brahmā, and the great god (i.e. Śiva) with the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī), also all gods with Gandharvas, pleased with her truthfulness, said to the two who were well-versed in truth: "Well-being to you along with your wife. O you of a good vow, ask for a boon."

Kṛkālā said :

16b-17a. O best gods, due to the association of the merit of which penance, have you come here to grant a boon to me with my wife?

Indra said :

17b-18a. This chaste, noble Sukalā is pleasing and auspicious. We were pleased with her truthfulness. We (therefore) desire to grant you a boon.

18b-23a. (Then) in brief they narrated her former account. Having heard of the magnanimity of her behaviour, the husband was delighted. With her the religious-minded one (i.e. Kṛkālā) with his eyes full of joy saluted all the deities, and again and again said : "If now all the magnanimous, ancient three gods (i.e. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) and other holy sages have favoured me and have come here, then I shall be devoted to gods like this (only) in existence after existence. Due to your grace let me

have liking for piety and truth; and afterwards, O gods of great prowess, if you are pleased, I desire to go to Viṣṇu's heaven with my wife and grandsires."

Gods said :

23b. O noble one, let it be so. Everything will take place (like this) only.

24-32. Then, O king, they showered flowers on the two (i.e. Kṛkālā and Sukalā). Gandharvas, knowing the essential nature of music, sang a charming, melodious song, giving great religious merit; and the groups of the celestial nymphs danced. Then the gods with the Gandharvas, praising the chaste lady, went, after giving (Kṛkālā) a boon, to their respective abodes, O best king. I have told you (how) a woman is (called) a sacred place. (Now) I shall tell you something else. I have narrated to you this entire, excellent, meritorious account. O king, a man who listens to it is free from all sins. A woman who devoutly listens to the excellent account of Sukalā, is never deserted by good fortune, truth, sons and grandsons. She is delighted with wealth and grains and would be happy with her husband. In existence after existence she would be a loyal wife, and not otherwise. A brāhmaṇa (who listens to the account) would become well-versed in the Vedas; (and) a kṣatriya would be victorious. There is no doubt that there would be wealth and grains in the house of a vaiśya. O king, a man knowing piety would become one of good conduct and happy. A śūdra gets happiness and prospers with sons and grandsons. There is great prosperity adorned with wealth and grains.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Pippala's Penance

Vena said :

1. — You have described the holy place in the form of wife, the best of all holy places. Now tell about the sacred place in the form of dead ancestors, which is a great emancipater of sons.

Viṣṇu said :

2-7. In the great sacred region (called) Kurukṣetra (there lived) a brāhmaṇa named Kuṇḍala. That noble Kuṇḍala had a good son by name Sukarman. His parents were very old, knew religious practices, and were proficient in sacred precepts. Both the noble ones were afflicted with old age. He, who knew piety, and who was full of sincerity, devotedly and continuously served them night and day. He, intent on (following) all (good) practices, knowing piety and a lover of knowledge, learnt from that (i.e. his) father, many sacred treatises; and he himself massaged the bodies of the two. He also washed their feet, bathed and fed them with devotion and naturally became thoughtful about them. O best king, he (thus) served his mother and father.

Sūta said :

8-11. At the time he lived there was a brāhmaṇa, (a descendent) of the noble Kaśyapa, O best king. He, void of passion, free from jealousy, endowed with pity, charity and restraint, having subdued lust and anger, practised penance without eating food. The intelligent one, solely devoted to knowledge and tranquility, went to Daśāraṇya, and the high-souled one having controlled his senses performed penance (there). Due to the power of his penance, the beings, free from fighting (with one another) lived there, in that age, as it were remaining in one (and the same) womb.

12-28. Seeing that (severe) penance of him, the sages were amazed. (They said:) 'None else has practised penance as this one is doing.' So gods led by Indra, were highly amazed. (They said:) 'Oh what severe penance he is practising? How great is his tranquility and restraint over senses?' Being free from emotion and agitation, and enduring cold, wind and heat, he remained (there) like a mountain. The best brāhmaṇa, disinclined to pleasures of senses, patient at heart, did not hoard anything and did not hear the sound of anyone. Having taken up a position like that, he, with a concentrated mind, meditating upon Brahman, remained there with his lotus-like face full of joy. Resembling stone and wood, he remained motionless like a mountain. Very firm and loving piety he appeared like a post.

His body was afflicted with penance. He was full of faith, and was free from jealousy. (Practising penance) in this way, the intelligent one passed a thousand years. Many ants constructed on this body a huge ant-hill with a heap of clay, as his abode. In the interior of the ant-hill he remained motionless. In this way that brāhmaṇa (named) Pippala practised very great (i.e. severe) penance. The best brāhmaṇa (Pippala) was surrounded on all sides by black serpents. (The serpents) of a strong poison bit that brāhmaṇa of an intense penance. Poison (even) after reaching the vulnerable points of his body did not harm it. Due to the brāhmaṇa's lustre the serpents became peaceful. From his body rose many flames of blazing lustre. They appeared separately. O best man (i.e. O king), they were just like the more (i.e. very) hot (flames) of fire. As the sun, having entered the interior of clouds, shines with his rays, in the same way the brāhmaṇa remaining in the ant-hill shone with his lustre. O best king, angry serpents bit the brāhmaṇa with their teeth, but even after piercing his skin, they did (i.e. could) not cleave (his body), with the tips of their teeth. O lord of kings, in this way the noble sage passed a thousand years in practising penance. The period, attended by cold, rain and heat was thus passed by the noble Pippala who subdued the three times, O great king. In the same way the noble one also ate (i.e. lived on) air.

29-31. He passed three thousand years in practising penance. Then soon the gods showered flowers on his head. (They said to him:) "O you noble one, you know Brahman, you know piety, there is no doubt about it. You have become full of all knowledge (i.e. omniscient) due to your deeds. You will certainly get (i.e. fulfil) whatever desire you have. You, on your own, will have all your desires accomplished (i.e. satisfied)."

32-37. Hearing (these) great words, that large-hearted Pippala, with his neck (i.e. head) devoutly bent down, and full of great joy, spoke (these) words: "O best gods, do that by which this entire world would be under my control. May I be a Vidyādhara." O best king, speaking like this, the intelligent one ceased (to speak). The gods then said to the best brāhmaṇa: "Let it be so." O noble one, having given the boon to that magnānīmous (Pippala) they left. When the gods had left, that

best brāhmaṇa Pippala was everyday devoted to sacred knowledge, and thought (as to how he would) control everything. O best king, since then Pippala, the best brāhmaṇa, obtained the status of a Vidyādhara, and was honoured as one moving according to his own desire.

38-41. In this way that brāhmaṇa Pippala attained the status of a Vidyādhara, and became well-versed in all branches of knowledge and the lord of gods. Once that Pippala of great lustre thought: 'I shall have everything under my control. I have been granted the best boon.' The best brāhmaṇa (Pippala) was eager to ascertain it. He would bring (i.e. brought) under control whatever he wanted to. When he thus became confident, he thought : 'In the world there is no other best brāhmaṇa like me.'

Sūta said :

42-46. O king, knowing the thought of that noble Pippala who was thinking like this, the crane which was on the bank of a lake said to Pippala in a melodious tone, charming and full of charity: "Why do you have this great pride? I do not think you have the power to bring everything under your control. This act of subjugating everything is recent (or is on this side). O Pippala, you, whose intellect is confounded, do not know what is ancient (or is on the other side). O brāhmaṇa, why do you in vain entertain pride when you have practised penance for three thousand years?

47-53a. That wise and very intelligent Sukarman, who was the son of Kuṇḍala had all the world under his control. Now listen. That intelligent one knew the recent (or on this side) and the ancient (or on the other side). O Pippala, listen, there is no one so very wise as he was. You are not like (that) Sukarman, the son of Kuṇḍala. He did not give gifts. He did not reflect on knowledge. He never performed acts like offering oblations or sacrifices. He never went on a pilgrimage, nor did he ever offer excellent service to fire for resorting to (i.e. obtaining) religious merit. He moved at will, he was ever a friend of (i.e. always loved) his father and mother. He was endowed with the knowledge of the Vedas, and was well-versed in the meaning of all branches of knowledge. You do not have that knowledge which

even that child (i.e. even as a child) Sukarman had. In vain you are proud.”

Pippala said :

53b-60. Who are you in the form of a bird, that are thus censuring me? Why do you condemn my knowledge? Of what kind is the ancient knowledge? Explain that to me in detail. How do you have knowledge (i.e. How have you come to possess knowledge)? Now tell me the scope of the recent (or inferior) as well as of the ancient (or superior knowledge), in detail and accompanied by learning, O best bird; and (tell me) whether you are Brahmā, or Viṣṇu, or Rudra.

The crane spoke :

Your penance does not exist; (therefore) you will not have its fruit. Hear now about the penance which you have not practised. You do not have the virtue which the child of Kuṇḍala had. Nor do you have the knowledge (which he had). Nor have you known the (highest) place (as he knew). O best brāhmaṇa, having gone from here you ask (him) about my form. He, the religious-minded one, will explain to you all knowledge.

Viṣṇu said :

Having heard all that which the crane said, he speedily went to the great hermitage in Daśāraṇya.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Parents As Sacred Places of Pilgrimage

Viṣṇu said :

1-5. (Pippala) having gone to Kuṇḍala's hermitage, full of truthful practices, saw (there) noble Sukarman, greatly devoted to his father and mother, serving (them), possessing great prowess—born of truth, of great form and lustre, having great

knowledge, engaged in serving his parents and seated at their feet, tranquil, endowed with great devotion and the great treasure of all knowledge. That high-souled Sukarman, the son of Kuṇḍala, seeing the very intelligent Pippala who had come to the door, quickly got up from his seat and honoured him, (and said to him): “O you glorious, very intelligent Vidyādhara, (please) come.”

6-10. The very intelligent (Sukarman) gave him water for washing his feet and a respectful offering, (and said to him): “O you highly intelligent one, are you free from difficulties? Are you all right?” He also asked Pippala that had come (to him) about his well-being. (He said to Pippala:) “I shall explain to you all about your arrival (here) today. You practised penance for three thousand years. O glorious one, you thus practised penance, and obtained a boon from the gods. You secured the power of subjugation, and also (the power of) moving according to your desire. Due to that you have become arrogant, and are unnecessarily proud. Seeing all your movements, the noble crane told you my name and about my excellent knowledge.”

Pippala said :

11. Who is that lord, that god, the crane who directed me (to come to you) and told me about all knowledge on the bank of a lake?

Sukarman said :

12-13a. Know that crane who talked to you on the bank of the lake to be the highest god Brahmā, of great knowledge. Speak (out) what else you want to ask. I shall explain it to you.

Viṣṇu said :

13b. O prince, that religious-minded Sukarman thus spoke (to Pippala).

Pippala said :

14. On the earth we have heard that the entire world is under your control. O brāhmaṇa, carefully show me the spectacle.

15-18a. "Today see the spectacle—the cause of controlling the uncontrollable." (Thus) spoke the religious-minded Sukarman to Pippala. Then for convincing (Pippala), Sukarman called to mind the gods. The Guardians of the Quarters like Indra, and also gods led by Agni and many Vidyādharaś that were invited came (there). Then the gods led by Agni said to Sukarman : "O brāhmaṇa, tell us the reason for which you remembered us."

Sukarman said :

18b-20a. Here has come this Vidyādhara (named) Pippala. He asks me the reason of my controlling the uncontrollable. I have invited you for convincing this high-souled one. (Please) go to your respective abodes.

20b-24. Thus he spoke to the gods. Then the gods said to that very intelligent Sukarman: "Your seeing us will not be fruitless. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon which you like. We shall grant it. There is no doubt about it." Thus the best gods spoke to him. The best brāhmaṇa having devoutly saluted those gods requested them: "O best gods, grant me always a sincere and firm devotion to my mother and father. This is the best boon (I desire to have). May my father go to Viṣṇu's heaven; similarly, O lords of gods, may my mother (also) go to Viṣṇu's heaven. This is the best boon (I desire to have). I do not solicit any other boon."

The gods spoke :

25. O best brāhmaṇa, you are devoted to your father. O Sukarman, listen, due to your devotion we are always pleased with you.

26-28. O prince, having said like this, the gods went to heaven. Then he (i.e. Sukarman) presented before him (i.e. Pippala) all his grandeur. Pippala also saw that great wonder. The religious-minded (Sukarman) also said to Pippala, the son of Kuṇḍala. (Then Pippala said:) "This is a recent (or interior) form; what kind of form is the ancient (or superior) one? ⊕ best among the speakers, tell me about the prowess of both."

29-37. I shall tell you the mark of the ancient form, due to which the worlds, the mobile and the immobile (and gods) led by Indra are delighted. This lord of the world himself, who pervades the entire earth, is the master (of everything). No meditating saint has seen his form. The scriptures, as it were afraid to speak, speak (about him) like this: "He is without hands, feet and nose. He is without ears and mouth." (Yet) he sees all the acts performed by the residents of the three worlds. (Even though he is) without ears he hears their talk. (Thus) he gives good (i.e. proper) evidence (of his omnipresence). Even without any movement, he would go; he is seen everywhere. Even being handless, he can seize (things); (though) footless, he runs. O brāhmaṇa, he, pervading everything though footless, is seen everywhere. He, whom the best gods and sages knowing the truth, do not see, sees them all, stationed in truthful and untruthful positions; whom, the (all-) pervader, pure, the divine being granting divine faculties, the leader of all, Vyāsa, the great meditating saint, knowing piety and material prosperity and of a lustrous form, knows. Vyāsa himself knows him to be the sky, of one colour and endless. (Vyāsa alone knows) this spotless form determined by what is told in the scriptures.

38-49. Mārkaṇḍeya also knows that station. I shall explain to you the recent (form). Listen with a concentrated mind. When the soul of the beings withdraws (everything into himself), he goes all alone; resorting to a bed in the water (i.e. in the ocean) he remains on the seat of the hood of Śeṣa. Resorting to him Janārdana sleeps for a long time. The great meditating sage Mārkaṇḍeya, tormented by the darkness in the water, and desiring a place (for him), dejected due to wandering, saw, while wandering, (Viṣṇu) who was lying on the bed of Śeṣa, who resembled a crore of suns, who was adorned with divine ornaments, who wore divine flowers and garments, who is the lord of all the pervading objects, who was enjoying his sleep at the end of a yuga, who held the conch, the disc and the mace. O best brāhmaṇa, (he also saw) a noble lady, resembling a heap of black collyrium, with her face terrible on account of large teeth, and of a fearful form. The best sage was addressed by her: "O great sage, do not get frightened." There was a very large lotus-leaf, extending over five yojanas. The great goddess

put Mārkaṇḍeya on that leaf. (She said to him:) “Even though Keśava is asleep, you have no (cause for) fear here.” The best of the meditating saints said to her: “O you beautiful lady, who are you? When this one is completely won over, you alone have grown.” O brāhmaṇa, when thus asked by the sage, the goddess respectfully said: “I am the Vaiṣṇavi (i.e. belonging to Viṣṇu) power of this Keśava who is sleeping on the bed of the serpent. I am here called Kālarātri. O best brāhmaṇa, know me to be thus endowed with all (kinds of) illusion. In the Purāṇas I am described as the great illusion for (i.e. causing) infatuation of the world.” O Pippala, speaking thus, that goddess vanished.

50-57a. When the goddess had gone, from his (i.e. Viṣṇu’s) navel sprang up a lotus, shining like gold, while Mārkaṇḍeya was looking (at him). From him were born all the worlds, the immobile and the mobile, all the regents of the quarters like Indra, and gods led by Agni. O king, I have presented to you his recent (or inferior) form. This one of the recent (or inferior) form is without any support in his ancient (or superior form). When he would present his body then (only) all the recent (or inferior deities) like Brahmā and all worlds have bodies, O Pippala. All the regions that are there in the three worlds are recent. This soul of the beings is ancient. The meditating saints well see him, who is of the form of final beatitude, of the nature of Brahman—the highest place—, who is the universal soul, is pure and endowed with divine powers. O Vidyādhara, I have explained to you the entire nature of the ancient one. Tell me what more I (should) explain.

Pippala said :

57b-60a. O you of a good vow, how has this great knowledge risen in you? You know the recent (or inferior) as well as the ancient (or superior) station. The great knowledge of the three worlds abides in you. I (however) do not see (in you) great devotion to penance. Tell me the power of performing a sacrifice, of acting as a priest at a sacrifice, of (the visit to) a holy place, if you have done these. Due to what have you thus (obtained) all knowledge?

Sukarman said :

60b-78a. I do not at all know (what) penance (is). I have

not emaciated my body. I do not know performing a sacrifice, or acting as a priest at a sacrifice or going to holy places. I have not practised meditation, not attained the meritorious period as a result of good acts. One (thing) only I know clearly and well, (and that is) the worship of (my) father and (my) mother. With both my hands I myself everyday do the meritorious washing of the feet of my mother and father. Engaged in contemplation at three times everyday I massage their bodies, and bathe and feed them. With devotion I obtain the water with which the feet of those two only i.e. my mother and father are washed, and with great devotion I worship them. During that time a measureless gain comes to me. With my heart having pure thoughts I worship them thrice (a day). O Pippala, I am one who moves freely and comfortably. What is the use to me of any other penance or of emaciating my body? Now what good would accrue to me by good (i.e. meritorious) pilgrimages or by other (acts of) virtue? O brāhmaṇa, I have seen that to be the fruit of serving one's father, which is obtained by performing all sacrifices. Similarly serving the mother gives a good position (i.e. bliss) to the sons. It is the all-in-all and the essence of all acts in the three worlds. By serving his mother the son gets (i.e. goes to) a (good) world. Similarly great religious merit is produced due to the service to the father. There is no doubt that there (only lie) the Ganges, the holy place like Gayā, or like Puṣkara, where the father would live (i.e. lives) with the mother. By serving the father the son gets the merit of visiting these sacred places and other various holy and auspicious places. O brāhmaṇa, a good son obtains the fruit of charity and penance by serving his father (and mother). Any other customary observance leads to affliction. A son obtains excellent religious merit by serving his father (and mother), which is the all-in-all of his deeds in this and in the next world. Now listen to the auspicious merit when as a son he serves his elders—the mother and the father—when they are alive. Gods are pleased with him, and also the sages who love religious merit. Due to service of the father (and mother done) here (i.e. in this world) the three worlds are pleased. He, who everyday would wash (i.e. who washes) the feet of his mother and father, has everyday a bath in the Ganges.

78b-82. I shall (now) tell you about the religious merit of him who always devoutly feeds his father and mother with sweet food and drinks. The son gets that fruit which is got by performing the horse-sacrifice. He, who devoutly worships his elders (i.e. parents) with (i.e. by giving them) tām̐būla, coverings, drinks, eatables and pure food, would become omniscient, and would obtain glory and fame. A son, on seeing his mother or father, should talk to them with joy. They are the treasures,¹ that, being pleased, live in his house. They are the cows, that love the son and always give him happiness.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Merit Resulting from Service of Parents

Sukarman said :

1-6a. O best brāhmaṇa, the son properly gets (the religious merit of) a bath similar to the one in all the holy places when the drops of water, (falling from the bodies) of the mother and the father who have bathed, fall on the entire body of the son. I shall (now) tell you about the religious merit of the son who serves his father who is fallen, who is maimed, who is old, who is weak (in doing) all acts, who is ill, who is suffering from leprosy, and also his mother like that (i.e. in such a condition). There is no doubt that Viṣṇu has his mind pleased with him. He goes to Viṣṇu's heaven, unobtainable by (even) the meditating saints. That son of a sinful mind who abandons his parents who are maimed, helpless, old, or are suffering from a serious disease, obtains (i.e. goes to) a terrible hell, full of worms.

6b-22. I shall now tell you about the sin of (i.e. committed by) a son, who, when called by his old parents, does not go (to

1. Nidhayaḥ—Nidhis are the treasures of Kubera. They are nine: Mahā-padma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nila and Kharva.

them). There is no doubt that the fool becomes the eater of feces and a village-pig; and then again he is born as a dog for (the next) thousand existences. That son, who, without feeding his old mother and father living in his house, himself eats (i.e. eats alone), would eat (i.e. drink) urine, (and eat) feces for a thousand existences. The sinner would be (born) as a black serpent for two hundred existences. He, the sinner, who goes forward by neglecting his old mother or father, is born as a shark for crores of existences. That sinful son, who censures them with bitter words, would be (born as) a tiger and then would be born as a bear. That wicked-minded son who would not worship his mother or father would dwell in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka for as long as a (period covered by) a thousand yugas. For a son there is no other holy place, that would emancipate him and would cause his well-being here and in the next world, like his mother or like his father. Therefore, O you very intelligent one, I worship the deity in the form of my father (and) the deity in the form of my mother. I have by that become a devotee devoted to all gods. Excellent knowledge is produced (in me) due to the grace of my mother and father. Which wise man does not worship his mother or father? O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of his having studied the Vedas, with the Aṅgas and the Upāṅgas, and along with scriptures and (other) branches of knowledge, who has not honoured his father? The Vedas are useless for him who has not honoured his mother. Also, O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of sacrifices, penance, (giving) gifts and worships (of deities)? (All this) becomes fruitless (in the case) of him, who, while living (as a householder) in his house, has not worshipped his mother and has not worshipped his father. This (i.e. honouring his parents) alone is the duty of a son; this (alone) is a holy place among (i.e. for) men. This alone is the final beatitude of a son; similarly (this alone) is the auspicious fruit of his existence. This (alone) is the sacrifice of (i.e. performed by) a son. There is no doubt about it.

23-29. Intent on worshipping the father (and the mother, a son) who everyday devoutly worships his father (and mother), has all that has been said before. He, who has worshipped his mother also, has undoubtedly obtained the fruit of giving gifts, or of (visiting) a holy place, or of (performing) a sacrifice. All

the acts giving merit, like sacrifices etc., are well accomplished by him who has everyday worshipped his father with good (i.e. great) devotion. For this only I have studied and learnt the science of religious merit. O Pippala, a son should always be intensely devoted to his father. Formerly, king Yadu obtained happiness when his father was pleased; (and) listen, how formerly when the father was angry, Ruru, a Paurava (king), obtained great sin on the earth, when cursed by his father. When I served these two (i.e. my parents) I got knowledge like this. By the grace of these I obtained an excellent fruit.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Mātali's Discourse on Old Age

Pippala said :

1-2. Tell me in detail, how, by the grace of his father, Yadu obtained happiness and enjoyed well. O son of Kuṇḍala, tell me also in detail how Ruru suffered as a result of his sin, O best brāhmaṇa.

Sukarman said :

3-11a. Listen, I shall tell you the account of the very meritorious Nahuṣa, and the noble Yayāti, (the account) which destroys sin. Nahuṣa, the lord of the earth sprang from (i.e. was born in) the Soma dynasty. He made many matchless gifts. He performed an excellent century of the horse-sacrifices (i.e. performed a hundred excellent horse-sacrifices). He also performed a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices and many kinds of (other) sacrifices. By the power of his religious merit he obtained (i.e. went to) Indra's world. He made his very intelligent son Yayāti, endowed with truthfulness, having piety as his valour, the protector of his subjects (i.e. the king). The king (Nahuṣa) went to (i.e. obtained) Indra's position. His son Yayāti, endowed with truthfulness, who (occupied) his place (i.e. the throne), would protect (i.e. protected) the subjects religiously. He himself would

look (i.e. looked) after his subjects and the respective duties. Having learnt about excellent duty, he, who knew righteousness got sacrifices performed. He did everything like performing sacrifices, (visiting) holy places, giving gifts (giving) religious merit. The intelligent son of the king (Nahuṣa) ruled truthfully for eighty thousand years in those days. The glorious Yayāti passed that much time (in truthfully ruling his subjects).

11b-15. He had four sons who were powerful and valorous like him. I shall tell (you) their names. Listen with a concentrated (i.e. attentive) mind. His eldest son was Ruru by name, who was very powerful. The second son was named Puru; the third one was Kuru; the fourth son of the king was Yadu by name, who was religious-minded. Thus the noble Yayāti had four sons. By means of their lustre and manliness, they resembled their father in valour. Thus Yayāti ruled his kingdom righteously. Great were his fame and glory in the three worlds.

Viṣṇu said :

16-18. Once the greatest brāhmaṇa, Nārada, the son of Brahmā, went to Indra's world to see Indra, O king. The thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra) saw the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada) who was omniscient, who was proficient in (all kinds of) knowledge, whose lustre was like fire, (when) he came there. With his neck bent in devotion (i.e. bowing in devotion), he seated the best sage, who was honoured with a respectful offering,¹ on an auspicious seat, and asked him:

Indra said :

19. Where have you come from today? For what purpose have you come here? O brāhmaṇa, O great sage, what very dear to you should I do today?

Nārada said :

20-21. O king of gods, O very intelligent one, I am pleased with all that you did devoutly and with what you said. I shall answer your questions. I have now safely come to your house

1. Madhuparka—a respectful offering made to a guest. Its usual ingredients are: Curds, ghee, water, honey and sugar.

from the earth. After having seen (Yayāti), the son of Nahuṣa, I have come to seek you.

Indra said :

22-23. Which king, being learned, wise, virtuous, and full of righteousness, always protects his subjects truthfully? On the earth, which is the king, who knows the Vedas, to whom the brāhmaṇas are dear, who is pious, who is conversant with the Vedas, who is a sacrificer, who is a donor, and who is a great devotee?

Nārada said :

24-30. With these qualities was endowed the powerful son of Nahuṣa, due to whose truthfulness and valour all people were well-settled. Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, is like you on the earth. As you are in the heaven, enhancing the prosperity (of your subjects), so he is on the earth enhancing the prosperity (of his subjects). O great king, that king Yayāti, superior to his father, performed a hundred horse-sacrifices, and also a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices. Devoutly he gave gifts in many forms like thousands of lakhs and hundreds of crores of cows. In the same way, he performed a crore of sacrifices, so also lakhs of sacrifices. He also gave gifts like grants of land to brāhmaṇas. He has protected Dharma in its full form. As you are ruling here in the heaven, so Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, the best king, who was endowed with these qualities, truthfully ruled for eighty thousand years.

The intelligent Sukarman said :

31-47. The lord of gods, having heard like this from the best of sages, reflected, and was afraid of (his) protecting the Dharma. (He thought:) 'Formerly, by the power of hundred sacrifices, the brave Nahuṣa went to (i.e. obtained) my position of Indra, and became the king of gods. He fell from that as a result of Śacī's intelligence. This great king who is like his father in valour, will undoubtedly reach Indra's position. There is no doubt about it. With this or that means (i.e. by hook or crook) I shall bring the king to heaven.' The lord of gods, who was afraid of him, thought like this. Then the king of gods, O best king, due to the great fear of that king Yayāti, sent his messenger to bring him to

heaven. (He sent) Nahuṣa's aeroplane endowed with all pleasures, and his charioteer Mātali with the aeroplane. Mātali, who was sent by the lord of gods to bring the very intelligent (Yayāti) went there where (Yayāti), Nahuṣa's son, stayed. As Indra, shines in his assembly, in the same way Yayāti, the religious-minded (king), shone in his own assembly. The charioteer of the king of gods said to that magnanimous king, whose ornament was truth: "O king, listen to my words. I have now been sent to you by the king of gods. Do, with a good (i.e. devoted) mind, all that the king of gods tells. O lord, you should come to Indra's world; (do) not (do) otherwise (i.e. do come), after having entrusted your kingdom to your son, and after having performed the best and the last sacrifice (in your life). O son of Nahuṣa, the very lustrous king lives there. Purūravas, of a great power, the noble-minded Vipracitti (also live there). Śibi lives there, Manu, king Ikṣvāku, the intelligent (king) named Sagara, and your father Nahuṣa (live there). The grateful Ṛtavīrya, and the noble Śantanu, and Bharata, Yuvanāśva, also king Kārtavīrya, —(all these) kings, after having offered various sacrifices are rejoicing in heaven. Many other kings also, very much devoted to the performance of sacrifices, are all rejoicing as a result of their meritorious acts in heaven with Indra; and you again know all the Dharma and are well established in Dharma. (Therefore,) O king, rejoice with Śakra (i.e. Indra) in heaven."

Yayāti said :

48. What deeds have I done due to which this request is made to me by you and by Indra, the lord of gods? Tell me all that.

Mātali said :

49-52. Since, O king, you performed meritorious acts like giving gifts, and performed sacrifices for eighty thousand years, (therefore) due to (i.e. as a result of) your deeds, go to heaven, O lord of the earth. Make friendship with the lord of gods. Go to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven). O you highly intelligent one, leave your body having the five (elements) as its constituents, on the earth; and taking up a divine form, enjoy pleasures after your heart (i.e. as you like). O lord of men, pleasures in heaven

solicit (i.e. wait for) you in accordance with the sacrifices which are performed by you, or gifts which are given by you or penance which is practised by you, on the earth.

Yayāti said :

53. O Mātali, how should one go to the world obtained (according to one's deeds) by leaving the body with which good or bad deeds would be (i.e. are) accomplished on the earth?

Mātali said :

54-55. O king, men go to him due to divine (deeds) after leaving the body there (i.e. on the earth) only, where they have obtained this body of the nature of the five (elements). All other men also, who obtain merit or demerit, go down (i.e. to the hell) or up (i.e. to the heaven) after leaving the body (here).

Yayāti said :

56-60. O Mātali, having produced merit or demerit with the body of the nature of the five (elements), all other men do go up or down. What is the difference due to which one would leave (i.e. leaves) the body on the earth, O you who know moral virtue? (How do you say that) the body would fall (i.e. falls) as a result of (one's) sin or religious merit? In the mortal sphere, O charioteer, an example is directly seen. I, (therefore), do not see a greater difference between sinful or meritorious deeds. Why does a man, a mortal, leave the body with which he performs deeds like truthful behaviour? The soul and the body are both friends (of each other). The well-determined soul goes after leaving his friend viz. the body.

Mātali said :

61-65. O king, you have said the truth. He goes after leaving the body. There is (then) no connection of the soul with that body. Since this (body) of the nature of the five (elements) is always worn out in the joints, is troubled by old age, and always damaged by diseases, he (i.e. the soul) does not desire to stay here (i.e. in it). Being agitated and troubled, the soul leaving it (i.e. the body) departs. Due to truthfulness, acts of religious

merit, gifts, religious observance and restraints, sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, (visits to) holy places, and self-control, and also due to good deeds of great religious merit old age is not at all undergone. (On the other hand,) O great king, it attacks the body by means of sins.

Yayāti said :

66. O best one, please tell me in detail, from what old age has sprung up and why it troubles the body.

Mātali said :

67-95. I shall describe to you the cause of old age; and why it has sprung up in the body, O you best king. The body of the nature of the five elements, is resorted to by the five objects of sense. O king, when the soul leaves the body, it (i.e. the body) is burnt. O king, when blazing with fire the body burns along with the fluids. From it smoke is produced, and from smoke clouds are produced. Water proceeds from the clouds; the earth becomes ready for water as a chaste woman in her menses implores water. From that odour is produced, and fluid is produced from odour, O best king. From the fluid food is produced, and semen is produced from food. There is no doubt about this. From semen body is produced; and body is surely ugly. As the earth (element) would produce odour and it moves on the earth through fluids, similarly the body would always move. It is everywhere the substratum of fluids. From it odour is produced and again fluid would be (produced) from odour. From it is produced great fire; O king, mark the analogy. As fire is produced from wood, and would illumine wood, in the same way in the body fire is produced from fluid. It moves there (in the body) and, O king, it always nourishes the body. As long as there is preponderance of fluid (in the body) the soul is tranquil. Fire moving (in the body) like that remains in the form of hunger. Being sharp it desires food with water; O king, it receives the gift—food and water also. The fire consumes blood and semen also like that; there is no doubt about it. Due to that there would be consumption destroying the entire body. O king, when there would be preponderance of fluid, the fire is put down. Being troubled by the fluid, it is produced in the form of fever. The

fire having arrested the neck, the back, the waist, the anus remains in all the joints. (Thus) the fire moves on in the body. Its preponderance always continues to exist, and nourishes the body on all sides. (When) the fluid is restrained it then becomes powerful. Being excessive due to power, it would move the vital parts of the body through the semen. Due to that lust is produced; and O king, it would become (i.e. becomes) of the nature of a dart. O king, it is called the fire of lust, which destroys strength. Due to addiction to coitus destruction (takes place) in the body. A being oppressed by the fire of lust would resort to a female. Due to addiction to sexual intercourse, the body which is made violent and emaciated by lust, would become void of lustre, and there is a loss of strength (in the body). The (already) weak body becomes (more) weak when urged on by fire. That fire would consume blood and semen in the body. Due to the consumption of semen and blood, the body becomes dispirited. A violent wind of a terrible form is produced; and then he would be pale, tormented with grief and of a vacant mind. He moves, having in his mind that woman whom he has seen or about whom he has heard. When the course of the mind (i.e. the mind) is greedy, there is no satisfaction in (i.e. of) the body. When the lustful man, ugly or handsome, becomes weak due to brooding and the loss of flesh and blood, there appears old age in the body (being) consumed by the fire of lust. Due to that, he being (more) lustful, becomes older and older day by day. As a usurer thinks of money, so he thinks of a woman in (i.e. for) coitus; so also, O lord of men, there is a loss of his lustre. From that a body is produced, and he perishes. Then undoubtedly fire in the form of old age is again produced; and then there is a terrible fever in the form of (i.e. of the nature of) consumption in the beings. All the immobile and the mobile ones being tormented by fever and by many other troubles, perish. All this I have told you; what else should I tell?

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

*Mātali on Why the Body Is Left Behind**Yayāti said :*

1. O Mātali, tell me the reason, why this body, the protector of Dharma, does not go to heaven with the soul.

Mātali said :

2-9. The five elements do not go together (with the soul); in the company of the soul, O king. All of them come together in the village of the body. All of them, afflicted by old age, go to their respective abodes. Since the earth is created with a preponderance of fluid, it being wet due to the fluids becomes soft, O king. It is pierced by ants and rats. Holes are formed into it, and also anthills with large interiors. In the same way inflammation of the glands of the neck and itch are produced in the body. O best of men, this body is also cleft by worms. Enlargements (of parts like the spleen), instantly troubling, are also produced in it. O son of Nahuṣa, this body is full of such defects. How will it go to heaven with the life, O lord of men? The earthly part is settled in the body for the vital air essential to digestion. The body does not come (i.e. go) to heaven. It remains here as the earth does. I have told you all this along with a heap of earthy blemishes.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

*Mātali on the Universality of Suffering**Yayāti said :*

1-2. O Mātali, listen, (we see that) the body falls due to sin and also due to religious merit. On the earth I do not see what difference religious merit makes. The body is produced again (just) as it fell before. Tell me in detail how the body is produced.

Mātali said :

3-16. In the case of the hellish beings, just in a moment, the (hellish) body is produced from the (five) elements due to impious acts only. In the same way, due to religious merit, a divine body (in the manner of that) of the gods is instantly produced from the essences of the elements. That body of the magnanimous ones, (which is produced) due to the mixture of the (fruits) of deeds should be known to be of four kinds according to the transformation of deeds. The immobile ones in the form of grass and bushes should be known as the ones born by sprouting up. Worms, insects and moths should be known to be born from the sweat of living beings. O king, all birds, serpents and crocodiles are oviparous. Human beings and quadrupeds should be known to be viviparous. When the earth is 'cooked' by heat, it is moistured by water and is scattered by wind (into loose particles). Then the seed approaches the soil in such a way that the seeds that are sown and are watered, become soft and attain the state of roots. From the root there is the rise of a shoot. From a shoot a leaf springs up. From a leaf a hollow stock comes up; from that a stem comes up; and from that the *prabhava* (power). From it would be (produced) *Kṣīra* (the sap), and from the sap there is the rise of *tandula* (the gram?), from the gram come up the ripened *oṣadhayaḥ* (herbs). They are said to be seventeen—the best ones—beginning with barley and ending with rice. The herbs are rich with the wealth of fruits. The remaining ones are said to be trifling. These were first cleansed and cut and crushed by the sages with winnowing baskets, mortars and (other) vessels. With water in a pan and fire, they, which have six varieties, undergo alteration, have many tastes due to the combinations of their respective tastes. O king, they have six varieties like that which is consumed, eaten, drunk, licked, sucked and bitten (and eaten). They have six tastes like the sweet (taste) etc. That food which is eaten by living beings through (i.e. in the form of) balls and mouthfuls, settles all the vital airs in the stomach one by one.

17-18. That (vital) air divides into two the food that is consumed (but) not digested. Having got into the food and having separated the digested food into (i.e. having created in it) various properties, having put water above fire and that food

above the water, that (vital air) Prāṇa itself remains below the water and slowly blows the fire.

19-21. The fire being blown by the wind makes the water very hot. That food again, due to the contact of heat, is digested wholly. That (food) which is digested, becomes divided into two—the secretion is separated, and the liquid is separated. The useless divided into twelve (kinds of) impurity would go (i.e. goes) out of the body. (The outlets are:) ears, eyes, nose, tongue, teeth, lips, organ of generation, anus. (These) would pour out impurities (like) perspiration, faeces, urine. They are said to be twelve.

22-38. In the lotus of the heart, all around, the arteries are confined. (The vital air) Prāṇa places that subtle liquid into their openings; and then that prāṇa fills those arteries with that liquid. Those arteries wholly furnish that liquid to the body. Then that liquid remaining in the arteries is digested by the heat of the body. It is digested in two ways. Skin, flesh, bones, marrow, fat, blood are produced. Fine, soft, short hair and flesh are produced from blood; hair and sinews are produced from flesh. From the sinews are produced marrow and bones. Marrow of the flesh is due to bones. The healthy semen, of the nature of procreation is due to the strength of the marrow. These twelve are said to be the transformations of (i.e. brought about by) the satisfied one. Semen is its transformation, and the body is born from semen. When at the time favourable for conception defectless semen remains in the womb (of a woman), it, sent forth by that vital air, becomes one (i.e. united) with the blood of the woman. At the time of the emission of the semen, the soul, united with the organs of sense, and always being controlled by his own acts, enters the womb. The semen with the blood (of the woman) would be (turned into) a foetus in a day. Then within five nights bubbles would be formed in the foetus. It takes the form of flesh in the five forms; neck, head, shoulder(s), spine and belly; so also hands and feet, the two sides, waist, and (the other parts of) the body; the limbs are produced one by one within two months. After three months, hundreds of sharp joints are produced (i.e. formed). Fingers etc. are produced (i.e. are formed) one by one in four months. After five months mouth, nose and ears are produced (i.e. formed). Within six months, the row of teeth,

so also tongue and nails are formed, so also cavities in the ears are formed. So also are formed anus, penis, organ of generation and the male organ of generation. The joints which (are present) in the limbs, are formed within seven months. In the eighth month the head with the entire body with limbs and with each limb clearly separated is formed. He is complete and endowed with the five. Due to the power of the food of (i.e. eaten by) the mother and by the tastes of six kinds, fixed in the umbilical cord, it (i.e. the foetus) grows day by day.

39-48. Then the soul would have recollection in this entire body (i.e. when the entire body is formed). He is conscious of (former) happiness and unhappiness and sleep and dream seen before: 'I, who was dead, am born again, I, who was born, died. I saw (i.e. was born in) many existences in many ways. Now I am just born, and have received (i.e. undergone) sacraments. I shall hereafter perform righteous deeds, by which I shall not be born (i.e. conceived) in a womb.' While remaining in the womb, he just thinks: 'After I come out from the womb (i.e. after I am born) I shall study (i.e. obtain) highest knowledge that would cause the cessation of the worldly existence.' The soul, certainly very much troubled by the great affliction in the womb, lives (there) and would think (i.e. thinks) of the means to salvation. As one who has gone over an excellent (i.e. high) mountain, stays there unhappily, in the same way, the soul, afflicted by the outer skin of the embryo, remains (in the womb) with the body wet with the fluid in the womb. As someone, being put into an iron-vessel is baked by fire, in the same way (the soul) put into the vessel of womb is baked by the digestive fire in the stomach. Its parts are continuously pierced by needles resembling the colour of fire. The pain he suffers (due to these), would be (i.e. is) eightfold in the womb. There is no other abode anywhere else like the one in the womb. The souls have immense suffering and a very fierce danger.

49-66a. Thus is narrated the suffering in the womb of (i.e. experienced by) all beings—mobile and immobile—according to the wombs (in which they are confined). The bewildered soul that is being born has (to suffer) a crore-fold more pain due to being pressed by the thong of the womb than he has experienced in the womb. Very great affliction takes place in the case

of (i.e. is experienced by) (the soul) coming out of the womb, and being squeezed like a sugar-cane due to being pounded by destructive hammers, and by means of the air (passing out at the time) of delivery. He does not get any protection. As the sugar-canes being pressed by the machine become sapless, in the same way the body remaining in the womb is caused to fall (out of it) by the pressure of the thong. It has limbs; it is of a round shape; it is tied by the bonds of sinews. It is smeared with blood, flesh and marrow, and is the receptacle of substances like excrement and urine; it is covered with hair, down and nails; and it is the principal abode of diseases. It has one gate (in the form) of the mouth and is adorned with eight windows.¹ It has the (two) doors of the two lips, and is possessed of teeth, tongue and throat. It has the arteries and the stream of perspiration, and is overwhelmed with phlegm and bile. It is approached by old age and grief. It remains in the fire in the mouth of Death. It is overcome with lust and anger, and is pressed by winds; it is effected by desire for enjoyments; it is hidden, it is under the sway of attachment and hatred. Every limb, big and small, has a complexion; it is covered by the outer skin of the embryo; it comes out through the lonely and narrow passage of the womb. It is moistened with excretion, urine and blood; it is due to the six (kinds of) marrow. It should be known that there is collection of the bones in the skeleton numbering three hundred and a hundred more (i.e. four hundred). There are five hundred muscles. It is all around covered with small soft hair numbering three crores and half. The body is full of crores of these gross and subtle, visible and invisible, fleshy tubular organs from within. There is perspiration, and due to those it is eternally impure. The teeth were said to be thirty-two in number, and the nails are said to be twenty. It should be known that (the quantity of) bile (in the body) is one kuḍava; in the same way the quantity of phlegm is half an āḍhaka. (The quantity of) marrow is five palas; and the buttocks are half of it. The lump of flesh is five palas; fat is ten palas; thick blood is three palas; the quantity of marrow is four times that of the blood. Semen is half a kuḍava; and the power of men is half of it. It is said that

1. Gavākṣāṣṭaka—The eight apertures of the human body are: the two ears, the two eyes, the two nostrils, organ of excretion and organ of generation (the ninth is the mouth).

one thousand palas of flesh (exist in) a corporeal frame. It should be known that the quantity of blood is a hundred palas, and there is no (definite) measure (of the quantity) of faeces and urine.

66b-83a. Thus, O king, there always is the residence of the soul (in the body). The impure body is (the residence) of the soul, which is produced by the bondage of (his) deeds. The body is produced due to the combination of the semen (of the male) and the blood (of the female). It is always united with faeces and urine; therefore it is said to be impure, like an externally pure pot full of faeces from within. This body would be (i.e. is) impure even though it is cleansed by voiding of excrement. This body is impure because the very pure five products of the cow¹ and offering quickly become impure after reaching it. Agreeable and fragrant food and drinks quickly become impure on reaching it (i.e. on being consumed). Which other object is more impure than it (i.e. the body)? O men, do you not see that everyday the foul-smelling excrement, the companion of (i.e. living in) the body, goes out of it? Then how can its support be pure? Like a charcoal being rubbed, the body, though cleansed with the five products of the cow or with water containing darbhas, never becomes pure. How can that body, from which the streams of phlegm and urine flow everyday, as streams (of water) from a mountain, be cleansed? There is not a single part which is pure in the body, the receptacle of all impurity, except (the soul). Even though the hand is cleansed with clay and water, by day or at night, it can never be pure. (And yet) the men are not free from attachment. Though this body is carefully decorated with excellent incenses etc., yet, like the dog's tail that is bent, it does not give up its nature. Wool that is naturally black can never become white; similarly the body, though cleansed, does not become pure. This world, smelling its own bad odour, and seeing its excrement, does not get detached, though (by doing this) he (i.e. a man) troubles his nose. Oh! see the greatness of attachment, which has deluded the world? Smelling, seeing his own foul things, man has not lost interest in the body. What other cause for detachment can be pointed out to a man, who does not

1. Pañcagavya—The five products of the cow taken collectively: milk, curds, clarified butter or ghee, urine and cowdung.

become detached by the odour of his body? The entire world is pure, but the body is highly impure, by the touch of the dirty parts of which even a pure (object) would become impure. The cleansing of the body is said to be (i.e. recommended) for removing the application of sandal paste. When both (the sandal and the dirt) are removed, (a man) becomes pure by the purification of his thoughts.

83b-93a. This mortal, foul-smelling body, impure in thoughts, does not become pure with all the water of the Ganges and with besmearing the body with a large quantity of clay. The wicked heart is not purified by baths at holy places and austerities. The body of a man, whose mind is impure, does not become pure even though washed at a holy place or even after entering fire. There is neither heaven for him, nor hell (also). (The) best thing is burning the body. Purification of mind is the greatest purification, and is the main thing in all acts. A beloved (wife) is embraced with one thought, a daughter with another. The attitude varies even in the case of things that are not separate. A chaste woman would think about her son in one way, and about her husband in another way. In this way, O magnanimous one, the (variety) of nature is explained, since even though embraced by his wife, he should not make her void of thoughts. A man would not eat various kinds of food, so also fragrant tasty things, without interest. Therefore thought (or interest) is the cause everywhere (i.e. in all one's dealings). With effort purify your mind; what is the use of other external purifications? The soul, pure due to pure thoughts, obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven and salvation. The smearing with the excrement and urine of ignorance and attachment would perish (i.e. be removed) by means of purifiers (like) the spotless water of knowledge and the clay of detachment. Thus they know this body to be impure by its (very) nature. One should know it to be worthless and useless, like the essence of a plantain-tree.

93b-102a. He, who, knowing the body to be full of blemishes like this, becomes relaxed, crosses the worldly existence, and remains with (i.e. has) a firm conviction. Thus the affliction due to birth is said to be very painful. That sense which the human being has, due to the fault of ignorance, and due to various kinds of deeds, perishes when he is born. Feverish heat is produced

in the case of human beings, when a human being is afflicted by being painfully pressed by the thong of the womb, and by the fearful external air due to his contact with delusion. Due to that feverish heat great delusion is caused. Then in the case of the deluded one, loss of memory takes place quickly. In the case of that being, attachment is produced during that existence only, due to the loss of his memory and due to his former deeds. The world (i.e. people) being attached and deluded, proceeds (proceed) to do what ought not to be done. They do not know themselves, nor do they know the highest deity. They do not listen to the (advice relating to) highest good, nor, though having eyes, do they see, like a person, tumbling at every step, even though walking slowly along an even path. Though they have intelligence, and though they are advised by the wise, they do not realise (the truth). Due to that a man going after (i.e. led by) greed is afflicted in the worldly existence.

102b-128. In the absence of a text (about the description of the soul's existence in) the womb, Śiva has propounded a sacred text to tell the affliction of (the soul's existence in) it (and) leading to salvation. It is a great wonder that even when a man has known that (text propounded by) Śiva, he does not accomplish what is good for himself. Since the sense-organs and intellect are not (properly) developed, there is great affliction even in childhood. The blessed (child), though desiring to speak or to act, is not able to do so. Cutting of teeth is very painful, and there is affliction also due to unsteadiness, wind, various child-diseases and planets harming children. With his body surrounded (i.e. overcome) by thirst and hunger, (the child) sometimes stays (at one place and sometimes) moves. A child would indulge in eating excretion, urine etc, due to ignorance. The child suffers pain due to his ears being pierced, due to being beaten by the mother and the father, due to learning the letters (i.e. the alphabet) and due to punishment (given by) teachers and others. How can there be happiness in youth, (to a young man) the functions of whose organs of sense are deluded, who is troubled with the disease of lust and who is always afflicted with diseases? Due to jealousy there is great affliction. Affliction is caused by delusion. The attachment in an angry (young man) leads to unhappiness only. Troubled with the fire of passion he does not

get sleep at night. How can there be happiness even by day due to the anxiety to get money? The drops of semen of a man with his body prostrated (over the bodies) of women, do not lead to happiness like drops due to (i.e. of) perspiration. They know that the pleasure obtained from (union with) women is the same as (obtained by one) being struck (i.e. bitten) by insects, or as of a helpless lepor due to the trouble caused by the fire of scratching. It should be known that the pleasure in (i.e. obtained from) women is like that which one feels due to anxiety about getting money; it is not at all different. The same is the pang of a mortal; without that joy is had by one's mind. Then it goes from one to another to whom it had gone before. Ultimately it is the same; it does not change. Who else is more insensible than one who, seeing his dear one that is thus affected by old age, or that is sick, or his own extraordinary child troubled by old age, is not detached? A being, though overcome with old age, is treated with contempt due to his weakness by his wicked servants. An old man is not able to achieve (the four goals viz.) righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyments and salvation. Therefore while young one should practise piety. Inequality (i.e. disturbance) in wind, bile and phlegm etc. is called a disease. This body is (so) called due to the congregation of wind etc. Therefore one should know that this body of the soul is full of diseases. In addition to (diseases caused by) wind etc. the human being meets with many kinds of afflictions due to the diseases of the body. They can be known by oneself. What else should I tell? In this body remain one hundred one (kinds of) death. Among them one is united with Kāla (i.e. god of death). Others are adventitious. Those that are said to be adventitious, are alleviated by means of medicines, muttering of sacred hymns, sacrifices and gifts; but death brought about by Kāla cannot be stopped. Untimely death might not occur by eating poison, (yet) a man would not eat it without fear, for he is afraid of an untimely death. For human beings there are various gates (leading) to death like many diseases; so also animals like serpents; poisons and employment of magical spells for malevolent purposes. Even the physician of gods¹ himself cannot cure a man who is afflicted

1. Dhanvantari—Name of the physician of the gods said to have been produced at the churning of the ocean with a cup of nectar in his hand.

by all diseases and whose death is imminent. This cannot be otherwise. No medicine, no penance, no charity, not the mother, no relatives can protect a man who is afflicted with Kāla (i.e. death). With (the help of) the magnanimous souls, who are equipped with medicines supposed to prolong life and prevent old age, and with penance and muttering of sacred hymns, he would only have intermediate (temporary) peace; he would (certainly) meet with death.

129-151a. He, who dies, is born in the species of insects due to his acts; he sees (i.e. meets with) death as a result of (i.e. which is a) change of the body. That is said to be death. It is not a real (i.e. total) destruction. In this world there is no analogy for the grief which a being has in death when he has entered great darkness (i.e. hell) and when his vitals are being cut off. Being extremely afflicted, he/she cries 'O father, O mother, O husband'. The world is swallowed by death as a frog is by a serpent. He is abandoned by kinsmen and is surrounded by his dear ones. Rolling on a bedstead and heaving deep and hot sighs, he, with his mouth parched, again and again faints. Being in a swoon, he throws his hands and feet here and there. From (i.e. when he is on) the bedstead he desires (to go to) the ground, and from (i.e. when he is on) the ground he again desires (to go to) the bedstead. He is helpless, is ashamed, is smeared with excretion and urine; he asks for water; his throat, lips and palate are dry; thinking about his wealth (as) 'to whom will it belong when I die?', being taken by the messengers of Yama and being dragged by the noose of (the god of) death, he dies, when (the relatives etc.) are watching. His throat makes a sound. Like a caterpillar the soul would enter (i.e. goes to) one after another body. He obtains the next body; he abandons the previous one. For the discriminating people, death is more painful than supplication. The grief in (i.e. due to) death is momentary, while in (i.e. due to) supplication it is unending. Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, became a dwarf through supplication. Who is greater than he who does not become mean (through supplication)? I have now understood this as to when one becomes superior to death. One should not repeatedly solicit another (man). Thirst (i.e. desire) is the cause of meanness. There is grief in the beginning, there is also grief in the middle; at the end there is terrible

grief, due to nature (i.e. this is natural). Thus there is a series of griefs for beings. A man should not lament over these griefs for beings, which are present and which have gone by. Due to (even) that (i.e. these griefs) (a man) is not detached from existence. There is a great grief due to excessive eating; then there is grief due to eating less. While eating the throat breaks; (so) wherefrom is there pleasure from eating? Hunger is said to be the greatest disease of all the diseases. It is temporarily alleviated due to the application of soothing medicines. The pang of the disease of hunger is acute, and it cuts off the entire strength (of a man). Overpowered by that a man dies as he would die of other diseases. What delight is there in its relish that lingers on the tip of the tongue? In a moment—in half of that time—it reaches the throat and returns. Thus for those who are tormented by the disease of hunger food is said to be (working) like a medicine. Wise men should not look upon it as actually leading to pleasure. In the case of him also, who, without (doing) any work, lies like a dead body, and whose mind is impelled by ignorance, wherefrom can there be pleasure? Wherefrom can there be happiness in the case of him whose mind is affected in (i.e. while performing) deeds, though he has knowledge? Beings though content, are troubled due to optional (deeds) by exertion in agriculture, trade, service, animal husbandry etc. and by (passing) urine and excretion in the morning, and by hunger and thirst in the noon, and by sleep at night.

151b-163. There is grief in earning money; there is grief in preserving what is earned. There is grief when wealth perishes; there is grief in spending it. Wherefrom (i.e. how) can there be happiness from wealth? As there is fear from death in the case of (i.e. to) men, similarly there is always fear to the wealthy persons from thieves, water, fire, their kinsmen, and even from the king. A wealthy person is everywhere eaten up (i.e. robbed) as flesh is eaten by birds in the sky, by wild beasts on the earth, and by fish in water. Wealth deludes a man in prosperity, keeps him away (from joy) in calamity, is painful when it is earned. (Then) when does it bring happiness? First (consider) a wealthy person; he is (always) sad; then (consider) one who is free from desire for all objects. Between the two, I think the wealthy person is unhappy, and the one, whose mind is detached, is happy. Due

to heat there is suffering in the spring and summer seasons; in the rainy season there is suffering due to (stormy) wind, heat and showers. Thus wherefrom (can one get) happiness? There is suffering in the (so-called) glory of marriage; again there is suffering in pregnancy. There is suffering due to the difficulty in delivery, and also due to the acts like those of excretion etc. (In the same way) there is suffering due to the son suffering from diseases of teeth and eyes. (Then one says:) 'Alas! What shall I do (now)? My cows have perished; my husband has broken down; my wife has run away. These guests, indicating fear, have come to my house. My wife has a young child. Who will do the cooking? What kind of bridegroom will be (obtained) by my daughter at the time of her marriage?' How can there be happiness to householders who are overcome by this anxiety? The knowledge, (good) character, all virtues of a man distressed by the anxiety of the family, perish along with his body, like water put in an unbaked jar. Wherefrom can there be pleasure in (i.e. from) a kingdom due to (i.e. as there is) anxiety of peace and war? There is fear even from the son (to a king); (then) what kind of happiness is there?

164-173. Generally all beings have fear from (members of) their own species, as dogs have fear from one another, as all of them desire to have the same object. There is no king on the earth, who, having abandoned everything, has entered a forest and remained there happy and fearless. The brave son (viz. Paraśurāma) of the sage (viz. Jamadagni) knocked down on the ground the thousand arms of the famous Kārtavīrya in a battle. Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, destroyed the matchless, rising valour of the very magnanimous son of the sage (viz. Jamadagni). The glory of Rāma (i.e. Balarāma) was destroyed, with his splendour, by Jarāsandha. The glory of Jarāsandha was destroyed by Bhīma, and his glory too by (Hanumān) the son of Wind. Hanumān too, being tossed by the Sun, fell on the ground. The glorious Arjuna killed all the demons—the Nivātakavacas—who were proud of their strength. He (too) was vanquished by the cowherds. At times even the sun, full of glowing heat is screened by clouds. A cloud is tossed by wind, and the power of wind is vanquished by the mountains. The mountains are burnt by fire, and that fire is extinguished by water. That water is dried up by

the suns; (and) all those suns, along with water and the three worlds, perish on (i.e. at the end of) Brahmā's day. Brahmā too, at the end of the period of two Parārdhas, is withdrawn along with the gods, by Śiva, the highest lord.

174-198a. Thus, in this worldly existence, there is no best power, excepting the highest soul, the immutable lord of the world. Realising that everything has a superior (object), one should avoid great pride. When the world is like this, who is a god, or who is even a learned man? There is no one (in the world) who is omniscient, or who is a total fool? A man is learned there (i.e. in a particular field) to that extent to which he knows it. By deep thinking, (it is found that) the power (of men) everywhere is similar. Someone has power in some field due to excess of wealth. Gods were vanquished by demons, and they were again (i.e. in their turn) vanquished by gods. Thus the beings in the world are dependent on one another through good fortune, success and defeat. Thus (even) for kings a pair of garments and water and food of the measure of a prastha, a vehicle, a bed and a seat (are enough). All the rest just leads to misery. He can even have a bedstead on the seventh floor; (but) there is the painful glory (of being consecrated by the water) from a thousand pitchers of water. In the early morning there is the sound of the musical instruments along with (that of) the citizens. There is just that pride in (i.e. due to) a kingdom, viz. 'This (musical instrument) is being beaten in my house.' All ornaments are (but) a burden; all anointing is dirt (only); all songs are (just) a prattle; dancing is (nothing but) the movement of a mad person. This (is the fruit) due to the enjoyments (obtained from) a kingdom. On reflection (one would see): 'wherefrom (i.e. how) is happiness (obtained?)'. Kings have anxiety about war (with one another) or due to the desire of conquering one another. Mostly great kings like Nahuṣa have fallen after reaching heaven due to the pride of wealth. Who gets happiness from wealth? Even in heaven, how can there be happiness when gods have observed the bright glory of other (gods) which remains more prominently in one than in another? When the foundation (of all ill acts) is cut off, men enjoy the fruit of their merit in heaven. Here the very terrible blemish is that no other

act is performed. As a tree, with its roots cut off, falls on the ground after (a few) days, similarly the residents of heaven fall down due to the exhaustion of their religious merit. All of a sudden calamity befalls those who strongly desire happiness through the boats of enjoyment of pleasures etc. There is misery for the gods in heaven. Thus on reflection (it is seen) that even in heaven gods do not have happiness. When the objects of senses are not obtained, there is the exhaustion of the acts that lead to enjoyment in heaven. In the fires of hell there is a great affliction to the beings, due to various terrible objects produced from speech, mind and body. There is a severe cutting with axes; and the chopping off of the bark-garments. There is the fall of leaves, branches and fruits (caused) by terrible wind. There is suffering among the immobile species due to being uprooted by rivers, elephants and by other beings, and also by wild fire, snow and dryness. There is a terrible pain in (i.e. due to) the anger of snakes and serpents. In the world the wicked are killed, and are bound down with fetters. Repeatedly there are sudden birth and death in the case of insects and also (in the case of those) belonging to the class of reptiles. Thus there are many kinds of miseries. The beasts end themselves and are beaten with sticks. They are troubled due to their noses being pierced and are beaten with a whip. They are fettered with canes, wood, goad etc. Service causes affliction to the mind; the young etc. are troubled. Due to separation from their herds, and their eyes being tied (i.e. covered), beasts have thus many kinds of afflictions. Sharks and birds have a great affliction due to rain, cold and heat.

198b-210. Thus there are many kinds of afflictions for bodies. For men there is a great affliction while living in the womb, and also great affliction of (i.e. during) birth. Ignorance is a great affliction of childhood; in adolescence there is (the affliction of) the punishment by a teacher. There is affliction in youth due to lust and attachment, and due to jealousy; and also due to agriculture, trade, service etc., and acts like protection of the cattle. In old age (there is affliction) due to aging and diseases. There is great affliction in (i.e. at the time of) death; still greater (is the affliction) in solicitation. There is a great fear from the king, fire, strokes by clouds (like lightning), thieves

and enemies. There is again a great fear in earning and preserving money and its destruction and spending. Miserliness, jealousy, and arrogance are greatly fearful results of the excess of wealth (i.e. when there is excessive wealth). There is a tendency for doing misdeeds. These are always the afflictions of the wealthy. (There are afflictions like) servitude, usury, slavery, dependence on others, connection with the desirable and undesirable, and many kinds of unions. (There are calamities like) famine, misfortune, folly, poverty, enjoying lower or higher (position), (going) to hell, and being overpowered by the king. There is affliction due to mutual subjugation. There is a great fear from one another; there is a great wrath towards one another; and a king has (to suffer) affliction from (other) kings. Here (i.e. in this world) the objects are transient, (so also) of a human being whose desires are satisfied. (There is affliction) due to the cutting of the vitals of one another, and due to the squeezing of the hands of one another. The greedy ones due to sin (indulge in) consuming one another. Since the mobile and the immobile (beings) beginning with (denizens of) hell and ending with human beings, are afraid of such and other afflictions, therefore a wise man should abandon everything. As when a burden is shifted from one shoulder to another it is regarded as rest, similarly in this world one grief is alleviated by another. The boats of enjoyment always excel one another.

211-225. Misery has settled with gods in the heaven due to the exhaustion of their religious merit. Due to the exhaustion of religious merit there is birth (i.e. a soul is born) in many species. Even in the world of gods there are said to be diseases of various forms. The head of Sacrifice was cut off; and it was rejoined by the Aśvins. Due to that defect the Sacrifice always has (i.e. suffers from) the disease of the head. The Sun has (i.e. suffers from) leprosy and Varuṇa has (i.e. suffers from) dropsy. Pūṣan has defect in his teeth, and Indra has (i.e. suffers from) stiffness of arms. Soma is known to have been suffering from a very severe disease of consumption. Even Dakṣa, the lord of created beings, suffers from acute fever. In every Kalpa even great gods perish. Even Brahmā becomes unstable after a period of two parārdhas. Brahmā again longed for his granddaughter, the daughter of Dakṣa. The lord angrily cursed goddess Jayā,

who knew deep, abstract meditation. The defects of the nature of (i.e. due to) lust and anger remain there, where the two remain. (Thus) all miseries are stable. There is no doubt about it. The fire consumes everything shattered by birth and death. (Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu) murdered a woman, was lustful, and acted as a charioteer in the Pāṇḍava army. Rudra burnt the three cities (of Maya), and destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice. The birth of Skanda is from the semen from (i.e. discharged during) sports in thousand ways. Thus all the three gods possess the faults like attachment. The lord superior to these is tranquil, perfect and giver of salvation. Thus the entire world lives on the excellence of one (over) another. One should go to (i.e. have) disgust, knowing that (the world) is full of miseries. From disgust there would arise detachment, and knowledge springs from detachment. Through knowledge one would get that highest propitious knowledge (and) salvation. He then is happy with his mind at ease (since he is) freed from all miseries. He who is omniscient, and perfect is called (a) free (soul).

Mātali said :

I have told you all that you had asked about. The discrimination between merit and demerit is due to omniscience. You should go to Indra's heaven at his bidding.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

Mātali on Three Kinds of Sin

Yayāti said :

1-2. O you charioteer of Indra, due to my good luck I have been able to see you. This gives me immense merit. Even in the mortal world human beings commit a terrible sin. O Mātali, now tell me about the ripening of their actions.

Mātali said :

3-12. Listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristics of a sinful

behaviour. In this world great knowledge is produced when (things) are heard. People condemn the Vedas and censure brāhmaṇic practices. Those who are learned should also know what great sin is. He who causes harm to all the good persons (has committed) a major sin. It would go (i.e. its effect would be nullified only) by expiation. People give up the customs peculiar to their own family and practise those of others. Those who know what should be done (i.e. what is proper) have described this to be a major sin. Reviling one's mother and father, beating one's sisters, and abusing one's father's sister is certainly a sin. The dead ancestors of him, who, when the time for offering a śrāddha has come, proceeds (to offer the śrāddha and) feeds someone else through lust or anger or fear, ignoring his son-in-law living at a distance of five kośas, his daughter's son, his own sister and her son, do not enjoy (the oblations offered by him), nor do the gods enjoy (the offerings made to them). This sin, committed by him, is equal to patricide. When the time for giving gifts has come, and when a brāhmaṇa (-group) has come, he avoids giving gifts to many, and gives them (only) to a few. That a gift is given to one, and no gift is given to another, is also a terrible sin, and is said to destroy (the merit acquired from) gifts.

13-23a. That is not a distinctive mark of a gift which is given (to someone else) ignoring his own brāhmaṇas employed by the patron. O king, a (patron) should well nourish, with all means and good gifts, that brāhmaṇa of a religious conduct who has resorted to him. He should not consider whether he is a foolish or a learned brāhmaṇa. A brāhmaṇa is always to be fed. He should always worship a learned brāhmaṇa endowed with all religious merit, who has come to him, after honouring him with good gifts. There is no doubt that the gifts which he would give to some other brāhmaṇa by ignoring that (learned brāhmaṇa) or the offerings that he would make, would be fruitless. On all auspicious occasions a brāhmaṇa, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya and a śūdra as the fourth should worship a brāhmaṇa that has sought their shelter—whether he is a fool or a learned brāhmaṇa. Listen (I will tell you) the meritorious fruit of it. He obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. O king, what is the reason for which (i.e. there is no reason why) he should not get done what is

possible? If another brāhmaṇa comes at that time when the śrāddha-rite is going on, he should then honour both the brāhmaṇas by giving them food, shelter, tāmbūla and presents. (If he does this) his dead ancestors are pleased. One should always give gifts and make presents to (a brāhmaṇa) who has eaten at a śrāddha. The sin of that performer of a śrāddha who does not give gifts would be equal to that due to the killing of a cow. Therefore, O best king, these two should be honoured with faith. Or if he is poor he should honour one (of the two).

23b-30. Thus men belonging to the three castes such as brāhmaṇa etc. should perform a śrāddha on the day of a great calamity, or when the astronomical division of time called vaidhṛti has come, or on a new-moon day, or a day between two sunrises in the next half. O great king, he should employ priests officiating at sacrifices. In the same way he should always employ brāhmaṇas for offering a śrāddha. A wise man should never employ an unknown brāhmaṇa. He should invite that brāhmaṇa whose family up to the third (previous) generation from him is known and whose conduct is known, O king. He should consider the conduct of a brāhmaṇa whose family is not known. When the śrāddha-offering is to be made, it may not be known whether a brāhmaṇa is pure or foolish, or is one who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. A śrāddha-offering ought to be done; so he should invite a brāhmaṇa (for that); O best king, first hospitable reception should be given (to him). If a sinful (host) does otherwise he certainly goes to hell. Therefore a brāhmaṇa should be engaged at a presentation of gifts or a śrāddha on the parvan-days.

31-33. At the time of presentation of gifts or a śrāddha, he should engage a brāhmaṇa after examining him. In his house the dead ancestors do not eat without a brāhmaṇa. They go away after cursing (him who offers the śrāddha) from a śrāddha (performed) without a brāhmaṇa. He (who offers such a śrāddha) is a great sinner even if he resembles Brahmā. O king, he who lives by abandoning the performance (of rites) to the dead ancestors, should be known to be a great sinner to be excommunicated.

34-39. Those who give up auspicious practices relating to Viṣṇu and giving (i.e. bringing) enjoyments, and who condemn

the brāhmaṇic way of conduct should be known as men of increasing sins. Those, who give up auspicious practices (or practices relating to Śiva), who hate the devotees of Śiva, who, the sinners, abuse Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), who always hate Brahmā (or brāhmaṇas), who condemn the (religious) practices, are the greatest sinners. I shall now tell (you) about the religious merit of those who worship the first, venerable, the highest knowledge, the meritorious Bhāgavata and (other Purāṇas like) Viṣṇu, Harivaṁśa, Matsya or Padma. He (i.e. such a person) has actually worshipped god Viṣṇu. Therefore one should worship the knowledge, contained in the Viṣṇu (Purāṇa), (and) dear to Viṣṇu. O king, there is always (kept) a book (i.e. a copy) of the Viṣṇu (Purāṇa). When it is worshipped, Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) is worshipped.

40-58. Those who, without worshipping (the Purāṇa containing) knowledge about Hari, sing or write, or without knowing it, present it, or listen to or recite it, or sell it through greed and devotion to bad (i.e. wrong) knowledge, or place it, as they will, at places that are not purified, or one who would declare it explicitly in accordance with (i.e. helping) his welfare, or he who, being capable, commits mistakes after having studied it, or he who being impure explains or listens to it at an impure place (all these condemn knowledge). This, in brief, is said to be the condemnation of knowledge. I (shall now) tell (you) about the sin of him who, the sinful one, desires to learn sacred texts without worshipping his preceptor, who does not render service (to his preceptor and) deliberately disobeys him, (and who) does not approve of the words (of the preceptor), does not respond to him, ignores when (some) work of the preceptor is to be done, (and he, who) abandons his preceptor who is afflicted and weak, or is proceeding to a foreign country or has been humiliated by adversaries or while he is reciting a Purāṇa. Till (the period during which) fourteen Indras have ruled, he would live in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka. Also one who, of a sinful mind, ignores his preceptor reading the Purāṇa, has (committed) a terrible sin, giving (i.e. taking him to) hell. Also the sin (of him) who condemns his wife, sons and friends is as great as (that of) the condemnation of one's preceptor. One who kills a brāhmaṇa, one who steals gold, one who drinks liquor,

one who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his teacher's wife)—all these are great sinners; so also the one who joins (i.e. abets) them. He, who very much cuts the vitals especially of a brāhmaṇa through anger, hatred or greed, is declared to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa. O king, he also is the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, having invited a poor, soliciting brāhmaṇa, says 'no' (i.e. refuses to give any gift) to him. He is declared to be killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, due to the pride of his own knowledge, renders lustreless (i.e. humiliates) a neutral brāhmaṇa in an assembly. He is said to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who elevates himself by means of pretended virtues, and who opposes his preceptor. They call him to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who creates an obstacle to them, who, with their bodies tormented by hunger and thirst, seek food or meal. He also is said to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, a wicked one, is intent upon finding out the weak points of all the people, who causes torture and is cruel. They call him the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who would snatch back the land, though destroyed, in course of time, which was formerly given to a deity, a brāhmaṇa, or cows. That sin of taking away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa obtained as (i.e. which was put as) a deposit should be known to be as great as that of killing a brāhmaṇa.

59-66. He who gives up making an oblation to the fire in the rite of the five daily sacrifices; he who stands as a false witness against his mother, father and preceptor (is, a great sinner). (This sin and) eating what is not dear to Śiva's devotees and what ought not to be eaten, also killing innocent beasts in the forest, and setting fire to a cow-pen, a city or a village—all these are terrible sins equal to the sin (involved) in drinking liquor. Taking away all the possessions of a poor man, kidnapping another's wife, snatching elephants and horses, or cows, land, silver, garments, herbs and minerals, sandal, aloe wood, camphor, musk, woven silk, or taking away the deposits (made) by others is said to be like the stealing of gold. Not giving (in marriage) his marriageable daughter to a befitting groom, having an illicit connection with the wife of his son or friend or his own sister, fearful violating of a maiden, attachment to a śūdra-woman, cohabiting with a woman of the same caste is said to be like violating one's teacher's bed (i.e. teacher's wife). Those sins, which have been enumerated as sins, resemble major sins.

67-70. When a brāhmaṇa having promised money to a brāhmaṇa does not give it and forgets about it—that is equal to a minor sin. (Some other minor sins are:) snatching the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, crossing one's limit, too much pride, too much anger, hypocrisy, ingratitude, lust for someone other (than one's own wife), miserliness, wickedness, jealousy, sexual intercourse with the wife of someone else, violating a chaste maiden. The elder brother before whom his younger brother gets married, the younger brother married before the elder brother, the girl whom he marries (are sinners). (It is a sin) to offer a girl to them, or to act as a priest at sacrifices performed by them. (Other sins are:)

71-80. Abandoning one's son, friend, wife, also one's master when he is reduced to poverty, and one's wife and good people and ascetics; killing a cow, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya, a woman or a śūdra; destruction of a Śiva-temple, trees, and lovely groves. (He) who causes even a small damage to hermitages or harms the group of servants there, or the beasts (living there), or the grains or wild crops, or steals ploughs, corn or beasts, or acts as a priest at a sacrifice of those who do not deserve to perform a sacrifice (is a sinner). The sale of (the merit due to) a sacrifice, of a grove or a lake, one's wife and children, of (the merit of) pilgrimage, fasts, vows and (other) pious acts (is a sin). (They are sinners) who live by the wealth of women and he who lives for a large part on the affluence of a woman (are sinners). O prince, he who would sell off his own faith, and he who would praise unrighteousness, he who mentions the faults of others, he who observes the weak points of others, he who longs for other's wealth, he who (passionately) gazes on another's wife—all these should be looked upon as resembling the killers of cows. (He is a sinner) who condemns all sacred texts, who snatches a cow, who sells the beasts, who tells lies or listens to the lies (uttered) by others; (he is a sinner) who plots against his master, or preceptor, who is deceitful, who is fickle or wicked. (He is a sinner) who eats (alone) leaving his hungry wife, sons, friends, children, old people, weak and afflicted persons, and also servants, guests and relatives.

81-87a. Those who eat savory (food) and do not give it to him who desires it should be known as ones cooking separately

(for themselves only) and such a person is condemned by the teachers of the Vedas. Those who take up restrictions and (later), with their organs of sense not conquered, give them up, and also those who have given up the life of a recluse, and those who are in the company of drunkards, and those who do not protect a cow that is afflicted with consumption or with thirst and hunger, are the killers of cows and are said to be hellish beings. Those who are engrossed (in committing) all (kinds of) sins, those who destroy the (grazing) field of the quadrupeds, or he who would beat (i.e. beats) saints, brāhmaṇas, preceptors or a cow, and also those who beat a faultless woman settled in a good position (i.e. behaving properly), and he, who, with his entire body bound with laziness, sleeps again and again; those who do not feed the weak or who do not look for the missing ones, or who trouble (the bullocks) by (putting) large burdens on them or drive them (even) when they are wounded are involved in (i.e. have committed) all (kinds of) sins. So also those who eat together (i.e. from the same plate).

87b-95a. Those men, who do not protect a cow with her limbs broken, and afflicted with wounds and (other) diseases and with hunger, are said to be hellish beings. Those men, who, the most sinful ones, strike the scrotum of bulls (i.e. castrate them), and also who harm cow's calves are beings living in a great (i.e. very painful) hell. Those (men) also, who do not honour a guest who has come to them with hope, and who is oppressed with hunger and exertion, go to hell. Those fools who do not show pity for a helpless, or maimed, or poor or young, or old or very much afflicted person, go to the ocean of (i.e. in the form of) hell. One who keeps goats, one who keeps buffaloes, one who is the husband of a śūdra or a barren woman, or a śūdra behaving like (i.e. following the profession of) a brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya, also architects, artisans, physicians and devalakas,¹ and those who make their servants work hard, go to hell. He, who, having transgressed what is prescribed, would charge arbitrarily (more) tax, also he who would inflict punishment without a (proper) cause, would be roasted in hells. That king

1. **Devalaka**—A low brāhmaṇa who subsists upon the offerings made to an idol. --

whose subjects are harassed by officials receiving bribes, by thieves in his kingdom, is roasted in hells.

95b-103a. There is no doubt that those brāhmaṇas who accept (gifts) from a king of a bad conduct also go to fearful hells. The king has (committed) that sin which is (committed) by men cohabiting with others' wives or by thieves. Being favoured by a king who does not protect, is fearful. That king, who, without thinking (properly), behaves with a person, who is not a thief, as (he would behave) with a thief, or who behaves with a thief, as he would behave with one who is not a thief, would also go to hell. Men (go to hell, who) through greed, snatch such objects as ghee, oil, food, drink, honey, flesh, wine or (any other) spirituous liquor, jaggery, sugarcane, vegetables, curd, roots and fruits, grass, wood, flowers, leaves, vessels of bell-metal, shoes, umbrella, bracelet, palanquin, soft seat, copper, lead, tin, bell-metal, or conch etc. that has come up from water, musical instrument like a flute, domestic utensils, (garments made of) wool, cotton or silken garments, objects belonging to the place of assembly or temples, or cotton or fine garments. He, who would snatch these and other objects, even in a small quantity, would quickly go to hell.

103b-114. There is no doubt that a man who snatches other's possession even of the measure of a mustard (i.e. even the smallest possession), goes to hell. There is no doubt that a man who takes away a small or a big object of another person, loved by the latter, goes to hell. Due to these and other sins, a man, immediately after his departure, would get (back) his former form or his body to be struck (by Yama's servants). The embodied ones go to Yama's world by the order of Yama. They are very much pained when they are being taken by the very fierce messengers of Yama. Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) is said to be the punisher, due to various sorts of severe corporal punishments meted out by him, to gods, lower animals and men who are governed by unrighteousness. A preceptor is the punisher through expiations (i.e. who makes them undergo expiations) of those who are endowed with decent behaviour but have soiled themselves through an error. Yama is not seen by them (i.e. their cases are not decided by Yama). A king is said to be the ruler of those who violate others' wives, who are thieves and who do

their transactions unjustly; and Dharmarāja is the ruler of those who have hidden themselves. Therefore, one should undergo expiation for the sin that one has committed. There is no destruction of (the acts whose fruits) one has not enjoyed (or suffered) even after crores of kalpas. For him, who himself commits a sin, or causes (someone else) to commit it, or approves of it, by means of body, mind or speech, the fruit is going down (to hell). In this way, the three kinds of sin have been explained (by me) in brief. Different courses (followed by) men committing sins are narrated. O king, I have told you in minute detail, the fruit of righteousness. O best of men, tell me, what else I should explain to you. I have told you about the fruit of unrighteousness. I (shall) tell you about the fruit of righteousness also.

115. Thus Mātali spoke to the king loved by all. The magnanimous one thus spoke on the topic of righteousness.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Fruit of Righteous Deeds

Yayāti said :

1. O charioteer, O lord, I have heard everything about the fruit of unrighteousness. Tell me also about the fruit of righteousness. I have a curiosity to hear it.

Mātali said :

2-12. These four kinds of all the embodied ones, being helpless, go to Yama's world which causes fear and which is terrible, due to their sins. All beings, that remain in the womb, that are born, and children, young men, middle-aged men, old men, men, women and eunuchs have to go (to Yama's world). There the auspicious or inauspicious fruit (of the deeds) of human beings is decided by all like impartial and omniscient Citragupta and others. There are no beings (in the world) that do not go to Yama's abode. (The fruit of) the deed done (by a

being) has to be enjoyed as decided by them. Those men, who do auspicious deeds, who have soft hearts, who are endowed with pity, go to Yama's abode along a pleasing path. A man who would give (i.e. who gives) shoes, wood or sandals to brāhmaṇas, happily goes to Yama's abode in a great aeroplane. By giving umbrellas (as gifts to brāhmaṇa) human beings go (to Yama's abode). By giving a palanquin (as a gift to a brāhmaṇa) one would happily go (to Yama's abode) along a path in the sky. Those who give garments (as gifts to brāhmaṇas), go, wearing divine garments (to Yama's abode). By giving a palanquin (as a gift to a brāhmaṇa) one would happily go (to Yama's abode) in an aeroplane. By giving a comfortable seat (to a brāhmaṇa) (human beings) happily go to Yama's abode. One who has constructed groves would go happily (enjoying) very cool shadows. Those who give gardens (with trees full of) flowers go to Yama's abode in the Puṣpaka aeroplane. He, who builds a temple, or a hermitage for ascetics, or pavilions for the helpless, playfully goes, due to (having constructed) best dwellings (to Yama's abode). So also he, who worships deities, fire, preceptors, brāhmaṇas, and his father and mother, (playfully goes to Yama's abode).

13-17. All that, even though little, which is given with faith to helpless, virtuous brāhmaṇas obtains (i.e. secures for him) all the desired objects. The saints say that in the world gifts (should be given) at a śrāddha. It should be realized that whatever—even of the measure of that which remains on the tip of a hair—is given with faith (gives good fruit); I always rely upon the four recipients (at a śrāddha). Therefore (if) one always has faith, the fruit of faith would be (obtained) by him. O king, he, who gives dwellings to the virtuous (but) helpless brāhmaṇas, goes to the abode of the grandsire, which satisfies all his desires. O king, he who has given with faith, (something even) of the size of a cowrie to a brāhmaṇa, would be a divine guest, enhancing the glory of gods. Therefore, those, who have faith, should give (i.e. human beings should give with faith). There is certainly (obtained) the fruit of that.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

Righteous Acts Enjoined by Śiva (Śivadharmas)

Mātali said :

1-4. Acts of righteousness have been told by Śiva (in) the excellent scriptures of the Śiva cult. Due to the difference in the manner of performance of acts they should be known to be many. The ancient acts as (told) by Śiva are free from blemishes like harming (others), are without suffering and exertion, are beneficial to all beings, are pure, involve little effort and give great fruit. They have many branches, but resort to (i.e. are supported by) the root (in the form) of Śiva. They have good flowers like knowledge and meditation. Since they sustain Śiva and are supported by the sayings of Śiva, they that help (human beings) to cross the ocean of the worldly existence, are known to be acts (liked) by Śiva.

5. Thus the ten, viz. harmlessness, forbearance, truth, sense of shame, faith, control of senses, charity, sacrifice, penance and gifts, are the means of (acquiring) righteousness.

6. The acts which are laid down by Śiva, and which have obtained identity with Śiva, when performed singly or collectively result in one course only.

7-11a. As the earth is said to be a common place for all beings, in the same way the city of Śiva is (said to be a common place) for all the devotees of Śiva. As here (i.e. on the earth) enjoyments for all beings are said to be abundant, in the same way they are said to be many in Śiva's city, due to the pre-eminence of various (kinds) of religious merit. As even the good or bad fruit (of their acts) is enjoyed by all human beings, the fruit of the acts (enjoined) by Śiva is religious merit. One gets excellent, good enjoyments in Śiva's city, especially according to his faith, in accordance with his religious merit. He gets an (excellent) place, his undisturbed enjoyments are comparable to final beatitude.

11b-13. Therefore, to win great enjoyments one should do great meritorious acts. There would be (i.e. he would have) supremacy (i.e. control) over his own enjoyments, which alone is

honoured by best gods as superior to everything. Some men engrossed in the pursuit of knowledge become free there only. Others intent on enjoying pleasures again come back to the mundane existence.

14. Therefore, he who desires salvation should give up attachment to enjoyments. He, being detached, and with his mind and heart tranquil, would obtain the knowledge of Śiva.

15-17a. To them also, who have set their heart on the lord (i.e. Śiva), and who perform sacrifices through devotion to him, the lord gives positions according to their nature. To them also who, with their sins destroyed, worship Rudra (even) once, the lord gives enjoyments in the worlds of goblins. All beings die (as a result of being) tormented by the burden of grief.

17b-22a. He who gives food is said to be the giver of religious merit, the giver of life and the giver of everything. Therefore, by giving food, one would get the fruit of giving everything. He who gives food (would obtain) all the gems, enjoyments, women and vehicles that there are in the three worlds, and would get the entire fruit (of giving food) here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world. There is no doubt that half of the collection of the (deeds of) religious merit which one who is nourished by the food and drink of a giver has, goes to the giver of the food, and half to the one (i.e. the receiver of the food and drink) doing the meritorious acts. The body is a great means of piety, material welfare and salvation. It is maintained by means of food and drink. Therefore it is the means of (obtaining) everything. Food is actually the creator, it is Viṣṇu himself, Śiva himself. Therefore, a gift like that of food was never there, nor will ever be there.

22b-24a. Water is said to be the life of all the three worlds. Water is purifying, divine, pure and is the elixir for all. Especially in the world of the departed spirits these eight gifts are commended: food, drink, horse, cow, garment, bed, thread and seat.

24b-26a. Since due to (these) special gifts a man happily goes to the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), therefore one should perform acts of charity. O prince, those again who do cruel deeds and are bereft of (i.e. have not given) gifts, experience terrible grief in hell.

26b-33a. Similarly the givers of gifts enjoy pleasures (in heaven). Happiness would be (coming) to them whose minds

are engrossed in doing the deeds enjoined on them. That city is full of innumerable, excellent, divine aeroplanes, fulfilling all desires, and serving beings. That is called Rudra's heaven; it is bright like the lustre of a thousand moons, or lustrous like the sun. It is endowed with all excellences. The city is said to belong to all Śiva-devotees, and also to the mobile and the immobile who die in the place sacred to Rudra. Even he who worships Śiva even for a day, goes to Śiva's place. What to speak of him who worships him many times! The followers and devotees of Viṣṇu, intent on meditating on Viṣṇu, also go to Vaikuṇṭha in the vicinity of the god who holds the disc. He, the righteous-minded one, who talks about (i.e. praises) Brahmā, goes to Brahmā's world. The doer of acts of religious merit goes to a holy world.

33b-39. Therefore, one, who has knowledge and a devoted mind, should oneself create in one's heart devotion for the lord (i.e. Śiva) or for Viṣṇu, O great king. With full consideration and taking into account the weak point of (one's) disposition, one would, in this way, through the grace of Viṣṇu, and in accordance with one's deeds, obtain a position suitable to one's disposition. Thus is said to be the great and excellent city of Śiva; it is said to be returning the human beings, intent on performing their deeds, to the world. Above the city of Śiva excellent heaven of Viṣṇu should be known (to exist). All men intent upon meditating on Viṣṇu, go (to it). Brāhmaṇas, best men of excellent character go to Brahmā's heaven. All the sacrificers, knowing the first principle, go to that city. Similarly, kṣatriyas who fight, go to Indra's heaven; and others who perform acts of religious merit, go to meritorious worlds.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Sinners in Hell

Mātali said :

1. I shall (now) tell (you) about the very poignant and very terrible torture caused by Yama (which) all the cruel, sinful killers of brāhmaṇas experience.

2-10. Sometimes the sinful ones are roasted with the fire of dry cow-dung; sometimes they are eaten up by fierce lions, wolves, tigers, gad-flies and worms. Sometimes (they are eaten up) by great leeches, or by huge cobras, and by terrible flies or sometimes by serpents with strong poison. (Sometimes they are eaten up) by great intoxicated and torturing herds of elephants, (or) by great bulls with sharp horns, scratching the path, and by buffaloes with big horns harming the bodies of the wicked, and by fierce female goblins and by terrible demons. Mounted on a great balance and being tormented by very terrible diseases and being burnt in a wild fire, they go (to Yama). They are very speedily shaken by very violent wind, and are shattered all round by the shower of great (slabs of) stone, and by the terrible falls of meteors having a sound like that of thunderbolt. Being struck by the shower of burning charcoal they go (to Yama). Being filled (i.e. covered) with a great shower of dust, they go to Yama. Men who are sinful experience terrible pain. Thus, the most sinful ones, who commit sins, experience, due to their particular sin, hell, full of many tortures.

11. I have thus explained to you all the difference between merit and demerit. What other excellent branch of religious knowledge shall I explain to you?

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Identity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva

Yayāti said :

1-2. The faith of me, to whom you have excellently explained everything about merit and demerit, has been all the more stimulated by it. Tell me the number said to be that of the gods staying in the (various) worlds (i.e. tell me about their position in the various worlds), O Mātali, and also (tell me that) by whose contact with religious merit and by whom it (i.e. that position) is reached.

Mātali said :

3-9. I shall explain to you the position of gods' worlds endowed with (obtained by?) deep abstract meditation (*yoga-yuktam*), and attained by penance, and giving pleasures and enjoyments. I shall (also) separately explain to you the capacity of merit; and also (describe) in (proper) sequence the nature of the worlds above. There the earthly power of the goblins is eight times. Therefore the power of the men who have recently gone (to Yama's world) is said to be equal to that. That of the demons is sixteen-fold, and like that is that of the kings. Thus whatever is left of the lustre of the family is complete. Gandharvas have (power) from the wind; that of the Yakṣas is said to be full. That of Indra is (derived from) the five elements, and it is forty times great. That of Soma is mental and divine, and that of the lord of the universe is (derived from) the five elements. That of the lords of the created beings has the properties of the moon and has egoism as an additional quality. That of Brahmā is sixtyfour-fold and the power of knowledge is excellent. The pre-eminent ritual of Viṣṇu is the power of Brahmā's position.

10-18a. In the divine city of Śiva there is affluence capable of satisfying all desires. The infinite supremacy of Śiva is great and self-eminent. It is without beginning, middle or end; its true characteristic is pure; it illumines everything; it is subtle; it has no match; it is higher than the highest; it is quite full, has the garb of the world; it abandons the noose for the souls. A man enjoys the pleasure belonging to the place which he has reached; and due to the grace of the lord, the aeroplane would be in accordance with it; various forms of the stars are seen; there are crores of these; to the meritorious twentyeight become bright (i.e. manifest). Those, who at times salute the lord, through association, curiosity or greed obtain that aeroplane. He who, through recital of (the lord's) name occasionally salutes Śiva, does not perish. These are thus the ways of rites pertaining to Śiva. Even through internal act (i.e. mentally) men (may salute the lord) through devotion for him. Those men who occasionally remember Śiva, would get incomparable happiness; what to say of those who are intensely devoted to him?

18b-26. With their minds gone to (i.e. set upon) him

through meditation, men reflected on Viṣṇu. They go to the highest place. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu. O king, the form of Śiva and that of Viṣṇu are identical. There is no difference between the glorious two, who are of the same form. (One can) salute Śiva of the form of Viṣṇu, and Viṣṇu of the form of Śiva. Viṣṇu is the heart of Śiva, and Śiva is the heart of Viṣṇu. The three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are (just) one form. There is no distinction among the three, only the qualitative differences are narrated. O king, you are a devotee of Śiva, so also you are a follower of Viṣṇu. Therefore the three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara are pleased with you. O you of a good vow, they—the givers of boons—are very much pleased with your deeds. O you, who remove the pride (of your enemies), I have come in your vicinity (i.e. to you) by the order of Indra. (First) go to the position of Indra, then to that of Brahmā, and then to that of Śiva. Go to Viṣṇu's position, free from tormentation and destruction. (Go to these places) in divine aeroplane, going everywhere. Being of a divine form, and getting into the Puṣpaka, moving comfortably, enjoy divine, charming pleasures.

Sukarman said :

27. Mātali, having thus spoken to king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, who knew the essence of religion, O best brāhmaṇa, became silent.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Yayāti's Reluctance to Part with the Body

Pippala said :

1-2. O you highly intelligent one, tell me in detail, what the king, the son of Nahuṣa said on hearing the words of Mātali. O wise one, this is an all-meritorious story which destroys sins. I desire to hear it. I am not at all being satisfied.

Sukarman said :

3. Yayāti, the best king, the greatest among those who practised piety, said to the messenger Mātali, Indra's charioteer, who had come (to him):

Yayāti said :

4-7. O messenger, I shall not abandon my body. There is no doubt that I shall not go to heaven without (this) earthly body. Though you have thus narrated the great blemishes of the body, and though you have already described all its merits and demerits, yet I shall not abandon my body, and I shall not come to heaven. Going to Indra, the lord of gods, tell him like this: "O you very intelligent one, a man does not obtain perfection by means of the soul alone or with only the body. This is the mundane (existence).

8-14a. Body cannot remain without life (i.e. the soul), nor can the soul remain without the body. O Indra, they have friendship (i.e. they are mutual friends). I shall not destroy the body due to whose grace the soul obtains exclusive happiness and other pleasures according to his mind (i.e. as he desires)." O messenger of gods, knowing the enjoyments in heaven to be like this, I do not want them. O Mātali, due to blemishes painful and very sinful disease are (contracted). Old age is due to a defect. Observe my body endowed with religious merit and sixteen years old. Since my birth my body has gone to (i.e. lasted for) half a century. Still there is freshness of my body (still my body is fresh). (This) period (i.e. life) of me has passed excellently. As the body of a youth of sixteen years looks handsome, in the same way my body endowed with power and valour looks.

14b-16. I do not have fatigue, I do not have failure, I do not have exhaustion; nor do I have (i.e. suffer from) diseases or old age. O Mātali, my body also thrives with enthusiasm for piety; for, in olden days, the medicine—the divine, great medicine, the elixir, all full of nectar is prepared for the destruction of sins and diseases. My body is purified by that; (therefore) it is free from blemishes.

17-24. O messenger, I am always doing (i.e. taking) the elixir, viz. the meditation on Viṣṇu and the excellent utterance

of his name. By that all my diseases and blemishes like sins have been destroyed, when, in this worldly existence, there is the great (i.e. effective) medicine like the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). Human beings suffering from sinful disease die (since) the very foolish ones do not drink the elixir of the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). O Mātali, my body is healthy due to that meditation, knowledge, worship, truthfulness, and religious merit caused by giving gifts. Diseases and sufferings torment him whose accomplishment is sins. There is no doubt that beings die here (i.e. in this world) due to sufferings. Therefore men, resorting to merit and truthfulness, should perform religious acts. The body is made of the five elements, and is worn out by the veins and joints. As an ornament is (fashioned) by a goldsmith with borax, so a human being is put together. In it always shine a great fire, a moving humour of the body, which is (made) of a hundred pieces. O brāhmaṇa, he who joins (these pieces) is intelligent.

25-30a. O Pippala, all these pieces (of the body) of the nature of the five elements and worn out by a hundred joints, are held together by the divine name of Viṣṇu and good fortune. The body is like a metal. The body becomes new by offering worship to Viṣṇu, meditation and restraint, truthfulness and charity. O Mātali, listen, the blemishes of the body—the diseases—perish. There is external and internal purity, and there is no foul smell. Then, O charioteer, due to the grace of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), (the body) would be pure. I shall not go to heaven. I shall fashion heaven here (only). I shall make the earth of the nature of heaven by means of (my) penance, devotion, my own religious acts, and the grace of the disc-holder. Realising this, you (may please) go and tell Indra.

Sukarman said :

30b-32. Then, that charioteer, having heard the words of the king and having congratulated him with blessing, took the king's leave, and went (to heaven). He told everything to the noble Indra. Indra, having heard (the message) of the magnanimous Yayāti, thought as to how to bring Yayāti to heaven.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

*The Efficacy of Viṣṇu's Name**Pippala said :*

1. When that illustrious messenger had left (for heaven), what did that religious-minded Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, do?

Sukarman said :

2-7. When that messenger of the best god (i.e. Indra) had left, the son of king (Nahuṣa) thought (to himself). Having immediately called his excellent messengers, he instructed them with words of propriety: "The excellent messengers should go to an excellent city, to all regions and islands in the world. They should carry out my words (i.e. order) which is full of virtue. May people go along the good path of Viṣṇu, by means of devotional and very meritorious (acts), meditations resembling nectar, knowledge, sacrifices and austerities. Abandoning the worldly objects of sense, may they worship Viṣṇu alone with sacrifices and gifts. May they see only the enemy of the demons and of the nature of the soul everywhere—at dry places, wet and immobile places, in the clouds, on the earth, in mobile and immobile (objects) and even in their own bodies. With hospitality and rites in honour of their dead ancestors may they offer gifts dedicating them to that god. May they offer sacrifices to that best god Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu); you (i.e. they) will soon be free from blemishes. That shameless man who through greed or folly would not obey these words of me right now, would certainly be punished like a vile thief."

8. Having heard the words of the king, the messengers, with their minds delighted, (moved over) the entire earth, and made the order given by the king known among all the subjects.

9-16. "O mortals, brāhmaṇas and others, the king has brought on the earth the very meritorious nectar. Drink that meritorious (nectar) called Vaiṣṇava, free from blemishes and of a desirable effect. The king has already brought (to the earth) the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Śrī Keśava, which removes suffering, which is desirable, which is

of the form of joy, and which itself is the highest truth. May people drink it. The good king has already brought (to the earth) the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of him, holding a sword in his hand, called Madhusūdana, the abode of Lakṣmī, and the meritorious lord of the gods. May people drink it. The good king has already brought (to the earth) nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Śrī Padmanābha, of lotus-like eyes, the prop of the worlds, and the great lord. May the people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of (Viṣṇu's) name, which destroys sins, which removes diseases, which gives joy, which destroys the dānavas and daityas (i.e. the demons). May people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Viṣṇu of the nature of sacrificial requisites, with a disc in his hand, the mine of religious merit, and of infinite happiness. May people drink it. The king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of Viṣṇu, the abode of everything, pure, the end (of everything), named Rāma, the pleasing, and the enemy of Mura. May people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of (Viṣṇu), of the form of the sun, the destroyer of darkness, the destroyer of the bond of the lotuses in the form of minds. May people drink it.

17. He, the noble one, Viṣṇu's devotee, having restrained himself, studies (i.e. recites) this truthful, very meritorious nectar of (Viṣṇu's) name, goes to salvation. There is no (other) agent (than it)."

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Popularity of Viṣṇu Cult during Yayāti's Rule

Sukarman said :

1-2. All the messengers said (i.e. proclaimed) in the islands, regions and cities: "O people, listen to the command of the king. With all their glory may they worship Viṣṇu. May people with

(devoted) minds desiring merit, reflect on Viṣṇu, by means of many gifts, sacrifices, austerities, and sacrificial rites." Such is the order of that king.

3-5. The people heard all these meritorious (words) thus well-proclaimed on the earth (by the messengers). Since then only the human beings sacrificed (in honour of) Viṣṇu, reflected on him, sang (in praise of) him, and muttered (prayers to him). All human beings, giving up the blemishes due to their bodies, minds and speech, by means of vows, fasts, restraints and gifts, and with their hearts gone to (i.e. set upon) him, worship that Śrī Keśava, Śrī Vāsudeva, the abode of Lakṣmī, and the habitation of the worlds, with well-recited, very meritorious and nectar-like hymns taught by the Vedas and with eulogies.

6-11. Thus prevails the order of that king on the globe. All those people are victorious due to their devotion to Viṣṇu. Those who are well-versed in knowledge, and who meditate and reflect on him and who are intent on worshipping him, adore Viṣṇu with (i.e. by reciting his) names and their deeds. As long as the globe lasts and the sun shines all human beings were (i.e. would continue to be) the followers of Bhagavān (Viṣṇu). Then the human beings, due to the power of meditation on Viṣṇu, due to his worship and (recital of) his eulogy and (his) names, became free from mental agonies and physical diseases. O brāhmaṇa, due to the grace of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) all the devotees of Viṣṇu became free from grief, became meritorious and had penance as their wealth. They were free from diseases, were without blemishes or wrath; they were endowed with all (kinds of) splendour, and free from all maladies.

12-27. Due to the grace of that god, all men at that time became immortal, ageless and all were endowed with wealth and grains. The mortals were adorned with sons and grandsons by the favour of Viṣṇu. O you noble one, in the (regions near) the doors of their houses only there always were meritorious desire-yielding trees, which yielded the fruits of all their desires, and also all-desire-yielding cows, which satisfied all desires. By the favour of Viṣṇu only all men became immortal, were adorned with sons and grandsons and were free from all blemishes. They were endowed with good fortune and with merit and auspiciousness. They were very meritorious, were endowed with charity and

were intent on knowledge and meditation. When that king Yayāti, who knew what was right, was ruling, there was no famine, no disease, and no premature death among human beings. All men were the devotees of Viṣṇu, all were intent upon (observing) the vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. They meditated on him, were devoted to him, and had their hearts set on him. O best brāhmaṇa, their divine and auspicious houses were furnished with white banners and with conches, and had their flags marked with maces and were marked with discs. The houses marked with lotuses and with the walls well-painted with good pictures resembled divine cars. O best ones, everywhere—near the doors of the houses and at holy places there were divine thickets of trees and auspicious grassy spots. O best brāhmaṇa, due to Tulasī and temples of Viṣṇu the auspicious and divine houses of (human) beings always shone. Everywhere meritorious devotion to Viṣṇu was seen to a great extent. O friend, O best brāhmaṇa, there on the earth the sounds of conches due to sounds (produced) by mutual crashing and destroying sin were heard. O best brāhmaṇa, through devotion for Viṣṇu women had drawn (the pictures of) conches, svastikas, lotuses on the doors of houses; and with music, songs, good words, regulated rise or fall of sounds through the musical scale people intent upon the meditation of Viṣṇu sing (in praise of) Viṣṇu.

28-29. They talk affectionately about Hari, Murāri, others about Keśava, Ajita, Mādhava,. They mutter the names of Viṣṇu, the refuge, (like) the lotus-eyed Govinda, the lord of Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, and worship with muttering (his names). Those great devotees of Viṣṇu, engaged in meditation on him salute him by fully prostrating themselves before him.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Yayāti's Subjects became Deathless by the Grace of Viṣṇu

Sukarman said :

1-6. All men, children, old people, unmarried girls always uttered names (i.e. recited the various names of Viṣṇu like) Viṣṇu,

Kṛṣṇa, Hari, Rāma, Mukunda, Madhusūdana, Nārāyaṇa of the form of Viṣṇu, Narasiṃha, Acyuta, Keśava, Padmanābha, Vāsudeva, Vāmana, Varāha, Kamaṭha, Matsya, Hṛṣīkeśa, Surādhīpa, Viśveśa, Viśvarūpa, Ananta, Anagha, Śuci, Puruṣa, Puskarākṣa, Śrīdhara, Śrīpati, Hari, Śrīnivāsa, Pītavāsa (i.e. clad in a yellow garment), Mādhava, Mokṣada (i.e. giver of salvation) and Prabhu. Women, engaged in domestic work always profusely sang (i.e. recited the names of) Hari, Mādhava, (so also when they were seated) on a seat, (when they were lying) in bed, (while they were going) in a vehicle and in meditation. Similarly children (while) playing saluted Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu).

7-16. Day and night they uttered the very sweet name of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, everywhere the utterance (of the name) of Viṣṇu was heard. Human beings lived on the earth (only) through the power of Viṣṇu. Discs (of Viṣṇu) shone as the (reflections of the) discs of the sun shine on the tops of the pitchers of palaces and temples. That condition which was seen in Vaikuṇṭha was seen on the earth. That noble king, Nahuṣa's son Yayāti, performed (acts of) merit, and made the earth resemble Viṣṇu's heaven. The appearance of both the worlds (being similar) the earth had become one (with Viṣṇu's heaven). No difference between the earth and Viṣṇu's heaven was noticed. As the devotees of Viṣṇu uttered the names of Viṣṇu in Vaikuṇṭha, like that (i.e. in the same way) men uttered Viṣṇu's names on the earth. O brāhmaṇa, identity between the two worlds was noticed. There was no fear from old age and diseases. People were free from death. On the earth greater grandeur of charity and enjoyment was seen. O best one, men happily enjoyed greater pleasure of (i.e. from) sons and grandsons. All the human beings—Viṣṇu's devotees—were always free from all diseases due to the gift of Viṣṇu's grace (which they received) and his instruction.

17-20a. The king brought about the grandeur of heaven on the earth. O best king, the years were of the extent of twentyfive (i.e. were very long). All men were free from diseases and were intent upon (getting) knowledge and meditation. All men were solely absorbed in (performing) sacrifices, and (giving) gifts, and all were kind. They were engaged in obliging (others);

those meritorious men, repositories of fame, were blessed. O brāhmaṇa, all men were solely devoted to religion and were solely absorbed in meditation. Instructed by that king, they became devoted to Viṣṇu on the earth.

Viṣṇu said :

20b-28a. O best king, listen to the account of that king. That son of Nahuṣa was always absorbed in all (deeds of) merit and a devotee of Viṣṇu. In this way he passed a lakh of years on the earth. His body endowed with maturity, appeared to be twenty-five years old by means of his (handsome) form. Those men (i.e. his subjects), having resorted to (i.e. living on) the earth, do not at all go to Yama. O king, all people free from attachment and hatred, bereft of the noose of suffering, happy on account of the merit (obtained) by (giving) gifts, and solely devoted to all religious deeds, always expanded (i.e. their number grew) with regard to progeny also. As the dūrvā (grass) and the banyan trees spread on the earth, in the same way all those men expanded (i.e. grew in number) by means of sons and grandsons. Those men, free from the blemish of death, lived long. All (those) men with strong bodies, free from old age and diseases and (therefore) happy, were seen to be twentyfive years old (i.e. very young) on the earth. All were devoted to good conduct and absorbed in meditation on Viṣṇu.

28b-34a. Thus all mortals—all human beings—had become solely devoted to (giving) gifts and enjoyments, due to the grace of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). O best man, no human being was heard to be dead. They did not see (i.e. meet with) grief, nor did they go to (i.e. have) blemish. O best of men, due to the favour of that disc-holder, the nature of the world had become just like that which was the nature of heaven. The messengers of Yama, beaten by Viṣṇu's messengers, disappeared. All of them, weeping with one another, went to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). The messengers told (Yama) all that the king (i.e. Yayāti) had done. (They said to Yama): "O Sun's son, due to (giving of) gifts and enjoyment the earth has become deathless. O god, Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, did it. That meritorious devotee of Viṣṇu, demonstrated the nature of heaven (on the earth)."

34b-35. At that time Dharmarāja heard all this. Then Dharmarāja, having heard in detail the activities of the king, considered the entire fact.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

Dharmarāja Rendered Jobless

Sukarman said :

1-4a. The son of the Sun (i.e. Yama) went with all his messengers to heaven to see there Indra, surrounded by groups of gods. Then that king of gods (i.e. Indra) saw Dharmarāja in his assembly. Quickly getting up he presented excellent respectful offering to him, and asked him (the reason for) his arrival (saying:) “Tell me (why you have come).” Hearing the weighty words uttered by the king of gods, Dharmarāja narrated (to him) all the great account of Yayāti.

Dharmarāja said :

4b-11. O lord of gods, listen what for I have come. I will here only (i.e. just now) tell (you) why I have come. The noble son of Nahuṣa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, has made all human beings that live on the earth the devotees of Viṣṇu. He has made the nature of the mortal world like that of Vaikuṇṭha. Human beings have become immortal and free from old age and diseases. They just do not commit a sin, nor do they tell a lie. They are free from lust and wrath, and are without greed and delusion. The noble ones are given to charity and all of them are devoted to religion. With all good works they worship sound Nārāyaṇa. Due to (the practice of) that Vaiṣṇava religion all men on the earth are healthy, free from grief, and all have a steady youth. O god, as the Dūrvā (grass) and the banyan trees spread on the earth, in the same way they have expanded (i.e. grown in number) due to their sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. With their sons and great-grandsons they have gone from one dynasty to another (i.e. have started various dynasties).

12-15a. Thus that son of Nahuṣa has made the entire mortal world the devotee of Viṣṇu and free from old age and death. Being free from (i.e. having no) function I have (as though) become deprived of my position. I have thus told you everything that puts an end to my job. Knowing thus, O thousand-eyed (Indra), do what is beneficial to this world. I have told you all this as I was asked by you. For this reason, O Indra, I have come into your proximity (i.e. to you).

Indra said :

15b-18a. O great Dharmarāja, formerly only I had sent my messenger (i.e. Mātali) for coming over of that noble one (i.e. to bring here that noble Yayāti). Even my messenger spoke to him. (But Yayāti said to him:) “I do not desire the pleasures in heaven. I shall not (at all) come to heaven. I shall make the entire globe of the nature of heaven.” Thus the king told (my messenger). He is protecting his subjects. Due to the power of his righteousness I always remain imperiled.

Dharma said :

18b-19a. O illustrious lord of gods, if you desire what is dear to me, then bring that good king (to heaven) by any means.

19b-22a. O king, having heard these words of that Dharmarāja, the intelligent lord of gods considered everything from a factual point of view. God Indra of a noble mind, having called Cupid and Gandharvas, brought Cuckoo and Rati. (He told them:) “Do that by which the king will come (here). Ordered by me you should go to the earth. (There should be) no hesitation (about it).”

Kāma (i.e. Cupid) said :

22b-23a. There is no doubt that I shall do what is agreeable and favourable to you. See me and the king standing (opposite each other) in a battle.

23b-24. Saying, ‘All right’, all went there where that king, Nahuṣa’s son, was. O brāhmaṇa, all of them, Kāma and others,

in the form of actors (i.e. having disguised themselves) greeted the king with blessings and related their good drama (i.e. with good acting spoke to him).

25-33. Having heard those words of them, the intelligent lord of the earth, Yayāti, arranged a divine assembly, with very learned men. The king, proficient in sacred and profane knowledge, himself came (there). That king, the son of Nahuṣa, saw that drama. (He saw) the life of Vāmana, also his birth as a brāhmaṇa. At that time Jarā (i.e. old age), in the form of a woman matchless in beauty in the world, sang an excellent, melodious, song, O king. Due to the charm of her singing and due to her graceful laughter (i.e. smile), and on account of her sweet words, and due to the device, manner and divine behaviour of Cupid he was deluded. Cupid had a form as that of Bali, or of the row of Vindhya or of Vāmana, formerly. Cupid himself became the principal actor and the stage manager, and Spring was his assistant. That Rati, whose husband was delighted, put on the apparel of the chief actress. In that dance-performance she moved in the retiring room. The very intelligent Cuckoo excited the king. As the glorious king saw the excellent dance and listened to the excellent music he was deluded by (these) presented by the chief actress (i.e. Rati).

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

Yayāti Yields to Passion

Sukarman said :

1-5. The king of kings was allured by the charm of Cupid's music and his charming smile and his appearance as an actor, O Pippala. Having urinated and evacuated his bowels, the king, Nahuṣa's son, sat on his seat without having washed his feet. Having reached (i.e. seized) that opportunity, Jarā (i.e. old age) moved on to the king. Cupid also accomplished the act, beneficial to Indra, O best king. When the drama was over, and they had

left, the religious-minded king was overcome with old age, had his mind attached to lust, was allured by the delusion (caused) by Cupid, was perturbed, had his organs weakened; the virtuous (king) was very much stupefied, and was driven away by objects of sense.

6-11a. Once the king eager for the vice of hunting (i.e. eager to go a hunting) went (to a forest). Being under the influence of infatuation and attachment, he sported in the forest. When the glorious king was sporting with interest a matchless deer with four horns came (there). O king, its entire body was beautiful, its hair was of golden appearance, its body was well spotted with gemlike brightness; it was beautiful and attractive. The archer (i.e. the king) with an arrow in his hand, ran (to it) with speed. The intelligent (king) thought that some demon had come (there). The deer too drew the king away. He went (after it) with the speed of a chariot, and suffered from exhaustion. While he was watching, the deer vanished.

11b-20. There he saw a wonderful forest, resembling Indra's garden; it was crowded with beautiful trees, and looked splendid with the five elements, with big sacred sandal trees and with charming groups of plantain trees, with (the trees like) Bakula, Aśoka, Punnāga, Nālikera (i.e. the cocoa-nut trees), Tinduka, Pūgiphala (betel-nut trees), date-trees, lotuses and Saptaparṇa trees, blossomed Karṇikāra (trees), and various trees that always had fruit, so also with Ketaka and Pātala. While seeing (these) the great king saw an excellent lake. It was full of holy water; it was extensive (spreading) over five yojanas; it was crowded with swans and ducks; it was resounding with aquatic birds; it was also delightful with lotuses; it looked charming with red lotuses, and was decorated with golden lotuses; it looked extremely charming due to white lotuses; it was everywhere resounding with intoxicated bees also. Thus he saw the lake endowed with all excellences. It was five yojanas broad and ten yojanas long. The lake was auspicious on all sides; and was adorned with divine objects. Fatigued by the speed of the chariot and tormented by weariness he sat in the shade of a mango tree on its bank.

21-26a. Having bathed in it, and having drunk (i.e. he drank) its cold water scented with fragrance of lotuses, resembling nectar, and removing all exhaustion. The king seated in the

shade of the tree, somehow heard the sound of a song being sung (by someone). The sound was heard as (would be the sound of) the song which a divine woman would sing. The great king, who loved music, became extremely thoughtful. When the noble one was thus anxious and thought for a moment, a woman, with plump hips and breasts arrived in the forest, when the king was looking on. She, whose body looked beautiful with all ornaments, and having the wealth of good character and (auspicious) marks, came to the forest and stood before the king.

26b-32a. To her the king said: "Who are you? To whom do you belong? Why have you come here? Tell me the reason for it." O Pippala, that woman of an excellent face, when thus asked at that time by him, did not give either a good or a bad reply to the king. That woman, with the neck of the lute in her hand, laughed, and quickly went (away). The great king was then filled with great wonder: 'When talked to by me, she is not giving a reply.' Again that king Yayāti thought: '(This) four horns which I had seen. I think that is the truth. This must truly be a deceitful form of (i.e. taken up by) demons.' O brāhmaṇa, the king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, thought (like this) for a moment.

32b-38a. When the king was thinking like this; the woman, laughing at the prince, vanished in the forest. In the meanwhile, he again heard the song, which was melodious, very divine, and accompanied with intonation and a regulated rise and fall of sounds through the musical scale. The king went to that place (from) where the great sound of the song was coming. In the water was an excellent lotus having a thousand petals. On it was an excellent woman, who was endowed with (good) character, beauty and virtues. She was possessing divine marks; she was adorned with divine ornaments; she shone with divine objects; her hand was engaged in holding the neck of a lute. She was singing a melodious song, accompanied with beating and measuring time and pause. With the power of that song she allured the mobile and the immobile, and also gods, groups of sages, all demons, Gandharvas and Kinnaras.

38b-42a. Seeing that (woman) of broad eyes and having beauty and lustre (he thought) in the mobile and the immobile world there is no other woman like her. Formerly, great Cupid, the actor, had got into the body of the king; he manifested him-

self at that time. As fire, having come in contact with ghee sends forth rays of light (i.e. is bright), so Cupid (i.e. passion) manifested himself, after having (i.e. after the king had) seen her. His mind was overpowered by Cupid (i.e. passion) on seeing that woman of charming eyes. (He thought:) 'I have never (before) seen such a young woman, alluring the world.'

42b-43. Thinking for a moment, the king had his mind attached to passion. Due to separation from her, the king, being burnt by the fire of passion and tormented by the fever of passion, longed for her.

44-46. (He thought:) 'How will she be mine? How will she have love (for me)? My life will be fruitful when this young girl having her face like a lotus and having lotus-like eyes embraces me, or if she is obtained by me.' Having thought like this that virtuous king Yayāti said to that beautiful woman: "O auspicious one, who are you? To whom do you belong?" That woman who was seen before is again seen (by me).

47-52a. The righteous one asked her: "Who is this (woman) by your side? O auspicious one, tell (me) everything. I am the son of Nahuṣa. O good one, I am born in the lunar dynasty and am the lord of the seven islands. O respectable lady, my name is Yayāti; I am well-known in the three worlds. My heart thus entertains a desire for union with you. O good lady, unite with me, do what is very dear (to me). O good lady, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire. O you of an excellent complexion, I am struck with invincible passion. Therefore, protect me, who am extremely helpless, and who have sought your shelter. For (i.e. in exchange for) the union with you I shall give my kingdom, the entire earth or even my body. All these three worlds are yours."

52b-55a. Having heard the words of that king, that woman with a lotus-like face said to her friend (named) Viśālā: "Tell the king that has come (here), my name, the place of my birth, (the names of) my father and mother, O you good lady. Also tell him about my love (for him)." Understanding her desire, Viśālā with sweet words then spoke to the king: "O prince, listen."

Viśālā said :

55b-71a. This Cupid was formerly burnt by Śambhu (i.e.

Śiva), the god of gods. That Rati, deprived of her husband, wept melodiously due to grief. O best king, at that time that Rati lived in this lake. O king of kings, then gods, having heard, like this, her melodious wailing attended by grief, had great compassion (on her). They spoke (these) words to Śaṅkara: "O great god, revive the mind-born (Cupid) again. O glorious one, of what nature will she be (i.e. what will be the plight of her) who is helpless, being deprived of her husband? Due to your affection for us (i.e. since you love us, please) make her united with Cupid." Hearing those words (Śiva) said: "I shall revive Cupid. This mind-born one (i.e. Cupid), having five arrows, even though without a body, will again be the friend of Spring. There is no doubt about it. He will live with a divine body; (and) not otherwise (i.e. not with any other body)." That fish-bannered god (i.e. Cupid), became alive due to the grace of the great god (i.e. Śiva). O best man, having thus approved of the desire of the respectable lady (i.e. Rati), with blessings (Śiva said:) "O Cupid, go and always thrive with your beloved." Thus (the god) of great lustre, the cause of the sustenance and destruction (of the world) said (to Cupid). Cupid again came to the lake where unhappy Rati remained. O king this is (that lake called) Kāma-saras (i.e. belonging to Cupid) where Rati is well-settled. She was overcome with grief when noble Cupid was burnt (by Śiva). From Rati's wrath sprang up a fire of a fearful form. He too, very much scorched Rati, who fainted. O best man, she, deprived of her husband, shed tears. From her eyes tears fell into the water. From them arose great grief destroying all happiness. O best king, after (that) Jarā (i.e. old age) came into being from the tears. From them the dull-headed destroyer, viz. Separation sprang up. Both the terrible Grief and Torture also then sprang up. From them was generated Delusion—terrible and destroying happiness. O great king, from Grief the Fever of Passion and Error originated. The distressed Wailing, Insanity and Death, destroying everything, arose from her tears.

71b-79. O great king, by Rati's side all assuming the body of torment and, all having the virtues of good feelings, originated incarnate. O king, then someone said: "This (is) Cupid (that) has come." Seeing Cupid that had come (there) she (i.e. Rati) was filled with great joy. Tears fell from her eyes. O great king,

in the water beings quickly originated. O best man, at that time (a lady) named Love sprang up, so also Renown and Shame. O best king, from them (i.e. from the tears) rose great Joy and the other one, viz. Peace. Two auspicious daughters giving pleasures and enjoyments sprang up. O king, there was a great combination of diversion, sport and devotion of mind. O king, due to joy tears fell from Rati's left eye into water. From them sprang up a good lotus. O best man, from that good lotus came up this beautiful lady, the daughter of Rati, Aśrubindumatī by name. Through love for her, I, always pleased and virtuous, ever remain near her, giving her pleasure, due to my being her friend. My name is known as (i.e. I am known by the name) Viśālā. O king, I am Varuṇa's daughter.

80-81a. Being always affectionate to her, I remain near her through love for her. I have thus told you all her (account) and mine also. O lord of kings, this beautiful one, desiring a husband, practised penance.

The king said :

81b-83a. O auspicious one, I have understood everything that you have told me; listen, let this beautiful daughter of Rati choose me. I shall give this young lady all that she desires. O auspicious lady, do that by which she will be under my influence.

Viśālā said :

83b-88. I shall tell you her resolve. Listen to it, O king. She desires as her groom a man, who is endowed with youth; who is omniscient; who has the characteristics of a brave man; who resembles the lord of gods; who possesses righteous conduct; who is brilliant; very bright, a donor, and the best among sacrificers; who knows (i.e. appreciates) virtues and devotion to religion; who possesses righteousness and good conduct; who is like Indra in the world; who is intent on religious practices through (performing) great sacrifices; who is endowed with all grandeur; who is as it were another Viṣṇu; who is always very much liked by gods, and is very dear to brāhmaṇas; who is friendly to brāhmaṇas; who knows the truth of the Vedas; whose valour is known in the three worlds. She desires such a groom as

is endowed with these qualities and is honoured in the three worlds, is very intelligent and very dear and handsome.

Yayāti said :

89. Know me, who have come here, to be endowed with these qualities. There is no doubt that the Creator has created (in me) a husband worthy of her.

Viśālā said :

90. O king, I know that in the three worlds you are rich with religious merit. The qualities which I have mentioned before exist in you.

91. Only due to one blemish she does not think highly of you. This doubt has arisen in me. (Otherwise) O king, you are full of Viṣṇu.

Yayāti said :

92. Tell me the great blemish which this one, beautiful in all limbs, does not really prize. Be well disposed to favour me.

Viśālā said :

93. O lord of the world why (i.e. how) do you not know your own blemish? Your body is covered with old age. Due to this (blemish) she does not prize you.

94. Hearing these great (important) and disagreeable words, the lord of the world, the king, overcome with great grief, again said:

95. "O auspicious lady, this blemish of old age in my body is not due to anybody's contact. I do not know (how) this old age has occurred to my body.

96. O auspicious one, whatever thing difficult to obtain in the world she desires, I am willing to give it to her. Choose the best boon."

Viśālā said :

97-100. When you would be free from old age, then she would be your very beloved (wife). This is certain, O king; I am

telling (you) the truth (and) the truth (only). Youth would prevail over his body who passes on his old age to his son, (or) brother, (or) servant after taking youth from him and giving him his old age. Due to good taste a happy agreement takes place between the two. He, O king, has the same fruit as the merit of him who offers himself through pity. There is no doubt about it.

101-103. He would have great religious merit when the merit obtained through difficulty is given to someone else. The fruit of merit is (thus) obtained. Therefore, O king, give (your old age) to your son, and after having obtained (youth) from him, come back with (i.e. after having got) handsomeness. Do (so) then, O king, when you desire to enjoy (her).

Thus, speaking to the king, that Viśālā ceased (speaking).

Sukarman said :

104a. Having heard like this, the best king then spoke to Viśālā.

The king said :

104b-106. O noble one, let it be so; I shall do your words (i.e. do as you have told me).

That stupid lord of the earth, Yayāti, overcome with passion, having gone home, and having called his sons Turu, Pūru, Kuru and Yadu, loving the father, said (these) words (to them): “Upon my order, O sons, bring happiness (to me).”

The sons said :

107-108. The words (i.e. the order) of the father—whether good or bad—have (has) to be executed by the sons. O father, speak out quickly, and know that it (i.e. the order) is carried out. There is no doubt.

Having heard these words of the sons, the lord of the earth, with his mind overcome with joy, again spoke to them.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

*Pūru Gives His Youth to Yayāti**Yayāti said :*

1-4. O my noble sons, the wise one among you should take this my old age which is giving me pain, and should give his own youth and excellent form (to me); (so that) I shall behave as I like. Today my very fickle mind is inflamed, and is attached to a woman. As fire whirls round the water in a pot, similarly, O (my) sons, my mind is very much shaken by the fire of passion. O (my) sons, one (of you) should take this my old age which is giving me pain, and should give (me) his youth; (so that) I shall behave according to my will.

5-6. He, the best son, who passes on his youth to me, will enjoy my kingdom, and will wield my bow (and carry on) my line. He will have happiness, ample wealth, riches and grains. He will have many children and glory and fame.

The sons said :

7. O king, you are a king who are devoted to religion. You are guarding your subjects truthfully. Due to what has this idea, naturally fickle, arisen in you?

The king said :

8-10. Formerly dancers, superior dancers, came to my city. Due to them such delusion has arisen in me, when Cupid had allured me. My body is covered with old age; and my mind was overcome with Cupid (i.e. passion). O best sons, I was smit and overcome by passion. I saw a beautiful maiden of a divine form. O sons, I spoke to her; but the good one did not say anything.

11-13. Her charming and clever friend is Viśālā by name. She spoke good words to me, giving me joy: "When you would be free from old age, the very dear one will be yours." I accepted (i.e. agreed to) these words spoken by her, and (then) came home. To get rid of my old age, I have thus told you that (she had told me). O good sons, realizing thus, you should do (what gives) me pleasure.

Turu said :

14-18. By the favour of the father and the mother, body is obtained by sons. O king, with the (help of the) body religious acts are done by a wise man. A son should especially serve his father. Yet, O king, this is not the time for me to give my youth (to you). O king, men should enjoy the pleasures of senses in youth. Now it is not properly the time for you (to enjoy these pleasures). (You say) O father, that pleasure would be enjoyed by you after you give your ripe old age to your sons; but (then) you would not have (that much) life (i.e. you would not live that long). Therefore, O great king, I shall not do your words (i.e. do as you say).

In this way the eldest son, Turu, spoke to him at that time.

19. Hearing those words of Turu, the king became angry. The pious one, with his eyes red with anger, cursed Turu.

20-26 “O you of a wicked heart, you have disobeyed this order of mine. Therefore, be a sinful person outcast by all religions. You will be without the lock of hair on the crown of the head; you will be deprived of the sacred texts; you will be without all manners. There is no doubt about this. You will be the killer of brāhmaṇas; you will be ruined by gods; you will be a drunkard; you will be without truthfulness; you will do fierce deeds; you will be the meanest man. You will be addicted to drinking; you will be hungry, sinful and a killer of cows. Your skin will be bad; you will have the hem of your lower garment untucked; you will hate brāhmaṇas; you will be deformed. You will be an adulterer; you will be very fierce; you will be very lustful; you will eat everything; you will always be wicked. You will have sexual intercourse with a woman of your own kin; you will destroy all religious practices; you will be without sacred knowledge; and you will suffer from leprosy. Your sons and grandsons also will destroy all holy objects, will be barbarians, and will be very much spoilt like this (i.e. in the same way).”

27. Having thus cursed Turu very badly, he spoke to (his other) son, Yadu: “Take on (my) old age now, and enjoy the kingdom free from any source of vexation.”

28a. Joining the palms of his hands, Yadu said to the king:

Yadu said :

28b-30. O father, I am unable to bear the burden of (your) old age; (please) be kind to (i.e. excuse) me. There are five causes of old age: frigidity, journey, bad food, aged woman, and disinclination of the mind. O king, I am not able (to put up with) the misery in my youth (i.e. while I am young). Who is able to hold (up old age)? Now (please) excuse me.

31-32. O son of a brāhmaṇa, the angry great king cursed Yadu: "Your lineage shall never deserve a kingdom. It will be without power, lustre, forbearance, and will be deprived of the practices of kṣatriyas (since you have) turned (your) back upon my order. There is no uncertainty about it."

Yadu said :

33. O great king, I am faultless; why have you now cursed me? (Please) favour the poor one (i.e. me). Be pleased to favour me.

The king said :

34. O son, (when) the great god will take birth with his portion in your family, then your family will be purified.

Yadu said :

35. O great king, you have cursed me, your son, who am faultless; If you have compassion for me, (please) favour me.

The king said :

36. He who is the eldest son should remove the misery of the father. He well enjoys the inheritance of the kingdom, and he would bear the burden (of the kingdom).

37-38a. You have not done (your) duty, (therefore) you are certainly not fit to be talked to. You have destroyed (i.e. disobeyed) the order of me who (can) strike with a great (i.e. heavy) punishment. Therefore you cannot be favoured, do as you please.

Yadu said :

38b-42a. O king, since you have destroyed my kingdom, form and family, therefore, I, the chief of your family, will be wicked. In your family will be (born) kṣatriyas of various forms. There is no doubt that very fierce and very mighty (beings) will enjoy their villages, good regions, their women, and whatever gems they will have. From my family (will) be born Turuṣkas of the form of barbarians—those who were destroyed and who were cursed by you with very fierce curses.

O best king, the angry Yadu thus spoke to the king (Yayāti).

42b-45. Then the angry great king again cursed (Yadu) thus: "Listen, know all that will be born in your family will ruin my subjects. As long as the moon, the sun, the earth, the constellations and the stars (last) the mlecchas will be roasted in the Kumbhīpāka and the Raurava (hells)." Then seeing the young Kuru playing, and possessed of good marks, the king did not call that son (of him) a prince. Knowing Kuru to be a child, the king left him then.

46-47a. Then the lord of the world (i.e. Yayāti) called Pūru, the meritorious son of Śarmiṣṭhā, and said to him: "Take my old age and enjoy my extremely good kingdom, with the sources of nuisance eradicated, (and) given by me (to you)."

Pūru said :

47b-49a. The lord (if you) should enjoy the kingdom as was enjoyed by your father, I shall obey your order. O king, give me your old age in exchange for my youth. Today only appearing handsome, enjoy, with your mind attached to objects of sense, pleasures and good deeds.

49b-54a. O noble one, sport with her as long as you desire. O father, as long as I live I shall keep up old age.

Thus addressed by that Pūru, the lord of the world, with his heart full of great joy, said again to his son: "O child, since you did not disobey my order, (on the contrary) obeyed it, therefore I shall give you much happiness. O you very intelligent one, since you took my old age, and gave me your own youth, therefore you enjoy the kingdom given by me." O king, that good

Pūru, thus addressed by that king, gave him his youth and took old age from him.

54b-60a. When, O dear one, the exchange of the ages of the father and the son was effected, Pūru appeared to be older than the king in all his limbs. The king reached youth, (and looked like a man) sixteen years old, and possessing great charm (looked) as it were he was another Cupid. The great king gave that noble Pūru everything—(his) bow, kingdom, umbrella, fan, seat, and elephant, (so also) his entire treasure, country, army, chowrie and also the chariot. That Nahuṣa's righteous son, attached to passion, thinking of that maiden, went with quick steps, to that lake known as Kāma, and resembling an ocean, where Aśrubindumatī (stayed). Seeing that eminent maiden of large eyes and having beautiful and plump breasts, the great king, with his mind attracted by Cupid, said to Viśālā:

The king said :

60b-62a. O you noble and eminent one of charming eyes, I have, O auspicious one, given up my old age, and am (now) endowed with youth. Becoming a young man, I have come (here). Let her be mine now. There is no doubt that I shall give her whatever she desires.

Viśālā said :

62b-63a. When (now) you have come after having abandoned the wicked old age, (yet) you are still covered by one blemish. (Therefore) she does not prize you.

The king said :

63b-64. If you definitely know my blemish then tell it (to me). I shall certainly abandon that blemish of an inferior nature.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

*Youthful Yayāti Enjoys with Aśrubindumati**Viśālā said:*

1-2. There (i.e. in that king) only, whose wife is Śarmiṣṭhā and whose wife is beautiful Devayānī, good fortune is seen. This cannot be false, O king; then O glorious king, how are you fascinated by (the beauty of) this maiden's body* since you are known as a husband having two wives?

3-4a. Like sandal, O king, you are with serpents (around) you. O king, as a great sandal-tree is surrounded by serpents, so you are surrounded by serpents called co-wives.

4b-6a. It is better to enter fire, it is better to fall from (mountain) top, but not good to have the dear husband, possessing handsomeness and lustre, (but) with co-wives—with the poison in the form of co-wives. Therefore she does not prize you, an ocean of mērtis, as her lover.

The king said:

6b-7a. O beautiful lady, I have nothing to do with Devayānī, nor with Śarmiṣṭhā; for this purpose see my treasure full of righteousness.

Aśrubindumati said:

7b-9a. O king, I shall be the enjoyer of your kingdom and your body. O king you will certainly (have to) do whatever I shall tell you to do. For this purposes, O you who love piety, give me your hand endowed with many virtues and having auspicious marks.

The King said:

9b-11a. O you of an excellent complexion, I shall not have any other wife than you. O you beautiful lady, O you lady of charming body, enjoy my entire kingdom with its wealth, so

*The existing reading कर्णवशो does not give any sense. It should better be replaced by कायवशो which we have translated here. (Ed.)

also the whole earth and my body. (In proof of this) I have offered this my hand to you. O good lady, I (shall) do whatever you (will) tell (me).

Aśrubindumati said:

11b. Just with this (promise), O noble one, I shall be your wife.

12-16a. Hearing this, Yayāti, the lord of the earth, the king of kings, with his eyes full of joy, married by the Gāndharva way that auspicious daughter of Cupid. The noble son of king (Nahuṣa) enjoyed with her, on sea-beaches, in forests and parks. The king, lord of kings, youthfully sported with her on mountains and in beautiful rivers. In this way, O best king, that noble king Yayāti passed twenty thousand (years) in sporting with her.

Viṣṇu said :

16b-17a. O very intelligent one, through the fraudulent act of Cupid, that great king Yayāti was thus allured by her for the benefit of Indra at that time.

Sukarman said:

17b-19. O Pippala, that lord of the earth, Yayāti, stupefied by Cupid's daughter by means of her alluring passion and charming union, was not aware of day or night. Once that daughter of Cupid of charming eyes said to that stupefied, submissive, obedient king Yayāti, who had bowed down:

Aśrubindumati said :

20. O dear one, a desire is produced (in me); so satisfy (that) desire of me: perform the best sacrifice, viz. Aśvamedha, O lord of the earth.

The king said :

21-24a. O glorious one, let it be so; I shall do what you very much like.

He invited his eldest son, who had no desire to enjoy the kingdom. (The son), when called, came there with his neck (i.e. head) bent with devotion, and joining the palms of

his hands, saluted (Yayāti) at that time. With his neck (i.e. head) bent, he also saluted her feet. "O King, give me an order since I, who was called, have come. O noble one, what should I do? I am your servant who has bowed to you."

The king said :

24b-29. O son, inviting brāhmaṇas, meritorious priests officiating at sacrifices, and kings, make preparations for a horse-sacrifice.

Thus addressed, that very lustrous and highly religious Pūru did everything in full as told by the glorious one. With the daughter of Cupid he took proper initiation (i.e. got himself consecrated for the sacrifice). Yayāti, the lord of the earth, gave various gifts to brāhmaṇas at the place of the sacrifice, so also endless, profuse gifts especially to the poor, O great king; and at the end of the sacrifice he said to that beautiful lady : "O young lady, tell me what else dear to you I should do. O beautiful lady, I shall do all that which is attainable and not attainable."

Sukarman said :

30-37. Thus addressed by the king, she spoke in reply "O king, a desire is produced in me; O innocent one, do (i.e. satisfy) it. O great king, I desire to see the very pleasing heaven of Indra, of Brahmā, so also of Śiva and of Viṣṇu. O noble one, show (these) to me, if I am very dear to you." Thus addressed by her, the king said to her who was very dear to him : "O you beautiful one, well, well, you are just saying pious things. O you beautiful lady, I think what you said due to feminine nature, fickleness and curiosity, is unattainable, O noble one. That is attainable by means of pious gifts, sacrifice, and austerities; what you told cannot be attained by any other means, O beautiful lady. You have just said something that is unattainable as it is mixed up (i.e. connected with) religious merit. I have not as yet seen or heard about a very meritorious man who has gone to heaven with his (human) body from the mortal world. Therefore, O you beautiful lady, what you said is unattainable for me. I shall do something else. O dear one tell me that."

The respectable lady said :

38-40. O king, it is certainly not attainable for other human beings; but it is attainable for you; I am telling the truth (and) truth only. O king, in the mortal world there is no other human being like you in (practising) penance, in fame, in doing valourous acts, (giving) gifts and (performing) sacrifices. Everything—the power of a kṣatriya, fire of energy—is established in you. Therefore, O son of Nahuṣa, this (thing) dear to me should be done (by you).

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Yadu Refuses to Kill His Mothers

Pippala said :

1-2. O best brāhmaṇa, when the king (Yayāti) married the daughter of Cupid, what did his two former, very auspicious, wives, viz. the noble Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan do? Tell me the entire account of the two.

Sukarman said :

3-9a. When that king took home Cupid's daughter, that high-minded Devayānī very much entered into rivalry (with her). "For her he, with his mind overcome with anger, cursed two of his sons (viz. Turu and Yadu)." The renowned one, having called Śarmiṣṭhā, said these words to her. Śarmiṣṭhā and Devayānī vied with her in beauty, lustre, charity, truthfulness and holy vows. Then Kāma's daughter knew their wickedness. Just then only she told everything to the king, O brāhmaṇa. Then the great king, getting angry, called Yadu and said to him : "Go and kill Śarmiṣṭhā and also (Devayānī) the daughter of Śukra. O son, if you care for felicity then do what is very dear to me." Having heard those words of his father, Yadu then replied to his father, the lord of kings :

9b-14. “O proud father, I shall not kill these two mothers, free from guilt. Those well-versed in the Vedas have declared a great sin in killing one’s mother. Therefore, O great king, I shall not kill these two mothers. O great king, (even) if a mother or a sister or a daughter is stained with a hundred blemishes she should never be killed by sons or brothers. Knowing this, O great king, I shall never kill (these) two mothers.” Hearing, at that time, the words of Yadu, the king became angry. Yayāti, the lord of the earth, then cursed his son: “Since you have disobeyed (my) order, you, resembling a sinner, polluted by my curse, enjoy a portion of your mother”.

15-19. Speaking thus to his son Yadu, that lord of the earth, Yayāti, that great king of great glory, having cursed his son, and without being solely devoted to Viṣṇu, enjoyed pleasures with her. That Aśrubindumatī of charming eyes and beautiful in all limbs, enjoyed with him all lovely enjoyments as liked by her. Thus that noble Yayāti passed his time. All other subjects were without any loss or without old age; all people were solely devoted to the meditation of glorious Viṣṇu. O noble Pippala, all people were happy and served the good by means of penance, truthfulness and meditation on Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Destiny is Irresistible

Sukarman said :

1-3. This very intelligent Indra, always afraid of the noble Yayāti, seeing his valour and many meritorious acts like (giving) gifts, sent the celestial nymph Menakā to act as a messenger. (He said to her:) “O good and illustrious one, go and tell (i.e. convey) my order. Going from here tell Cupid’s daughter the words (i.e. the order) of (me), the lord of gods: ‘Bring the king here by any means (i.e. somehow).’ ”

4. Hearing this, that Menakā sent (by Indra) went there; and told her all that the lord of gods had said.

5-8. Having thus told her that Menakā, directed by her (i.e. Cupid's daughter) went (back to Indra). When Menakā had left, that high-minded, glorious daughter of Rati reminded the king of the lawful agreement: "O King, with a truthful speech, you formerly brought me (here); in the meantime you gave me your hand, and brought me to your residence. O king, you must do here (i.e. now) only what I tell you. O hero, you have not done what I told you; I shall abandon you and go (back) to my father's house."

The king said :

9. O good one, I shall certainly do what you have told me. O respectable lady, leaving (i.e. not telling) what is unattainable, tell me what is attainable.

Aśrubindumati said :

10-19a. For this purpose, O lord of the earth, I choose you in marriage, knowing that you are having all (auspicious) marks and endowed with all virtues, and knowing that you would accomplish everything, support everything, practise all good usages and create (i.e. perform) religious rites, and would obtain all the three worlds, and knowing that you are matchless in the three worlds. I know you to be a devotee and the best among the followers of Viṣṇu. With this hope I formerly took you for my husband. He who has the grace of Viṣṇu would move everywhere. O lord of kings, here is nothing that cannot be accomplished (by you) in three worlds—mobile or immobile; for you of a good vow (everything) is (attainable) in all the worlds. Due to Viṣṇu's grace only you can freely move in the sky. Having come to the world of mortals, O lord of the earth, you have made people free from old age, grey hair and death. You yourself have devised many desire-yielding trees near all the doors of the houses of men, O king. To the houses of men you yourself have sent sages and have always firmly settled the desire-yielding cows in their houses, O king. You have made men happy by (satisfying) all their desires. In a house a thousand nobly born people are seen.

19b-26a. Thus you have increased the human race. In spite of Yama's opposition and that of Indra too, O king, you made

the mortal world free from diseases and sins. O great king, by means of your prowess and self-respect you have shown the earth to have the form of heaven. There is no other king like you. No man is born or will be born like you. I know you to be the illuminator of the entire religion. Therefore I took you as my husband; giving up joke, O lord of kings, speak the truth before me. O king, if you have truth and piety then speak the truth. "I do not move in divine worlds, nor can I freely move in the sky". When, giving up truth, (you say like this), you will never go to heaven; your words will be certainly false; and all good things done formerly will be reduced to ashes.

The king said :

26b-29. O good lady, you spoke the truth, there is nothing like unattainable for me. Due to the good grace of the lord of the world everything is attainable for me. O respectable lady, listen to the reason for which I am not going to heaven. They will not allow deities to go to the mortal world; as a result all the human beings—my subjects—will be having death when abandoned by me; there is no doubt about this, O you beautiful lady. I do not desire to go to heaven; I have told you the truth, O you beautiful lady.

The respectable lady said :

30. O king, having seen the worlds, you will again come (back). Today fulfil my matchless strong desire.

The king said :

31-40. I shall certainly do all that you have said.

That very lustrous king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, having (thus) observed and thus spoken to his beloved then thought : 'A fish though moving in the water, is bound (i.e. caught) in a net. A deer even having the speed like that of the wind is bound. A bird sees a prey even though it is at a distance of a thousand yojanas. Being deluded by destiny it does not see the noose sticking to its neck. Destiny brings about good and bad things. Destiny destroys honour. Destiny brings about humiliation by remaining

wheresoever (it pleases). It makes a man a donor or a suitor. Destiny holds everything—all immobile and other beings (living) in heaven or on the earth. Destiny alone is this world. It is without origin and death and is the greatest cause of the world. Destiny ripens the worlds as the fruit laid on a tree. Hymns, penance, charity, friends or relatives are not able to protect a man oppressed by destiny. It is not possible to overcome the three nooses of destiny: marriage, birth and death—when and where one would have these, and with whom or through whom. As the clouds in the sky are moved by the wind, so the world is moved by destiny united with (the fruits of) the deeds (of beings).

Sukarman said :

41-67. But the destiny, which, united with Karman (the deeds), is adored by men, would (only) urge Karman (the fruits of the deeds), and does not create it. In the human (world), calamities, misfortunes, serpents and diseases, move (in accordance with) their being decided by (one's) deeds. All those that are the causes and means of happiness, being mixed with merit, are united with (the fruits of) deeds. They would not see (i.e. would not care for what is) auspicious and (what is) inauspicious. (Obscure!) relatives united with (the fruits of) deeds may exchange them*; but (the fruits of) deeds (alone) urge men on to happiness and unhappiness in this world. As gold or silver has its nature fixed, similarly a being is bound in accordance with his deeds. These five are produced (i.e. decided) when a man is just in (his mother's) womb: his life (i.e. longevity), deeds, wealth, learning and death. As an agent (potter) fashions from a lifeless lump whatever he wants to fashion, in the same way deeds performed before follow the doer. One becomes a god, or a man, or a beast, or a bird, or a lower animal, or an immobile object, according to one's deeds. He always enjoys in accordance with that only which is accomplished by himself—unhappiness results from one's own deeds; happiness results from one's own deeds. Obtaining the bed of womb, he enjoys the fruit of his deeds of the previous body (i.e. done in the previous existence). On the earth men never (i.e. can never) give up the fruits of their deeds. They

*कर्मदायदिवानोके is most probably a corrupt reading. (Ed.)

are not able to change them by means of their power or intelligence. They enjoy meritorious deeds, pains and pleasures. Reaching (i.e. due to) a cause, a man is always bound by the bonds of his deeds. As from among thousands of cows a calf finds out its mother, similarly the fruit of the auspicious or inauspicious deeds—which is not destroyed except by 'enjoyment (or suffering)—follows its agent. Who can change the fruit of a deed done in a former life? (The fruit of) the deed follows him also who runs very fast. The (fruit of) the deed of a former life, as it was done, sleeps with him who sleeps. It stands by him who stands, and follows him who goes. The (fruit of the) deed of him who acts, acts; it follows him like his shadow. As shade and light are always mutually connected, similarly a deed and its agent are well related. Planets, diseases, poisonous snakes, demonesses¹ and demons trouble a man who is first oppressed by his own deeds. He who is to enjoy happiness or (suffer) unhappiness at a place is bound there by a rope, is forcibly carried away by fate. In giving happiness or unhappiness, destiny alone is the master of beings. O wise one, a deed is conceived in one way by (a person) keeping awake or sleeping, and destiny destroys it (by giving it) another turn. It protects that which should be protected (i.e. which it wants to protect) from weapons, fire, poisons or difficulties. Truly that which cannot be protected, is protected by destiny in this way. That which is destroyed by destiny can never be protected. As seeds that are sown in earth and riches remain (dormant) and (then) grow (active), in the same way deeds remain (intact) in the soul and (then) become active. As due to the exhaustion of oil the flame goes out, so due to the exhaustion of (the fruits of) deeds a being goes to destruction (i.e. departs) from his body; since those who know the truth declare that death is due to the exhaustion (of the fruits) of (one's) deeds. Various beings and diseases are the cause of his death. 'Thus it is ripening of the deeds of my former existence. It is not otherwise. It has (now) certainly come (to me) in the form of this lady; there is no doubt about it. Actors, dancers and bards had to come to my house; due to their contact, old age

1. Sākini—a kind of female being, attendant on Durgā supposed to be a demoness or fairy.

has resorted to my body. I think everything is done by (i.e. due to) one's deeds (in a former existence), since it has (now) definitely sprung up.

68a. Therefore deeds are the main (factor); efforts are useless.

68b-74. Formerly the king of gods had sent the best messenger by name Mātali, for (taking) me (to heaven). I did not do his words (i.e. what he told me). I now see the ripening of those deeds.' He (Yayāti) was thus full of anxiety, and was overcome with great affliction. (He thought:) 'If with pleasure I do not do what she says, then both my truthfulness and piety would go (i.e. perish); there is no doubt about it. Whatever was decided in accordance with my deeds has come; (what is predestined) will certainly take place. Destiny is difficult to overcome.' Yayāti, the lord of the earth, was thus absorbed in thought. He sought the refuge of Kṛṣṇa, Hari, the remover of distress, by meditating upon him, saluting him, and praising him (as): 'O you to whom Lakṣmī is dear, protect me who have sought your refuge.'

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

Yayāti Takes Back His Old Age

Sukarman said :

1-8. When the king was thus absorbed in thinking, that beautiful daughter of Rati said : "O you very intelligent king, what do you think just now? There is no doubt that mostly women are fickle. I am not leading you away through fickleness. I am not making use of a fraudulent expedient today, O best king, (by speaking) as other greedy women speak, something that cannot be done, through greed and delusion. A strong desire to see all the worlds is produced in my heart. Seeing deities is meritorious, and is very difficult to be had even by good men. Say to me, O king, that you will cause (i.e. help) me to see the deities. Like another ordinary man, afraid of a great misery and

fallen into the ditch of delusion, you are thinking if there would be a great sin due to my company now. Give up your anxiety; you should not go to heaven. I shall never do that which gives you pain."

9-11. The king, thus addressed (by her), said to that beautiful woman : "O respectable lady, now listen to what I have thought out. I see (here) insult, and not the (satisfying of) my mind. O beloved, when I go to the heaven, my subjects will be helpless. The wicked-minded Yama will trouble my subjects with diseases. O beautiful one, I shall go to heaven with you."

12-26. Having thus spoken to her and having called his best son Pūru, possessing old age and of a great intelligence (he said to him :) "Come on, O you who know all the customary observances, you certainly know your duty. O you religious-minded one, you have preserved piety by my order. O son, give me (my) old age back, and take back (your) youth. Protect this kingdom of mine along with the treasure, army and vehicles. Enjoy the earth full of gems, along with villages, forests and cities given (to you) by me. O sinless one, you should do the protection of the subjects which is meritorious; on the authority of the sacred texts you should always punish the wicked and protect the good. O glorious one, you should protect the brāhmaṇas by your deeds devoutly and according to the rules, since they are worthy of respect in the three worlds. Every fifth or seventh day inspect the treasure and meet the learned. You should always honour your army by favouring them and giving them wealth and food. Always use your spies as your eyes, and always be engaged in charity. Always be restrained in your consultation, since it is always to be guarded by very wise men. O son, always control yourself; do not go a hunting. Do not trust anybody—women, treasure or your great army. Always collect worthy persons and all arts. Worship Viṣṇu with sacrifices, and always be virtuous. Everyday crush the sources of nuisance among the subjects. Everyday give your subjects all that is desired by them. Give happiness to the subjects, support the subjects, O son. Have (sexual union with a woman) in your own family (only); do not have it with someone else's wife. Do not think ill about other's wealth; always follow your forefathers. Always ponder over the Vedas and the sacred texts; O child, be engaged in the study

of (the science of handling) weapons. O child, always be contented, and be devoted to your own bed (i.e. wife). Always study elephants, horses and chariots.”

27-28. Having thus instructed his son, having congratulated him with blessings, having put him (on the throne) with his own hand, he gave his weapon into his hand. Then Yayāti, the lord of the earth, having taken (back) from (Pūru) his old age, gave him (his youth) and desired to go to heaven.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Yayāti Visits the Divine Worlds

Sukarman said

1-5a. Having called all the subjects from all parts (of the world), the lord of the earth, full of great joy, said : “O best ones my subjects—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and sūdras, along with this lady I am going to Indra’s heaven, Brahmā’s heaven, Rudra’s heaven and then to Viṣṇu’s heaven, destroying all sins and causing salvation. There is no doubt about it. With (your) families (you) should stay happily on the earth. O people, I have appointed this glorious and wise Pūru as your guardian and king with the sceptre.”

5b-13. Thus addressed, all those subjects said to the king : “O best king, in (i.e. from) all the Vedas and Purāṇas we hear about Dharma; but nobody has seen, as we saw, Dharma, like the one (i.e. you) born in Nahuṣa’s great house, in the lunar dynasty, of ten constituents, loving truth, possessing hands, feet and face, propagating all (good) practices, endowed with spiritual and material knowledge, and a great treasure of religious merit, the mine of virtues and proficient in truth, O great king. Truthful and highly lustrous people practise great virtues. That Dharma we have seen in you, of a desirable form (or handsome like Cupid), satisfying (our) desires and so truth-speaking. Even with the three kinds of acts (i.e. of body, mind and speech) we are unable

to abandon you. We shall happily and agreeably go wherever you go. There is no doubt that we shall be in hell where you will stay (i.e. if you live in a hell). O very great king, without you, what is the use of a wife, or enjoyments, or life? We have nothing to do with that (i.e. wife etc.). O lord of kings, we shall go with you only; this will not be otherwise.”

14-26a. Hearing these words of the subjects, the lord of the earth, full of great joy said to the subjects : “O you all very meritorious people, come along with me.” With Cupid’s daughter the king got into the chariot. (That) Yayāti, Nahuṣa’s son, shone like Indra, the lord of gods, with the chariot having the colour of swans and resembling the orb of the moon; he was free from distress (as he was) being fanned by chowries and fans; he also shone with that lucky, auspicious and great banner. He was praised by sages, bards and singers, so also by his subjects. Then all his subjects approached the lord of men in vehicles; and they proceeded to heaven with (i.e. having mounted on) elephants and horses (and having got into) chariots. They were brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and other common people. All they were followers of Viṣṇu and were absorbed in the meditation on Viṣṇu. Their banners were white and adorned with golden staffs. All were marked with conches and discs and were having staffs and flags. The banners urged by wind shone among the crowds of the subjects. All (the subjects) had put on divine garlands, and were adorned with Tulasī-leaves. Their bodies were smeared with divine sandal, and with (the paste of) divine black ale wood. They were adorned with divine garments and were decorated with divine ornaments. All those handsome people followed the king. All the subjects—the people numbering thousands, hundreds of lakhs and crores, and very large numbers like arva, kharva (i.e. 10,000,000,000) went (with the king). All of them, followers of Viṣṇu, doing meritorious acts, absorbed in the meditation of Viṣṇu, and in muttering (sacred names) and in charity (went) with the king.

Sukarman said :

26b-30a. Full of great joy all of them proceeded (with the king), O great king, having installed his son Pūru on his throne,

that Yayāti, the lord of the earth, went to Viṣṇu's world. Due to his lustre, religious merit and piety all those people proceeded to the best heaven of Viṣṇu. Then along with the king of gods, gods with the Gandharvas, Kinnaras and bards came facing them (to greet them), honouring that very lord of kings, O best king.

Indra said :

30b. O great king, welcome to you. Enter my house.

31a. Enjoy here all divine pleasures as you like.

The king said :

31b-40a. O you thousand-eyed, very wise god, I am saluting your lotus-like couple of feet. I (shall) then go to Brahmā's heaven.

Being praised by the gods, he went to Brahmā's heaven. The very lustrous Brahmā along with excellent sages offered him hospitable reception with water for washing his feet and with respectful offering and excellent seats; (and) said to him : "By the power of your deeds go to Viṣṇu's heaven." Thus addressed by the Creator he went to Śiva's house. Śiva, along with Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) offered hospitable reception to that very king, and said these words to the king : "O lord of kings, you are the devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you are also very dear to me; therefore, O Yayāti, lord of kings, live in my house. Enjoy all pleasures difficult to be obtained by human beings. O lord of kings, there is certainly no difference between Viṣṇu and me. There is no doubt that he who has the form of Viṣṇu is Śiva, and O king, he who is Rudra (i.e. Śiva) is the ancient Viṣṇu. There is no difference between the two. Therefore only I speak (like this). I do give a place (in my abode) to a meritorious devotee of Viṣṇu. Therefore, O innocent great king, you should stay here."

40b-43a. Thus addressed by Śiva, Yayāti, dear to Viṣṇu, and with his neck (i.e. head) bent down in devotion, saluted Śiva, the lord of gods, (and said to him :) "O great god, whatever you have said is proper. There is no difference between you two. It is one form divided into two. I desire to go (to the heaven) of Viṣṇu; I salute your feet." "O great king, let it be so; go to the heaven of Viṣṇu."

43b-65a. (Thus) instructed by Śiva also, the lord of the earth, with Viṣṇu's very meritorious devotees, dear to Viṣṇu dancing before him—the king—, proceeded (towards Viṣṇu's heaven). He, accompanied by the conch-sounds destroying great sins, and very many roars of lions, many (other) sounds, being worshipped by good bards, (his praise) being sung in melodious tones by public readers skilled in scriptures, moved (on). Gandharvas, eagerly engaged in singing, sang before him. He was being praised by sages along with hosts of gods that had joined them. That son of Nahuṣa was being served by beautiful celestial damsels. That great king, being praised by meritorious and auspicious Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Siddhas, bards, Sādhyas, Vidyādharas, Maruts and Vasus, so also Rudra and groups of Ādityas, and by the Guardians and Lords of quarters, and by all the three worlds all around, saw the matchless and trouble-free heaven of Viṣṇu. O king, that excellent and best city shone with golden, heavenly cars, full of all beauty, with hundred-storied mansions shining with halls white like swans, the *kunda* (flowers) or the moon, and resembling the Meru and Māndāra mountains which with their tops touched the heaven and the sky, and with bright, golden pitchers (on their tops). It shone with the splendour of lustre like the sky with multitudes of stars; with flames of blazing lustre it, as it were, looked with eyes. O lord of kings, that Śiva's heaven, invited, with many jewels, as it were, with teeth showing while laughing, and under the pretext of the flag with tossing foliage, the meritorious devotees of Viṣṇu, dear to Viṣṇu. It was well adorned everywhere with charming tops of banners tossed by wind, and with golden staffs and bells. It shone with gates and watch-towers looking (bright) like the sun's lustre, with beautiful round windows, rows of lattices and windows with the lustres of the broad ways, and golden ramparts, with arches, good banners and many very auspicious sounds, with the tops of pitchers, mirror-like discs resembling in lustre the sun's orb, with great splendour, with hundreds of private chambers resembling water-less clouds, crowded with staffs and umbrellas and pitchers, with chambers like clouds in the rainy season, and the earth looked, with (so many) pitchers, like the sky with stars. The city of Viṣṇu looked beautiful with the mass of staffs and banners with lustre like the multitude of stars, of the form

of crystal objects, looking like a conch or the moon, with crowds of golden palaces and (palaces) made of many metals, with divine cars numbering ten millions and thousands of hundreds of crores; and with all enjoyments. Those men, devotees of Viṣṇu, of righteous deeds and with all their sins washed away live, through his grace, in those houses, which are fully meritorious, divine and rich in all pleasures.

65b-75. The house of Viṣṇu was adorned with excellent (objects) like these. It was everywhere crowded with many kinds of trees, graced with sandal trees, having all desired fruits. It shone with wells, ponds and lakes beautified with cranes, so also with lakes, crowded with swans and ducks, beautified with white lotuses, (other) lotuses, big white lotuses, (other kinds of) lotuses and blue lotuses, and (others) having the colour of (i.e. resembling) golden lotuses. Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu's heaven) was rich with all beauty, was adorned with divine parks, was full of divine charm and was graced by the devotees of Viṣṇu. The king saw (this) Vaikuṇṭha, the matchless place of salvation. Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, entered that beautiful city, crowded with hosts of gods and free from any morbid heat. He saw that Viṣṇu, destroyer of all sufferings, free from any damage, shining with divine cars, resplendent with all ornaments, clad in a yellow garment, marked with Śrīvatsa, and very lustrous, mounted on Garuḍa accompanied by Śrī, higher than the highest, —the highest god, the refuge of all the worlds, (who) shone with perfect detachment of the form of the highest joy, and was being served by great, very meritorious devotees of Viṣṇu.

76-79. The lord of the earth, with his wife, saluted Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) crowded with hosts of gods, waited upon by groups of Gandharvas and celestial nymphs, who was magnanimous and who removed all sufferings. All the men, devotees of Viṣṇu, who had gone with the king, saluted Viṣṇu, O you very intelligent one. O you highly intelligent one, they devoutly saluted his both feet. Viṣṇu said to the glorious king, who was blazing with lustre, and who was saluting him : "O you of a good vow, I am pleased with you. O lord of kings, ask for a boon which you have in your mind; I shall certainly grant it to you. You are my devotee, O you very intelligent one."

The king said :

80. O Madhusūdana, O lord of gods, if you are pleased, then, O lord of the worlds, always grant me your servitude (i.e. make me your servant).

Viṣṇu said :

81-83. O glorious one, let it be so; you are undoubtedly my devotee; O great king, with this lady you may stay in my heaven.

That great king Yayāti, the lord of the earth, thus addressed, lived, through the grace of that god, in the excellent heaven of Viṣṇu, which was decorated.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Glorification of Devotion to Parents

Sukarman said :

1-10. I have narrated to you this entire account, which removes sins, which emancipates sons, which is divine, and which gives great religious merit. The well-known deeds of Yayāti are actually seen in the world. Pūru obtained the great kingdom as it was brought into existence, and Turu was reduced to a bad plight, due (respectively) to the father's favour and anger. It emancipates sons, gives glory and wealth and grains. Both Turu and Yadu were under the influence of a curse. There is no other giver of desirable fruits like the father or the mother. A father may call his son through love, and a mother (may call him saying:) 'O son, O son.' Listen to its meritorious fruit. When a son, who is called by his mother, goes to her with affection, he would get the fruit of having bathed in the Ganges. A very glorious son, who would wash the feet (of his parents) enjoys, through their grace, the fruit of (having visited) all the sacred places; and by shampooing their bodies he would obtain the fruit of a

horse-sacrifice. In that son, who would nourish his father (and mother) with food, covering, and bath, merit equal to that obtained by the gift of the earth is produced. The Ganges is full of (the merit of) all sacred places. A mother is like that (only). There is no doubt about it. The ancient poets know that as the ocean is established as full of much merit, similarly is the father in this world.

Sukarman said :

11-19a. That son, who abandons or yells at his father or mother, undoubtedly goes to the hell called Raurava. That son, who, being a householder, does not support his old mother or father, goes to hell and would certainly meet with agony. For a wicked-minded and sinful son, who abuses his father (or mother), the ancient poets have never known any requital. O brāhmaṇa, knowing thus I am everyday worshipping devoutly and with my neck (i.e. head) bent my mother and father. My father, calling me, would tell me what ought and what ought not to be done. I do it with discrimination and according to my strength, O Pippala. Due to that I have obtained the highest knowledge giving me happiness. A man lives in the mundane existence due to the favour of these two (i.e. the parents). I know whatever men remaining on the earth do and when a householder proceeds to heaven. O Pippala, even while being here I know the movement of cruel persons. O best of the Vidyādharas, the three worlds have come under my sway. You should (please) worship Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

Viṣṇu said :

19b-21. Pippala, thus directed by him, having bowed down to the best brāhmaṇa, and also being ashamed, went to heaven in accordance with (the fruit of) his deeds. O king, that Sukarman of a religious mind, also served his father (and mother). I have thus told you everything pertaining to the holy place (in the form) of the father (and mother). O very intelligent Vena, tell me what else I should tell you.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

The Story of Cyavana : Kuñjal : Divyādevi

Vena said :

1-2. O venerable lord of gods, through your grace towards me, you have told me about the sacred place (in the form of) a wife, so also about the excellent holy place (in the form of) the father and (in the form) of the mother, giving great religious merit. Being gracious to me (now) tell me about the holy place (in the form) of the preceptor.

The Lord said :

3-10. O king, I shall tell you about the matchless holy place (in the form) of the preceptor, which is declared as the remover of all sins and the giver of happiness to the disciples, which being of the nature of ancient Dharma (i.e. religious merit) gives great virtue to the disciples, which is the highest sacred place, highest knowledge giving a visible fruit, (and) O lord of kings, by whose favour (the disciple) gets the fruit here (i.e. in this world) only; and O lord of kings, by the favour of the glorious preceptor he enjoys happiness and would obtain glory and fame in the next world. O prince, (by the preceptor's favour) the disciples actually see the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile, so also the dealings and practices of the people. A disciple obtains wisdom and goes to salvation. As the sun illumines all the worlds, so the teacher enlightens his disciples and is the best refuge of them. O best king, the king Soma (i.e. the Moon) would shine at night only, and would keep a watch over the mobile and the immobile. O best king, a lamp would illumine a multitude (of objects) in the house, and would dispel the entire dense and impure darkness.

11-15a. O you very intelligent one, the preceptor, the light of the disciples, illumines a pupil, covered with the darkness of ignorance by means of the light of instruction. The sun shines by day, the moon at night, a lamp shines in the house, always dispelling darkness. The lamp shines at night in the house (and illumines it, but) the preceptor always enlightens the disciples. The preceptor would destroy all his darkness called ignorance.

Therefore, O lord of the earth, the preceptor is the highest holy place for the disciples. Realising this, a disciple should always worship the preceptor, full of merit, by means of three kinds of acts (i.e. bodily acts, mental acts and words).

15b-29. O brāhmaṇa, for this purpose (i.e. to illustrate this), an old account, removing all sins, is reported; it is told about the glorious Cyavana. The best sage Cyavana was born in the family of Bhārgava. O best king, once a thought arose in his (mind): 'When shall I be endowed with knowledge on the earth?' The best sage, longing for knowledge, would always think day and night. When he was thus reflecting, he had a thought: 'I shall go on a pilgrimage, giving the desired fruit.' Leaving his house and field and his wife, son and wealth, he roamed over the earth in course of a pilgrimage. O king, he went on a pilgrimage in the direction of the flow of the Ganges. Under the pretext of a pilgrimage (i.e. as a pilgrim), that lord of sages visited the holy places (on the banks) of Narmadā, Sarasvatī, and all (other) rivers like Godāvarī, and (on the shore) of the ocean and all other sacred places, so also places of deities and places having auspicious characteristics, O best king. The body of him, who was wandering over (i.e. visiting) best holy places, became pure (and lustrous) like the sun's lustre. Cyavana, with his mind purified by this act, shone with lustre. While wandering he (once) came to the best holy place on the right bank of Narmadā, called Amarakaṇṭhaka. (There) he saw a great Phallus (of Śiva), giving happiness to all. Then he saluted, eulogised, and worshipped the great lord Siddhanātha, then he saw (i.e. visited) Jvāleśvara, then Amareśvara, Brahmeśa, Kapileśa and the best Mārkaṇḍeśa. Having thus finished his pilgrimage he then came to Oṃkāra. Having resorted to the cool shade of a banyan tree, removing fatigue, the brāhmaṇa Cyavana, the son of Bhṛgu, remained there comfortably. There he then heard a note given out by a bird, which was full of divine speech and spiritual and worldly knowledge.

30-38. There was a parrot (on the tree) who lived there for a long time. His name was Kuñjala; he was religious-minded and had four sons and a wife. He had four sons who delighted their father (i.e. him). O lord of kings, I shall tell you their names: The eldest one was Ujjvala; the second was Samujjvala;

the third was Vijjvala, and the fourth was Kapiñjala. Thus, O very intelligent one, that meritorious parrot Kuñjala had four sons, who were very much devoted to their father and mother. Being disturbed and oppressed by hunger, they together roamed in the arbours of mountains and islands. O best king, they satiated the hunger in their bellies with agreeable fruits like nectar and with water sweet like nectar. The good sons gave a ripe juicy fruit to the couple (i.e. their parents), and carefully put (aside some) fruits (for them). Being contented, the glorious ones, full of devotion, procured food for their mother, (then) ate and recited. All of them engaged in sports, played and amused themselves there. Knowing (when it was) evening time they well (i.e. without fail) came to their father, after carefully having brought food for him (and their mother).

39-46a. When that noble brāhmaṇa Cyavana was watching all the (four) birds came to the very beautiful nest of their father. O you very intelligent one, they saluted both their father and mother. Having obtained food for the two (i.e. their parents), they stood by them. O king, all the best sons esteemed by their father and mother tenderly talked words full of love (to them). They also (fanned) with the cool wind from their wings their father and mother. O king, the two birds, having applauded with blessings, their good sons, nourished them. They too gave them very rich food resembling nectar. O best brāhmaṇa, the two just loved them (i.e. the sons) very much. The two, resorting to their own abode, with their minds pleased through happiness, drank pure water produced (i.e. procured) from crores of holy places, told a divine, very meritorious tale, destroying sins.

Viṣṇu said :

46b. The (eldest) son Ujjvala was (once) asked by his father Kuñjala:

47. "O my son, where had you gone today? What wonderful agreeable (event) did you see or hear there? Tell me that, my son."

48. Having heard the words of Kuñjala, his father, that Ujjvala, with his neck (i.e. head) bent down with devotion, replied:

49a. He saluted him with his head (bent down) and told him a pleasing story.

Ujjvala said :

49b-61. O you glorious one, O you very intelligent one, everyday I go to the Plakṣa island even with strenuous effort, for food. O great king, in the Plakṣa island there are many countries, mountains, rivers, parks, forests and lakes, so also villages and cities enjoyed by people. Those people are always contented, are endowed with charity, piety and muttering (of sacred hymns) and possess faith, and live happily. O great king, in the Plakṣa island lived Divodāsa, who was of a pious mind and was righteous. He had a matchless daughter, endowed with virtues and beauty, of a good character, charming and auspicious, known by the name Divyādevī and was incomparable in beauty on the earth. The father saw (i.e. noticed) her to be faring well with beauty and youth. She, the charming and auspicious one, was in the prime of youth. That Divodāsa, seeing his daughter Divyādevī, thought: 'To which noble, good groom should she be given?' (Then) the best king, having considered, thought of the king of Rūpadeśa, and the king invited him and the noble one gave his daughter to the intelligent Citrasena. O king, on the occasion of his marriage, when the right moment of the marriage came, Citrasena died due to fated time. The religious-minded king Divodāsa thought (to himself). The son of a king invited good brāhmaṇas and asked them: "At the time of her marriage Citrasena expired. Tell me what her fate will be."

The brāhmaṇas said :

62-66a. O king, the marriage of an unmarried daughter is seen to be performed according to the sacred injunctions. Her husband may die; if not, he will have union with her; (but) being stricken with great malady or physical disease he may abandon her and go; or he may become a recluse. This is what is seen in the religious works. Wise men get married their unmarried daughter(s). As long as she does not menstruate (i.e. does not attain puberty), another groom is enjoined for her. The father should certainly get her married according to the sacred injunc-

tions. Thus, O king, the wise men have stated the sacred rules. Get her married.

Thus told the best brāhmaṇas.

Ujjvala said :

66b-70. Virtuous Divodāsa, the great king, prompted by the words of the brāhmaṇas, made preparations for the (his daughter's) marriage, O king. O best brāhmaṇa, he gave away Divyādevī (in marriage) to that virtuous and glorious king, Rūpasena. At the (time of) the marriage the lord of the earth (i.e. Rūpasena) died. Whenever Divyādevī (was married) her husband, a king, invariably died when the proper time for marriage had arrived. O father, twentyone husbands died (like this) time after time. Then the king (Divodāsa) of a well-known valour became very unhappy.

71-76. Having thought (this) over, the lord of the earth, called his ministers, and having held consultations with them, decided (to arrange) a self-choice marriage (for her). The glorious one invited the kings of Plakṣadvīpa. Those kings, who were greatly devoted to religion, who were invited to the self-choice marriage, being deluded by her beauty and prompted by death, foolishly fought (among themselves) and died on the battlefield. Thus O father, there was the destruction of the noble kṣatriyas. Divyādevī, being very much afflicted with grief, went to a cave in the forest. That virtuous young maiden Divyādevī wept piteously. O father, thus I witnessed (this) wonderful sight there. Then, O father, tell me its cause in detail.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Divyādevi As Citrā in Her Former Birth

Kuñjala said :

1. O boy, I (shall) tell you all the acts of that Divyādevī. Listen to all that she did in the former birth as I am telling you.

2-7a. There was an auspicious city named Vārāṇasī, the destroyer of sins. In it lived a very intelligent man named Suvīra, who was born in the Vaiśya caste and who possessed wealth and grains. O you very intelligent one, his wife was Citrā by name, who was well known. She, abandoning the family-practices, behaved improperly. She did not care for her husband, (and) behaved wantonly. Bereft of piety and merit she would act (i.e. she acted) sinfully only. She always reviled her husband, and always loved quarrelling. She always stayed in the house of another (person), and wandered from house to house. She would observe (i.e. she observed) the weak points of others, and was always wicked to beings. She was very much given to condemning the good, and always laughed.

7b-9a. Knowing her to be of an improper conduct and very sinful, Vīra reproached her. O you very intelligent one, that pious, highly intelligent (Vīra) of truthful and religious thoughts, abandoned her and married another Vaiśya's daughter; and stayed with her righteously.

9b-14. That bold Citrā, expelled by him, roamed over the earth. She became associated with wicked and sinful men. She of a wicked determination, worked as a go-between. The sinful one split the houses (i.e. families) of the good. She would call a chaste woman and would induce her with evil words. She violated customary observances. With convincing (but) evil words that Citrā would present the wife (the wives) of good men to someone else. Thus Citrā certainly split a hundred houses. The very wicked one created quarrels between husbands and sons. The sinful one would stir the minds of men for (i.e. make them sexually disposed to) women. She set up a quarrel making Yama thrive.

15-20. Thus having split a hundred houses (i.e. families), she then died. O good son, she was punished by king Yama with a heavy penalty. The Sun's son (i.e. Yama) threw her into many hells (like Raurava). Citrā was roasted in Raurava. Various afflictions were shown (i.e. imposed on her). As a deed is done so it (i.e. its fruit) is enjoyed. Due to a wicked resolve that Citrā split a hundred houses. O best brāhmaṇa, she experienced the fruit of the respective deeds. Since she split a hundred houses, therefore she is experiencing grief. When the time of (her) marriage came, her destiny had become ripe. When the proper

time (for) her marriage came, her husband died. As she split a hundred houses, a hundred grooms died at the time of the self-choice marriage and twentyone (grooms died) at the time of (her proposed marriage).

21. As you asked me I have told you (the account) of, Divyādevī. I have told you all these—her former deeds.

Ujjvala said :

22. You first told me the former deeds of Divyādevī, so also the fierce sin called splitting the houses (that she committed).

23. Due to the prowess of which religious merit did that daughter of Divodāsa, the king of the Plakṣa island, obtain (a birth) in a great family?

24. This is my doubt, O father. Please tell it to me. How did the princess become (a woman) of such a sinful behaviour?

Kuñjala said :

25. I shall (now) tell you about all the pious acts of Citrā. O (my) son Ujjvala, listen to what Citrā did formerly.

26-30. A very wise Siddha (i.e. a man endowed with supernatural faculties), while wandering came to the door of Citrā's house. He wore tattered clothes, was without a (proper) garment, was a recluse, and had held a staff (in his hand). He had a small strip of cloth worn over his privities, had a pot in his hand and was (otherwise) naked. Having come to the door of Citrā's house, he remained there. He observed a vow of silence, was clean-shaved, had his mind and organs of sense conquered. He abstained from food, took a very small quantity, and knew the essence of everything. He was very much tired due to having been on a long journey, and his mind was distressed with heat; O good son, he was depressed with fatigue, and was overcome with thirst. Having come to the door of Citrā's house, he resorted to the shade (of a tree). The noble one, afflicted with fatigue, was seen by Citrā.

31-35. Citrā served that very noble one, by washing his feet and giving him an excellent seat. "Sir, be seated comfortably on a very soft seat. Eat excellent food to remove (i.e. satiate) your hunger. Being contented drink cold water as you like." Saying so, and doing like that (i.e. giving him food etc.), and worshipping

him like a deity, she, O son, massaged his body and removed his fatigue. The noble Siddha, thus addressed by her, ate (food) and drank (water), O best brāhmaṇa. The Siddha, who knew the essence of everything, thus pleased by her, was gratified, and he, the soul of entire piety, remained steady for a while. That great meditating saint went (away) according to his will, as he had come.

36-44. When that noble and glorious Siddha had left, Citrā met with death, being under the sway of (i.e. according to) her deeds. She was punished by Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) with very painful penalties. That Citrā reached hell causing a host of agonies. O great king, (there) she experienced misery for a thousand yugas. At the end of (i.e. after having) experienced (misery) she got the birth of (i.e. was born as) a human being. She had formerly worshipped the Siddha, the best among the meritorious. It is the ripening (i.e. the fruit) of her deeds that she came to (i.e. was born in) the house of Divodāsa, the great king, (and) in the family of meritorious Kṣatriyas. O best man, she got the name Divyādevī; and she had given good food and drink to the noble one. She enjoyed the meritorious consequence of the great righteous act of charity. She drank cold water, and ate dainty food. Enjoying divine pleasures, she lived in her father's house; and due to the power of this Siddha, she was born as a princess. O good son, due to the efficacy of her great sin of splitting the families, O king, that Divyādevī experienced widowhood.

45. I have thus told you all the deeds of Divyādevī. What else, which you ask me now, should I tell you?

Ujjvala said :

46-48. Tell me how she got free from grief and great affliction. What kind of young woman was she, who was afflicted with great grief? What kind of happiness did she have? What will be its consequence? O father, please remove this doubt of mine now. Tell me (about) the means by which she will obtain salvation. The noble one is all alone weeping in the great forest.

Viṣṇu said :

49-60. Having heard (those) great (i.e. important) words

of his son, and having thought for a moment, that very wise Kuñjāla replied to his son: "O my noble son, listen; I am telling you the truth. Having reached (i.e. being born in) a sinful stock, due to my former deeds, and due to the contact with this tree, the knowledge of me, who was pious and noble, has now been lost in this existence of a lower animal, O son. I shall tell you about that instruction by which, and through the favour of Revā and grace of Viṣṇu, she has obtained knowledge and has reached salvation; being free from blemish, she will go to salvation, as gold becomes pure due to the contact with fire and gets (back) its own nature. O very intelligent one, due to the meditation on Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) and due to the muttering (of prayers), sacrifices and vows the sin of the sinners perishes. As an elephant would always give up his intoxication due to the fear of a lion, so the sin goes away due to the recitation of the names of Viṣṇu. As the serpents become poisonless due to the lustre of (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, so all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish; and in no other way. They too go away due to the recitation of the names of Viṣṇu. When being steady, and free from lust and anger, she would mutter the hundred names, destroying heaps of sins, and when, having controlled all the organs of sense, would guard them through the knowledge of self, and when, having entered into his meditation, having become one with (i.e. having become sincerely devoted to) him, and being composed, she would mutter (the names of Viṣṇu) she would reach (i.e. obtain) highest knowledge and salvation. When she would be endowed with abstract meditation, and when she would set her heart upon him, she would be completely resting at his feet."

Ujjvala said :

61. O father, right now tell me about the great, highest knowledge; and after that the vow of meditation and the auspicious hundred names.

Kuñjāla said :

62. I shall explain to you the highest knowledge, which nobody has perceived (i.e. acquired). O son, listen to (the description of) the perfect final emancipation, free from impurity.

Sūta said:

63-69a. O highly intelligent one, as a lamp in a place sheltered from wind, is steady (as it is) free from wind, burning brightly, (and) would destroy all darkness, in the same way the soul, free from blemishes, remains alone, free from desires, pure, and O son, he is never a friend or a foe. (He has) neither grief nor joy; (he has) neither greed nor jealousy. Being all alone, he is free from dejection, joy, happiness and unhappiness; so also free from all the objects of sense, (when) he would withdraw his organs of sense (from the objects). Then he has become absolute and salvation takes place (in his case). O lord of kings, a lamp, without any company (i.e. being solitary), and free from wind, would, through the contact of the movement of fire, dry up the oil due to the support of the wick. Then it emits soot, and on the top of the lamp a dark line of (i.e. due to) the oil is seen, O you very intelligent one. It itself draws oil and becomes spotless by means of the oil.

69b-72a. In the same way he (i.e. the soul) remains in the wick of the body and would draw the oil of the deeds; and would himself shine with lustre. Being free from anger etc. and winds called troubles, so also being desireless and steady he would glow with lustre. Remaining in his own place, he sees all the three worlds by means of his lustre.

72b-84. I have told (i.e. described to) you this (soul), of the nature of absolute knowledge. I shall (now) explain to you the meditation upon the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu); he is seen with the eye of knowledge, of the nature of absolute knowledge. Whom (i.e. him) the noble ones, intent upon (obtaining) the highest object (i.e. salvation), and having abstract meditation, and being watchful, see. His penance (i.e. penance practised to reach him) manifests everything. Being without hands and feet, he moves everywhere. O son, he captures (i.e. pervades) all the three worlds—mobile and immobile. O son, (even being) without nose and mouth, he smells and eats. He, the witness (to everything), the lord of the world, (even though) without ears, hears everything. (Though) without a form he is connected with forms and is under the sway of the group of five (organs of sense). Who (i.e. he) is the life of the entire world, and is worshipped by the

mobile and the immobile. O son, (though) tongue-less, he recites everything according to the Vedic texts. For him, who is without skin, touch of all objects is produced (i.e. he can touch everything). He is ever joyful, is detached, has one form (only), is independent, is without old age, without the feeling of mineness, just, possessing qualities, without the feeling of mineness, and pure. He is not under the control of anyone, (but) everything is under his control; he is the giver of everything and the best among the omniscient ones. He has no supporter; he, the eternal one, is full of everything. He who thus observes everything as full of meditation of the noble one, goes to the incorporeal, highest place, resembling nectar. I shall explain to you another meditation of this noble one. It is having a form, corporeal, formless and sound. O my son, he is called Vāsudeva since the entire matchless universe is occupied by him. His colour would be (i.e. is) that which is of the showering cloud. He, the lord of gods, resembles the sun's lustre and has four arms.

85-95. In his right hand shines a conch decorated with gold and jewels, and the disc resembling the sun's orb and a lotus are (held) in it. O boy, the mace Kaumodakī, destroying great demons, shines in the left hand of the illustrious one. A big lotus, rich with fragrance is (held) in his right hand. He, dear to Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) always shines with weapons. (A man should meditate upon) Viṣṇu (whose) neck is like a conch, face is round, and eyes resemble lotus-leaves, who shines with teeth resembling jewels. His hair is (flowing) like treacle, and the lips have the form of a coral. O son, he having the eyes like lotuses, shines with a crown. Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) shines with a glorious form and great lustre and is marked with the Kaushtubha gem. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) shines with ear-rings resembling the sun's lustre and always shines with the auspicious mark of Śrīvatsa. Vijaya, the best among the victorious, shines with a body having armlets, bracelets, necklaces and pearls resembling stars. That Govinda also shines with a golden-coloured garment and with fingers with rings and gems. The creator of the worlds, the lord of the worlds (i.e. Viṣṇu), (shining with) all complete weapons and divine ornaments, is mounted upon Garuḍa. A man who thus meditates upon him with a concentrated mind is free from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's world.

96. I have thus told you everything about the meditation upon the lord of the world. I shall now tell you (about) the vow, destroying all sins.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

‘A Hundred Names of Viṣṇu’

Kuñjala said :

1-4. I shall explain to you the kinds of vows by which Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is propitiated. O good son, there are many kinds of Ekādaśī: Jayā, Vijayā, and Jayantī, Pāpanāśinī, Trispṛśā, Vañjulī; the next is Tiladagdhā, then the other one is Akhaṇḍā, Cārakanyā, and Manorathā. There is (the vow of) Aśūnyaśayana (i.e. not sleeping on a bed), and there is the great vow of Janmāṣṭamī. There is no doubt that the sin of beings goes away due to these very auspicious vows. I am telling you the truth (and) the truth (only).

Kuñjala said :

5-9. I shall tell you about his hymn, destroying a heap of sins, called ‘Suputra-śata’, and giving salvation to men. I shall now only tell you about the hymn of that god Kṛṣṇa, which is excellent and is called ‘Śatanāma’. O best son, listen to it. I shall tell you the sage of (i.e. the composer of), and the metre of the hundred names of Viṣṇu. I shall also tell you about the deity, purifying all sins, O glorious one. Brahmā is said to be the sage (i.e. the author) of the hundred names of Viṣṇu. Omkāra is declared to be the deity, and anuṣṭubh is (said to be) the metre. It leads to the acquisition (i.e. fulfilment) of all desires and is employed in (obtaining) salvation. Of this hymn of the hundred names of Viṣṇu, Brahmā is the sage, Viṣṇu the deity, anuṣṭubh the metre. It is used for the fulfilment of all desires and for the destruction of all sins.

10-24. “I salute Hṛṣīkeśa, Keśava, Madhusūdana, the killer of all demons, sound Nārāyaṇa, Jayanta, Vijaya, Kṛṣṇa, Ananta,

Vāmana, Viṣṇu, the auspicious lord of the universe, the prop of the universe, worshipped by gods, sinless, destroyer of sins, Narasiṃha and dear to Śrī, lord of Lakṣmī, Śrīdhara (possessing glory of Lakṣmī), giver of wealth, Śrīnivāsa (i.e. abode of Lakṣmi), and very prosperous, Śrī Rāma, Mādhava, Mokṣa (i.e. Salvation), of the nature of forgiveness, Janārdana, omniscient, knowing and giving everything, the leader of all, Hari, Murāri, Govinda, Padmanābha, the lord of beings, giver of joy, endowed with knowledge, giver of knowledge, master of knowledge; Acyuta, possessing power, the moon, holding a disc in his hand, higher and lower, the support of the yugas, the source of the world, of the nature of Brahman, the great lord, Mukunda, good (i.e. great) Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu), of one form, the lord of the world, glorious Vāsudeva, holy and dear to brāhmaṇas, loving and beneficial to the cows, sacrifice, constituent of the sacrifice, causing sacrifice to prosper, a good enjoyer of sacrifice, master of Vedas and Vedāṅgas; knower of the Vedas, of the form of the Vedas, abode of learning and lord of gods, the unmanifest one, a great Brahman, having a conch in his hand, the ancient man, lotus-eyed, (of the form of) Varāha (i.e. a boar), supporting the earth, Pradyumna, Kāmapāla, Vyāsa, Vyāla, and Maheśvara (i.e. the great lord), (full of) all pleasures (and) great pleasures, salvation and the highest lord, of the form of Yoga (i.e. abstract meditation), of great knowledge, giving salvation to the meditating saints and dear to them; the enemy of Mura, the protector of the world, the one having a lotus in his hand, and holding a mace, living in a cave, living everywhere, of an auspicious abode, and possessing large arms, lord of Vṛndā, of a huge body, purifier and destroyer of sins, lord of the gopīs (i.e. the cowherdresses), the friend of the cowherds, the protector of cows, the refuge of the herds of cattle, the highest soul, the highest lord, Kapila and having human activities, steady and eternal—I salute him with my mind, speech and bodily acts.” He, doer of virtuous acts, who, even with (these) hundred names, praises, with a steady mind, Kṛṣṇa, (he) being purified by religious merit here (i.e. in this world), leaving (other) worlds, goes to Viṣṇu’s heaven.

25-27. A man should mutter with a concentrated mind, the very meritorious hundred names, cleansing all sins, and should meditate upon them with abstract contemplation. Such a man

would always obtain the fruit of having a bath in the Ganges with religious merit. Therefore a man should be very steady and mutter (these names) with a composed mind. A restrained man, being devoted, should mutter (these names) three times (a day). There is no doubt that for him there is (i.e. he gets) the fruit of (having performed) a hundred horse-sacrifices.

28-32a. I shall tell (you) about the religious merit of the man, who having fasted on the Ekādaśī day in front of Viṣṇu and (keeping) awake, would, mutter these names: The man obtains the fruit of Puṇḍarīka sacrifice (i.e. offered in honour of Viṣṇu). A man, who, remaining near Tulasī, would mentally mutter (these names) obtains the fruit of the Rājasūya sacrifice even after a year. One desiring happiness should mutter (these names) near the two (viz. at a place) where there is the Śālagrāma stone and the Dvārāvātī stone. A man (who does this) having enjoyed many pleasures and a hundred families would emancipate more than one along with him.

32b-39. He who would bathe (every morning) in Kārtika and would worship Viṣṇu, and also he, who, being purified, would recite the hymn (in honour of Viṣṇu) goes to (i.e. obtains) a superior position. The man, who bathes every morning in Māgha, having worshipped with devotion, Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, and would meditate upon Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu), or would mutter (his names) or listens to them (being recited), and, giving up sinful (deeds) like drinking liquor, goes, without any difficulty, to Janārdana, O (my) son. The dead ancestors of the man, who at the time of a Śrāddha, would mutter the hymn (containing) the hundred names destroying sins, in front of the brāhmaṇas eating (food), become pleased, and being gratified obtain salvation. A brāhmaṇa who always mutters it, becomes learned in the Vedas; a kṣatriya, (who always mutters it) obtains (i.e. rules over) the earth; a vaiśya (who always mutters it) would enjoy wealth and prosperity; a śūdra (who always mutters it) enjoys happiness and obtains brāhmaṇahood after getting another (i.e. next) existence and obtains (mastery over) the Vedic lore. This hymn, giving happiness and salvation should always be muttered. There is no doubt that due to the grace of Viṣṇu a man would be equipped with everything.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Divyādevi Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven

Kuñjala said :

1-4a. O good son, I have told you the vow, the hymn, the great knowledge and the meditation of Viṣṇu which destroy sins. When she (i.e. Divyādevī) would practise these auspicious four, she will go to Viṣṇu's world, difficult to be obtained even by gods. O child, going from here, teach the vow to Divyādevī. Tell (i.e. teach) her the king of vows called Aśūnya-śayana. Emanicipate the glorious princess from a great sin. You asked me (and therefore) I told (you about the vow) giving religious merit and destroying sins. O glorious one, go, (do) go.

Saying so, he ceased (to speak).

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

4b-10. That religious-minded and very intelligent Ujjvala, thus addressed by his father, having saluted the feet of his mother and father, quickly went to Plakṣadvīpa. He went to that mountain, auspicious on all sides, full of various minerals, and adorned with lofty peaks full of many kinds of jewels. O king, there were rivers with clean water flowing in many streams on that excellent mountain. O king, Kinnaras and Gandharvas sang there melodiously. It was crowded with the celestial nymphs; it was filled with hosts of gods; it was ringing with Siddhas and Cāraṇas; it was adorned with groups of sages. It was everywhere resounding with the notes of various birds.

11-13. The bright and quick-footed one thus reached that mountain. That woman also was weeping melodiously on that mountain. The wise one said (these) words to her who was again and again weeping. "O auspicious one, who are you? Why are you weeping now? Whom had you resorted to? Who has harmed you? Today only tell me the entire cause of your grief."

Divyādevi said :

14-18. O glorious one, it is properly the fruit of my deeds.

Being widowed I am staying here unhappily. O you illustrious one, who are you, afflicted by my grief?

O child, he, who had taken the form of a bird, having heard all that the princess had said, spoke enthusiastically, O child: "O glorious one, I am a bird, afflicted by your grief. I have taken the form of a bird, (but) I am neither a Siddha, nor a wise person. I saw you weeping here very loudly; therefore, O respectable lady, I am asking you. Tell me its cause, what happened in your father's house, and your own account."

19-24a. In brief and in proper order, she told everything that pained her. Having heard that, that large-hearted, great bird Ujjvala said to that Divyādevī who was very much pained: "At the time of your marriage your grooms died, the kṣatriyas also perished due to your self-choice marriage. O you lady of beautiful eyes, through compassion for you, my father told me the sinful deeds you had done in the other (i.e. former) existence. O you beautiful lady, strengthened by that blemish you are covered with that. Eat the fruit of the deeds you did in the previous birth. Be composed."

24b-27. That young humble lady, having heard those words of Ujjvala, replied to that magnanimous bird, who (thus) spoke (in human voice) in piteous words: "O bird, favour me. With (i.e. showing) grace, tell (me about) the atonement of that sin; also (tell me about) the expiation which will purify my sins, by which, being pure due to my sins washed, I shall go to a holy (place). Be gracious, and tell me about the expiation, O you glorious one."

Ujjvala said :

28-31. O you glorious one, for you only I asked my father. Then my father told (me) about the matchless expiation. O you illustrious one, you do that which would purify all your sins. Meditate upon Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu), mutter his hundred names. Be intent upon (obtaining) knowledge. Always practise the excellent, holy vow (called) 'Aśūnyaśayana' which destroys sins.

The religious-minded one explained to her knowledge, hymn, vow of and meditation upon the noble Viṣṇu, which reveals all knowledge.

Viṣṇu said :

32-35. Remaining in the solitary forest, she took it from him. She became free from all pairs of opposites and remained in penance. O great king, controlling her food, helpless and very much afflicted, free from lust and anger, and always controlling the group of the organs of sense and having abandoned great delusion, she practised the vow. When the fourth year came, the excellent lord Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) who was very much pleased came there with a desire to grant her a boon. The lord, the giver of boons, manifested his form to her.

Sūta said :

36-42a. She, joining the palms of her hands, trembling and helpless, spoke in a faltering tone, after saluting Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the great lord, dark-green like a sapphire and a cloud, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, rich with charm due to all ornaments, having a lotus in his hand: "I am not at all able to stand your divine lustre. Be gracious and please tell me who you, of a divine form, are and what is the cause (of) your (coming over) here? With favour (i.e. favour me) and tell me everything, O highly intelligent one. Due to your lustre and gestures I know (i.e. I think) you are just a god. O lord of the world, I, who am ignorant, do not know your form and name. Are you Brahmā, or Viṣṇu or Śaṅkara himself?" Speaking like this, and bowing to him she fell (i.e. prostrated herself) on the ground like a staff. Viṣṇu spoke to that princess who had bent before him.

The lord said :

42b-46a. O you auspicious one, there is no difference among the three. O you beautiful lady, I am always worshipped by him who has worshipped Brahmā or Śaṅkara. No doubt should be raised about it. These two are not different from me. I always have these three forms. Those who worship me, worship well these two. I am god Viṣṇu, who has come here through pity for you and due to the hymn and this auspicious vow and your restraint. You have become free from blemishes. O you auspicious one, ask for a boon.

Divyādevi said :

46b-49a. O Viṣṇu, O Kṛṣṇa the remover of affliction, be victorious. I am saluting your couple of feet. O lord of gods, emancipate me. O you having the disc in your hand, you desire to grant me a boon. Be gracious to me. O you sinless one, give (i.e. create in) me devotion for the couple of your feet. O lord of the world, show (me) the sound path to salvation. If, O Janārdana, you are pleased, give me the status of your servant (i.e. make me your servant).

The Lord said :

49b-54. O you noble one, let it be so. Go, with your sins completely washed, to Viṣṇu's highest heaven, always difficult to be obtained (even) by meditating saints. Now, due to my grace, do go to the highest world.

When the magnanimous Viṣṇu uttered these words, Divyādevī became divine with her lustre resembling that of the sun. She, adorned with divine ornaments, with a divine garland, a divine necklace, went, when all the people were watching, to Viṣṇu's heaven, free from tormentation and destruction. The bird, full of joy, again came home. The best one told all that to his father.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

The Miraculous Bath in the Water of Mānasa Lake

Viṣṇu said :

1-3a. Then Kuñjala said (these) words to his very bright son : "O son, tell me what you saw earlier. Tell me that. I am now very much pleased to listen to it." Thus ordering his son, that Kuñjala ceased speaking. The son, bending with modesty replied to the father :

Samujjala said :

3b-14. O father, for your and my food, I go to Himālaya,

the best mountain, attended by hosts of gods. I saw a wonder there, not seen or heard of before. (I saw) a region crowded with groups of sages, adorned with celestial nymphs, rich in many beautiful things creating curiosity, auspicious, and endowed with auspicious things, attracting the mind with many curious things, full of many auspicious fruits. There, near the Mānasa (lake), O father, I saw a wonderful thing. A swan accompanied by many swans came there. In the same way, O glorious one, other black swans with white beaks and feet (also) came there. At other places their bodies were white (i.e. other parts of their bodies were white). They were black like that, and, O you very intelligent one, others were white. There were four females of formidable figures and fearful, fierce and cruel due to their fangs, with their hair erect and causing fear. Later they also came there to that Mānasa lake. O father, in front of me the black swans bathed in the Mānasa (lake). Others roamed around; they did not bathe there in the Mānasa (lake). Later the females also came there to that Mānasa (lake). O father, the women laughed loudly and fiercely. From that lake a swan of a huge body came out. Then three went out; they neglected the swan. Discussing with each other, they went along the aerial path. Those very fearful women wandered on all sides.

15-19a. All the birds, afflicted with great agonies, sat in the shades of trees on the auspicious peak of Vindhya. When they were well (i.e. minutely) watching there came a bhilla, holding a bow and with an arrow in his hand, after having harassed beasts. Resorting to a slab, he sat there happily. Then the female bhilla (the wife of that bhilla) came there carrying (i.e. with) food and water. She saw her husband endowed with superior marks of kings. Knowing (i.e. taking) her husband covered with lustre, full of divine lustre, like the sun remaining in the sky, to be someone else, she left him and went (i.e. started going).

The hunter said :

19b-22. O darling, come, come on, why do you not look at me? I, who am being tormented by hunger, am waiting for you.

Hearing his words, the female hunter came (there) quickly. Reaching the vicinity of her husband, she wondered : 'Who

this lustrous god may be that is calling me?' Then the female hunter said to her husband of a blazing lustre : "O hero, what have you to do here? Who are you, having divine marks?"

Sūta said :

23. The hunter, thus addressed by the female hunter said to his wife : "O dear one, I am your husband, and you are my wife.

24. How do you not recognise me? Why is there a doubt (in your mind)? One who is oppressed by hunger expects water and food."

The female hunter said :

25-29. My husband is a barbarian, of a dark complexion and has put on a black dress. Such is my husband who causes fear to all beings. Who are you of a divine body, who would call (i.e. who addressed) me 'O dear one'? This is my doubt; tell me the truth.

For convincing his wife he told her (about) his family, his (native) village, his sports, his distinguishing mark, his son, his daughter. That female hunter, with her heart pleased said to her husband : "Due to what has your body become like this? Why have you put on a white dress? Tell me (about it). I am wondering." Hearing these words, the hunter, who was thus asked by his wife, full of respect (for him), replied to her :

Sūta said :

30-35a. "O you of a good vow, there is a confluence on the northern bank of Narmadā. O you very dear one, I, who was fatigued, quickly went to this (place of) confluence. I bathed (there), drank water, and have (now) come (here). Since then my body is covered with lustre like this. I became (fully) clad, and my garment turned white." By the marks, figure, family, place she recognised her husband, and having realised the possibility of religious merit, she then said to him : "Show me the (place of) confluence (first). I shall afterwards give you food with drink."

35b-42a. Thus addressed by his wife, the hunter quickly went (there); he subsequently showed her the confluence, the destroyer of sins. "O noble one, the birds of quick steps flew, and with her went to that excellent confluence of Revā. While birds and I were watching, she gave a bath to her husband, and she herself took a bath. Both turned (to be persons) possessing divine bodies and endowed with divine beauty, clad in divine garments, and (smeared) with (divine) unguents, having divine garlands, and smeared with divine sandal, O best of birds. Having got into Viṣṇu's vehicle, the two, worshipped by sages and Gandharvas, and honoured by Viṣṇu's devotees, went to Viṣṇu's heaven. I saw the noble couple being praised, and going along the heavenly path. Seeing the excellent best holy place, the birds also warbled with clear notes due to joy.

42b-50. The four black swans, having bathed at the confluence destroying sins, and with their hearts purified, again became bright. Having bathed and drunk water they again went out. All those black females died just due to that bath. O father, crying and moving, trembling with grief they went to Yama's world. I saw them then. Then the swans flew and went to their abode. O father, I actually saw this, and told it to you. O father, please tell me what those females with black sides and huge bodies will be (turned into). Tell me about the geese with black legs and bills, who went out of the Mānasa (lake). Tell it to me, O father, what they will be (i.e. turn into). How again, had the (white) swans become black? How did they become white again (just) at that moment only? O father, why did those females die? Such a doubt has arisen in my mind. Being favourable to me, you, who are clear-sighted, please remove, today only, the doubt of me who am always humble."

51. Speaking thus to his father, Samujjvala (or Ujjvala) ceased speaking. Then that parrot, named Kuñjala, started speaking.

CHAPTER NINETY

*The Powers of the Holy Places**Sūta said :*

1. Having heard all that Samujjvala said, that pious Kuñjāla said in reply :

Kuñjāla said :

2-7. O dear one, I shall explain it to you. Listen with a steady (i.e. attentive) mind to the account removing all doubts and destroying sins. In the assembly of that noble god Indra a debate, producing curiosity, was going on. (At that time) Nārada hurriedly came to see Indra. Indra, having seen him, with lustre like that of the sun, who had arrived, became glad and the very intelligent one, with his mind humble through devotion, offered him material of worship and water for washing his feet. Joining the palms of his hands, he saluted him. Seating the best brāhmaṇa on an auspicious, soft seat, and bowing down, he, full of great reverence, asked him : “Tell me now the reason for your arrival today.”

8-10a. Thus addressed by the lord of gods, the great sage said : “Having bathed in holy regions and sacred places with great faith, having worshipped deities and dead ancestors, having seen many holy places, I have come, from the earth, to see you, O Indra. I have already told all this which you had formerly asked me.”

The Lord of gods said :

10b-12a. O sage, you have seen auspicious, holy places and good regions. By visiting which sacred place, would a killer of a brāhmaṇa be free from (the sin of) murdering a brāhmaṇa, (or) a drunkard, or a killer of a cow, or one stealing gold, (would be free from the sin), (or) O illustrious one, how would one be free from plotting against one's master? (Or) how would the killer of a woman be happy?

Nārada said :

12b-23. O lord of gods, I do not know the speciality, regarding the destruction of sin, of such holy places as Gaṅgā etc. O Indra, I know that all great holy places are very auspicious and divine. But I do not know properly their special properties and lack of them. O god, ascertain the power of the holy places of giving salvation.

Having heard those words of that magnanimous Nārada, Indra called the Holy Places residing on the earth. By his order, all the Holy Places—divine ones—came there in embodied forms. O you of a good vow, the divine ones had joined the palms of their hands; they were adorned with good ornaments; their garments were divine, glossy and bright. They had especially taken up the form of women and men. They resembled gold and sandal, and had put on divine forms. O lord of men, they shone with the colour of pearls. Some of them had the complexion of heated gold and some were tawny. Some in the assembly were white and very yellow and bright. Some of the embodied ones resembled lotuses; still others resembled the sun's lustre, (or) the lustre (i.e. flash) of lightning; others shone in the assembly like fire. O lord of men, they shone with the richness of all ornaments, with necklaces, bracelets, armlets, garlands and good sandal. They, (with their bodies) smeared with divine sandal, fragrant and great, and with water-pots in their hands came into the assembly.

24-37. Gaṅgā, Narmadā, the holy Candrabhāgā, Sarasvatī, Devikā, Bimbikā, Kubbjā, Kuñjalā, the well-known Mañjulā, Rambhā, the extremely holy Bhānumatī, Sughargharā, Śoṇā, Sindhu, Sauvira, Kāverī, so also Kapilā, and Kumudā, the holy Vedanadī, the very holy Maheśvarī and the well-known Carmanvatī, Lopā and Sukauśikī, Suhaṃsī, Haṃsapādā, Haṃsavegā and Manorathā, Suruthā, Svārunā, Veṇā, Bhadraveṇā, Supadmini, Nāharī, Sumarī, the holy Pulindikā, Hemā, Manorathā, Divyā, Candrikā, Vedasaṃkramā, Jvālā, Hutāśanī, Svāhā, Kālā and Kampiñjalā, Svadhā and Sukalā, Liṅgā, Gambhīrā, Bhīmavāhinī, Devadrīcī, Vīravāhā, Lakṣahomā, Aghāpahā, Pārāśarī, Hemagarbhā, Subhadrā, Vasuputrikā—these very holy rivers, rich with the beauty of all ornaments, with pitchers

in their hands, and well-honoured came there in embodied forms, O lord of men. Prayāga, Puṣkara, Arghadīrghā, Manorathā, the very holy Vārāṇasī, removing (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, Dvārāvati, Prabhāsa, and Avantī and Niṃṣa and Caṇḍaka, Mahāratna and Maheśvara and Kaleśvara, Kaliñjara, Brahmakṣetra, Māthura, Mānavāhaka, Māyā, Kāntī and other many very holy and divine places—sixty-eight in number—so also hundreds of crores of all rivers, led by Godāvarī came there by his (i.e. Indra's) order. All regions, very holy and great holy places, possessing bodies and marks came to Indra, the lord of gods; came there, obeying his order. With their heads bent down, they all saluted the lord of gods.

Sūta said :

38-47. The great Holy Places said to the victorious lord of gods : “O god of gods, tell us why you have called us. O lord of gods, tell us all the reason; salutation to you.” Hearing these words of them, the lord of gods said : “Which holy place is able to remove (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa? Which holy place is able to destroy the great sin called the murder of a cow, or the matchless sin called the murder of a woman or the great sin due to plotting against one's master or the elders, or drinking liquor, or due to the terrible (sin of) causing abortion. (Which holy place is able to destroy) the great sin, giving great trouble, due to plotting against the king, (or) against (one's) friend, or any other sin of treachery, (or) changing the deity, (or) means of livelihood of brāhmaṇas, (or) destroying the pasture-ground of cows, or burning a dwelling or setting ablaze a house? These sixteen are major sins, so also illicit intercourse. Which best holy place would be able to destroy sins (like the sin) due to deserting one's master, or due to running away from the battle-field? From amongst you which one would certainly be able (to destroy a sin) without expiation? When all gods and Nārada are watching (i.e. in the presence of all gods and Nārada) may all of you speak after having properly decided.”

48. When the magnanimous king of gods spoke like this, the Holy Places, after having consulted their lord, spoke to Indra, present in the assembly.

The Holy Places said :

49-54. Listen, we shall tell (it). O lord of gods, salutation to you. All holy places destroy sins; but, O Lord of gods, we are not able to destroy the very fearful and strong sins which you mentioned. Prayāga, Puṣkara, the matchless Aghatīrtha, and, O noble one, Vārāṇasī—(each one of these) is able to destroy sins. To destroy major sins these four are of unlimited power; so also they have unlimited power to destroy minor sins. O lord of gods, the very powerful Puṣkara and others have been created by the Creator.

Having heard these words of the Holy Places, the lord of gods, full of great joy, then praised them.

THE
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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA SECTION II: BHŪMIKHAṆḌA (Continued)

91. Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedaśarman and Vañjula	1241
92. The Greatness of Revā	1243
93. Vijvala Narrates His Experience	1246
94. In Praise of Making Gift of Food	1248
95. Deeds Which Lead to Heaven	1252
96. Good and Bad Deeds and the Fate of the Performer	1255
97. Subāhu Eats His Own Flesh	1258
98. The Vāsudeva Hymn	1266
99. God Viṣṇu Appears to Subāhu	1272
100. Vena Asks to Hear More about Kuñjala	1276
101. Kapiñjala's Narration	1277
102. Aśokasundarī Is Born	1280
103. Aśokasundarī Is Saved and Āyu Gets Boon	1286
104. Indumatī's Dream	1295
105. Nahuṣa is Born	1297
106. Indumatī's Lamentations on the Loss of Her Child	1301
107. Nārada Assures of Nahuṣa's Return	1302
108. Vasiṣṭha's Instruction to Nahuṣa	1303
109. Vidvara, a Kinnara, Dispels Aśkokasundarī's Apprehensions	1306
110. Nahuṣa Gets Divine Weapons from Gods	1310
111. Nahuṣa Enters Mahodaya, the City of Huṇḍa	1311
112. Aśokasundarī has a Glimpse of Nahuṣa	1312
113. Rambhā Acts as Aśokasundarī's Messenger	1313

114. The Fight between Nahuṣa and Huṇḍa Starts	1316
115. Huṇḍa is Killed in the Battle	1318
116. Nahuṣa Marries Aśokasundarī	1321
117. Nahuṣa's Consecration	1323
118. The Story of Kāmoda	1325
119. The Birth of Kāmodā	1328
120. Nārada on Dreams	1331
121. The End of Vihunḍa	1334
122. Dharmaśarman's Account	1338
123. Kuñjala's Story: A Preceptor Is a Holy Place	1340
124. Pṛthu's Righteous Rule	1345
125. The Merit of Listening to or Reciting This Purāṇa	1346

SECTION III: SVARGAKHAṆḌA

1. Sūta Romahaṣaṇa Agrees to Narrate Padma Purāṇa	1350
2. The Creation of the Elements, Prakṛti etc.	1352
3. Various Mountains and Regions of the Earth	1354
4. Uttarakuru, Bhadrāśva, Mālyavat	1359
5. Ramaṇaka, Hiraṇmaya, Airāvata	1361
6. Bhāratavarṣa: Its Rivers and Regions	1363
7. Span of Life in the Four Yugas	1366
8. Śākadvīpa: Mountains, Rivers and Countries	1367
9. Śālmalika, Krauñca, Kuśa and Puṣkara Dvīpas and Their Mountains	1370
10. Dialogue between Nārada and Yudhiṣṭhira	1372
11. Puṣkara, the Holiest of Holy Places	1374
12. Visit to Some Holy Places and Its Merit	1377
13. The Greatness of Narmadā	1378
14. Sages Pray to God Śiva for Protection from Demon Bāṇa	1381
15. The Greatness of Amaraṇṭaka	1384
16. Kāverī Saṅgama Tīrtha	1389
17. Narmadā and the Holy Places on Her Northern Bank	1391
18. More Tīrthas on the Bank of Narmadā	1393
19. Śuklatīrtha	1400

Contents

20. Naraka, Kapilātīrtha, Ṛṣitīrtha, Gaṇeśvara, Bhṛgutīrtha, Somatīrtha etc.	1403
21. Vihageśvara, Narmadeśvara, Aśvatīrtha etc.	1408
22. The Story of Five Gandharva Maidens	1412
23. The Sage Lomaśa Comes to the Help of the Goblins	1419
24. Piṅgatīrtha, Narmadā, Dvārāvatī, Timi etc.	1422
25. Vitastā, Malada, Maṇimanta, Brahmavālaka etc.	1425
26. Kurukṣetra, Pāriplava, Śālvikini, Koṭitīrtha etc.	1427
27. Kanyātīrtha, Saptasārasvata, Pṛthūdaka, Sannihiti etc.	1434
28. Dharmatīrtha, Śākambharī, Rathāvarṭta etc.	1440
29. Kālindītīrtha: Efficacy of Yamunā	1443
30. Hemakuṇḍala and His Two Sons	1446
31. Vikuṇḍala's Dialogue with the Devadūta	1449
32. Sugandha, Arundhativaṭa, Sindhuprabhava etc.	1463
33. The Merits of Vārāṇasī	1466
34. The Greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara	1470
35. The Greatness of Kapardin	1472
36. The Greatness of Madhyameśa	1476
37. Other Holy Places of Vārāṇasī	1477
38. Gayā and Other Holy Places	1478
39. Savidyā Sandhyā, Lauhitya, Karatoyā etc.	1483
40. Mārkaṇḍeya Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga	1491
41. The Greatness of Prayāga	1494
42. Importance of Giving a Cow at Prayāga	1496
43. The Fruit of Visiting Prayāga	1498
44. The Fruit of Bathing in the Confluence at Prayāga	1501
45. Agnitīrtha, Virañjana, Svargatīrtha etc.	1503
46. More about Merits Derived from Pilgrimage	1506
47. Prayāga Again	1508
48. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva Dwell in Prayāga	1509
49. Kṛṣṇa Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga	1510
50. Viṣṇu's Name the Greatest Holy Place	1512
51. Karmayoga or Rules of Conduct	1514
52. Rules for Sipping Water	1519
53. Rules of Conduct for a Celibate Student	1523

Contents

54. Rules for the Householder	1529
55. Don't's for a Twice-born Householder	1532
56. Do's and Don't's in Eating	1539
57. Acts of Charity Prescribed for a Householder	1542
58. Code of Conduct for an Anchorite	1547
59. Rules of Conduct for a Sannyāsi	1550
60. Restraints for a Sannyāsi	1552
61. Devotion to Viṣṇu the Best Way to Salvation	1555
62. The Merit of Reciting the Padma Purāṇa, Svargakhaṇḍa	1562

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedaśarman and Vañjula

Kuñjala said:

1-16a. Formerly when Indra was affected by (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa, he committed a great sin of having an illicit intercourse with Gautama's wife. He was abandoned by gods and brāhmaṇas. Indra, propless and shelterless, practised penance. At the end of his penance all deities, sages, yakṣas, kinnaras started a religious bath to honour the lord of gods. O best son, O noble one, having taken the lord of gods to the Mālavaka country they gave him a bath with (the water from) the pitchers filled with water. Then he was first taken to Vārāṇasī to give him a bath; then Indra (was taken) to Prayāga and then to Arghatīrtha. O best of brāhmaṇas, the noble one was given a bath by the magnanimous Puṣkara itself; he was also given a bath by all gods like Brahmā, by hosts of sages. Hallowed with Vedic hymns destroying all sins by sages, the lord of gods was given a bath by elephants, trees, serpents, snakes along with kinnaras. When that noble Indra was purified, his (sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa and (that of) illicit intercourse were gone. On the earth Indra's (sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa along with that terrible sin of illicit intercourse perished. Indra who was well-pleased granted a boon to the Holy Places: "Since, you, who, are pure, freed me from this very terrible sin, therefore, by my favour you will be holy and the lords of sacred places." Giving such a boon to them he gave a boon to (the) Mālava (country): "Since today you bore my dirt causing distress, therefore you will be adorned with food, drink, wealth and grains. There is no doubt about it. By my favour you will surely be very holy and free from bad times (like drought etc.)." After Indra, the lord of gods, had given him (i.e. the Mālava country) such a boon, all the Holy Places and also the Mālavaka country went to their respective places along with Indra.

Sūta said:

16b-17a. Since then the four, viz. Prayāga, Puṣkara, Vārāṇasī and Arghatīrtha obtained an excellent authority.

Kuñjala said:

17b-22. In the Pañcāla country there was a kṣatriya named Vidura. Due to folly he had formerly killed a brāhmaṇa. He, without the lock of hair on the crown of the head and without the sacred thread and without the (saffron-) mark (on his forehead) wandered for begging (saying): “I, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, have come. Give alms and food to the killer of a brāhmaṇa and a drunkard.” Thus he formerly went to (different) houses and begged. Thus he came (to a spot) after having visited all the holy places. Yet, O best brāhmaṇa, (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa did not leave him. That sinful Vidura, full of agony and grief, and with his heart burning, resorted to the shade of a tree.

23-29a. Then, there lived in the Māgadha country a brāhmaṇa (named) Candraśarman; he was overcome with great delusion. He had killed his preceptor. The wicked one was deserted by his kinsmen and groups of relatives. He came there where Vidura stayed. He was without the lock of hair on the crown of his head and the sacred thread and the characteristic marks of a brāhmaṇa. Then he was asked by that wicked Vidura: “Who are you, unfortunate and of a distressed mind, that have come here? Why do you, bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa, roam over the earth?” Thus addressed by Vidura, that mean brāhmaṇa Candraśarman told him everything that he had formerly done and the sin he had committed while staying in his preceptor’s house. (He said:) “I, highly deluded and agitated with anger, formerly killed my preceptor. Therefore I am now tormented.”

29b-32. Having told all (his) account, Candraśarman asked (Vidura), “Who are you of an extremely distressed mind, that have resorted to the shade of (this) tree?” Vidura narrated his sin in brief. Then there came a third twice-born, emaciated due to affliction, a heap of many sins, and named Vedaśarman. Both (Vidura and Candraśarman) asked him: “Who are you, a distressed figure? Why are you roaming over the earth? Tell (us) your true condition.”

33-40. Then Vedaśarman told them all that he had done: “I had illicit intercourse; I was despised by all people and also by my kinsmen and relatives. I am polluted by that sin. (Therefore) I am wandering over the earth like this.” Then (there came a

vaiśya named Vañjula, who was a drunkard. He was particularly a killer of cow. As before he was asked by (the other three). He narrated all the sin that he committed before. All the other (three) heard all that he told. Thus the four most sinful ones gathered at one place. None of them shared with one another food or coverings. O noble one, they (however) talked to one another. They did not occupy the same seat, nor did they sleep in the same bed. Thus full of grief they went to many holy places; but their terrible sins did not perish. The holy places do not have the power to destroy major sins. They, Vidura and others, went to Kālañjara mountain.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

The Greatness of Revā

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Reaching Kālañjara (the four) very much afflicted, tormented by great sins, lamenting and senseless lived there; and there came a very glorious siddha. He asked them who were afflicted with great grief: “For what reason are you unhappy?” He the very wise one, and proficient in all (branches of) knowledge was told by them (the cause of their grief). The very meritorious one having known their great sin, showed compassion to them.

The siddha said:

4-36a. On the occasion of the new moon day falling on Monday, you four, impure with sins, should go to Prayāga, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, being the third, and Vārāṇasī, the fourth one. You will be free from sins when you will have bathed in the water of the Ganges. There is no doubt that you will attain purity.

All of them, instructed by him, carefully saluted him, (and) tormented by sins, quickly went from Kālañjara. The best twice-born ones—Vidura, Candraśarma, Vedśarma as the third, the drunkard and wicked-hearted vaiśya (named) Vañjulaka, having reached Vārāṇasī, O you best one, then to Prayāga, Puṣkara, and Arghatīrtha, when the new moon day fell on a Monday, went to the great city. When that auspicious day came they bathed in the water of the Ganges. Just by bathing (in the water of the Ganges) they became free from the sins like the murder of a cow. Those Holy Places, polluted with sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, and of drinking liquor, roamed over the earth. O best brāhmaṇa, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, Prayāga—the destroyer of sins, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth, were polluted with sins. All became black, and roamed in the form of swans. The best brāhmaṇas bathed at all holy places. Their blackness that had come to them through sin would not leave (them, though), O king, they again and again bathed at very holy places. O best brāhmaṇa, whichever holy places they, in the form of swans, visited, all of them, being very much afflicted went with them. Women of the form of sins roamed around them. In the form of swans they went to sixty-eight very holy places. O great king, they (i.e. Vidura and others), with their minds full of sins, again came to the Mānasa (lake) along with the very Holy Places. O great king, there they bathed, but the major sin did not leave them. The Mānasa (lake), with its mind full of the sense of shame, and having taken the form of a swan, became black-bodied—whom you have seen before. Then they went to the northern bank of Revā which destroys sins. O best brāhmaṇa, they became free from sins just by (taking) a bath at the confluence of (Revā and Kubjā), which was resorted to by gods and siddhas. Having given up that (dark) complexion, they obtained merit. Whichever sacred place the swans had gone to, and had bathed at, women seeing them, laughed (at them); and the sin did not leave them at all, (but) by the fire in the form of the water of Kubjā even the greatest sin was reduced to ashes; and those women died. The sins of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, that of drinking liquor and of illicit intercourse were reduced to ashes, destroyed by (the confluence of) Kubjā with Revā. Those that

died on the bank of the river, were, O noble one, gone. Know that swan to be Mānasa (lake) which accompanied the sixtyeight very holy places (moving) in the form of swans. Hear from me the names of the four black swans: Prayāga, Puṣkara, the excellent Arghatīrtha, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth one. All the four destroy sins. These four Holy Places, overcome with (the sin of) the murder of brāhmaṇas, went sadly to holy places, O you highly intelligent one. O son, the terrible sin of them, who were (thus) wandering, did not go away. They were indeed purified at the confluence of Kujā (with Revā), and were freed from their sins. It is said that in front of Indra Prayāga became the king of all the meritorious holy places, (as he was) approved of by them. Let (other) holy places roar as long as the Revā is not seen as destroying sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Revā is greatly meritorious and very blessed at the conjunction with Meghanāda and the big confluence; Revā is not obtainable everywhere. She is difficult to be reached by men at Oṃkāra, Bhṛgu-kṣetra, and at her confluence with Narmadā and Kujā, and by best gods at Māhiṣmatī. She is meritorious at her confluence with Viṭaṅkā, at Śrīkaṇṭha and Maṅgaleśvara. Revā, full of the merit of gods is not obtainable everywhere. A man is happy there, where (Revā) the mother of holy places, the great goddess and the destroyer of heaps of sins (flows) between the two banks. A man obtains the fruit of the horse-sacrifice by just one bath (in Revā).

36b-37. I have told you all this that you asked for, and that removes all sins, that is holy, giving salvation to those who listen to it.

Having spoken thus the very intelligent (Kuñjala) spoke to his third son.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

*Vijvala Narrates His Experience**Kuñjala said:*

1-2. O Vijvala, what thing not seen before and full of wonder did you, while wandering on the earth, see ? Tell me that, O you of a good vow. O best son, tell me which country did you go to with a strenuous effort for (obtaining) food; (tell me) what wonder you noticed.

Vijvala said:

3-6. On the surface of mountain Meru there is a forest by name Ānanda. It is abounding in divine trees, always full of fruits and flowers; it is crowded with groups of gods, and is attended by sages and siddhas, and also by beautiful celestial damsels, gandharvas, kinnaras and serpents; (it is full of) wells, ponds, lakes, rivers and streams. The holy forest Ānanda shines with divine objects, aeroplanes numbering in crores and resembling swans, kunda flowers and the moon. It is full of the mixed and sweet sounds of songs, and resounds with the thunders of clouds.

7-10. It is everywhere sweet due to the humming of bees. It is covered with sandal trees, mango trees and blossomed campaka trees. In this way that excellent Ānanda forest shines with many trees; and due to the notes of various birds it is full of a mixed sound. There I saw the very beautiful Ānanda forest like this. O father, a clean lake (i.e. lake with clean water) shines like an ocean (in the forest). It is full of auspicious water, and is crowded with auspicious aquatic animals, fragrant with lotuses and is full of swans and ducks.

11-12a. Thus in the centre of the forest there is a lake, adorned with crowds of gods and hosts of sages. It shines well with kinnaras, serpents, gandharvas and bards.

12b-26. O father, there I saw a wonder. It cannot be described. (A man) shone there with a divine aeroplane, shining with an umbrella, a staff and banners and full of all pleasures and with pitchers, O best one. O you of the best vow, he, the shining

one, was being praised by gandharvas, celestial nymphs and great sages. (None else) like him was seen; (he was) matchless in form in the world, with his entire body looking charming with ornaments, and round his neck a necklace made of big gems shone. I saw a beautiful lady standing near him. She was (adorned) with golden necklaces and with armlets and bracelets of pearls, and with divine garments and smearings of sandal. The man being praised and sung came there. The lady had the form of Rati, had fine hips, and plump buttocks and breasts. Due to the excellence of her form she was shining like that with ornaments. I saw these two, having the sweetness of form and beauty and endowed with all charm, coming there. The two noble ones—the man and the lady—having lotus-like eyes, got down from the aeroplane, came near the lake, and bathed there, O father. The couple having large weapons seized each other and like them the dead bodies of the two had fallen on the bank of the lake. The dead bodies were like the two—the man and the lady—of lotus-like eyes that were (seen) at Prabhāsa, even in form, O illustrious one. The dead body resembling a godly form, was like the man. The form of it was seen just like him. The other dead body had a form as was (that of) the wife. She then cut off the flesh from the female dead body and ate the (pieces of) flesh covered with blood. The man, being very eager, also ate the flesh of the dead body.

27-33a. The two, oppressed with hunger, ate the flesh of the two (dead bodies). They ate the flesh till they were satisfied. O father, then drinking the water in (i.e. of) the lake, the two became happy. Remaining there for some time they again went by the aeroplane. O father, I also saw there two other females. These two females were endowed with beauty and grace and had pleasing characteristics. When the two (i.e. the husband and the wife) were eating the flesh in the great forest, the two females laughed very loudly. When I was seeing (i.e. in my very presence) the two everyday ate the flesh after taking bath etc. O noble one, the other two females, having terrible forms, with their mouths fearful due to fangs, and very fierce said to them there only: “Give (us), give (us).”

33b-37a. Remaining in the vicinity of the forest I observed like this, O father. The two everyday cut off the flesh and ate it.

The bodies of the corpses (i.e. the dead bodies) again became complete. O father, everyday getting down like this, the two and the other (females) acted as I told (you) before, when I was seeing (i.e. in my presence). At that time, O father, I saw the wonder that took place (there). When O father, you asked me (if) I saw a wonder, I told you all that (I saw) which caused doubt.

37b-43. Through grace and with a pleasing heart tell me (about it). O best twice-born, who is that lotus-eyed one, of a divine form, who came with the lady in an aeroplane? And O noble one, who is that lady that ate that large (quantity of) flesh? Who is that (man) and who is that (lady) that came there and ate (the flesh)? Tell us (i.e. me), O father, about the other females that laughed at that time and said: "Give (us), give (us)". You tell me about these two very fearful females. O father, O you of a good vow, please remove this doubt of me.

Saying so the bird ceased (speaking). That (Kuñjala) thus asked by his third son Vijvala told him all account of Cyavana. So listen (to it).

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

In Praise of Making Gift of Food

Kuñjala said:

1. O son, listen, I shall tell you the reason why the two became the eaters of their own flesh.

2-12a. There is no doubt that everywhere (i.e. for everything) auspicious or inauspicious act is the cause. O son, a man enjoys happiness due to a meritorious deed; and due to a sinful deed he suffers. A man should undertake a deed after having pondered over the subtle path by means of the eye of the knowledge of scriptures, and also after having repeatedly well thought over the coarse path of conduct with an accurate mind (i.e. thought), as,

O son, an artist, fashioning images, produces elegance (in them) by means of the lustre of the fire and flames all round. A metal, heated by fire would slowly turn into a liquid. O child, undoubtedly the kind of form produced is similar to the kind of food, perfect with taste, that is poured down. A deed is enjoyed in the same way as it is done. It is the deed that is the principal thing and that alone proceeds in the form of rain. O child there is no doubt that the farmer enjoys (i.e. reaps) the fruit as he sows the seed in the fields. (A man) enjoys in the same way as he performs a deed. Deed is the cause of his destruction. All of us are controlled by (the fruits of) our deeds. We are the heirs of our deeds and the kinsmen related to our deeds in the world. It is the deeds that prompt a man to pleasure or pain. As gold or silver is poured down (in a liquid form) as the form is (desired), in the same way a being is conceived in accordance with his former deeds.

12b-20. Of the fetus in the womb these five are seen: (span of) life, acts, wealth, learning and death. As the doer does (i.e. fashions different images from) a lump of clay, similarly acts that are performed grasp the doer. A being reached the state of a god or a human being or a beast or a bird or a lower animal or an immobile thing due to his acts only. He always enjoys in accordance with what is done by himself. He, having acquired the bed (in the form) of the womb enjoys pleasure or pain ordained by himself (and due to acts) in the former body (i.e. existence). Even by means of his intelligence or power the best of men is not able to change (the fruits of) the deeds (performed) in the former existence. (Beings) experience pains and pleasures (as a result) of their own deeds. He (i.e. a man) is compelled by self-prompted causes or reasons. As a calf finds his mother from among thousands of cows, in the same way (the fruits of) the deeds—good or bad—which do not perish otherwise than by being experienced follow the doer. Who can change the former deed that is binding ?

21-25a. The (fruit of one's) act runs after one who is running very fast, since the deed done formerly (inheres in the soul of the doer). It stands by one who stands, and follows one who goes (i.e. walks). The deed of one who performs (various acts), makes him act like a shadow. The being and his acts are like

the shadow and the sun which are always mutually well-connected. The objects of senses are diseases; old age etc. are diseases. They later trouble a man who is (already) oppressed by (his) former deeds. He who is to experience pain or pleasure (at a particular place) is always bound there as with a rope, and is forcibly carried (there) by destiny.

25b-30. They say that destiny gives pleasure or pain to beings. Fate is thought of in one way while a person is sleeping or awake (i.e. by a person who is sleeping or awake), and it presents itself in a different way, binds and desires to kill him. It well protects him from weapons, poison and calamities who deserves to be protected. As on the earth seeds, trees, clumps of trees and grass stand and multiply, in the same way the deeds (act) on the soul. As a lamp goes out when the oil (in it) is consumed, so the body of a being perishes with the destruction of the deeds. In the same way philosophers have said that death takes place after the destruction of the deeds. The various diseases of beings are said to be their causes. Therefore, deed is the principal (thing in the case) of beings.

31-34a. One enjoys (the fruit) of the deed which one does (i.e. has done) before. O child, I have told you the meaning of what you had seen and about which you asked me now. Now the two whose terrible deed you saw in the Ānanda forest, are enjoying each other. O child, I shall narrate their movements. Listen to me who am talking. O child, of the creations etc. this is the land of deeds (i.e. where deeds are performed) and other lands are meant for enjoyment. O very intelligent one, having gone into them one enjoys (the fruits of one's deeds).

Sūta said:

34b-37. In the Caula country (lived) a very wise king named Subāhu. He was handsome, virtuous (and) wise. There was none (else) like him. The king was Viṣṇu's devotee, he was highly intelligent and very dear to Viṣṇu's devotees. Meditating on Madhusūdāna (i.e. Viṣṇu) with three kinds of deeds (i.e. of body, mind and speech) he performed all sacrifice like the horse-sacrifice. His family priest was a brāhmaṇa by name Jaimini. He, having called that Subāhu, said these words to him:

38-41a. "O king, give gifts by which happiness is enjoyed. A

man after death goes beyond difficult worlds and crosses (difficulties). By means of gifts one gets happiness and eternal glory. In the world matchless fame is produced by (making) gifts. The doer (of pious deeds) would live in heaven as long as his fame lasts. Therefore, (giving) a gift is said to be difficult to do; it is not at all possible (to make) gifts. Therefore with all efforts men should always give (gifts)."

Subāhu said:

41b-42a. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me which of the two, (giving) gifts or penance, is very difficult to do and which (of the two) gives great fruit after death.

Jaimini said:

42b-46. There is nothing (else) more difficult to do than giving gifts. O king, it is actually seen by people. In the world, leaving (i.e. at the cost of) dear life people prompted by greed enter a sea or a forest for the sake of wealth. Others take to service (of others) which is (nothing but) a dog's life. Similarly some first (take to) farming which is full of harm and which is troublesome. O best among men, to give up that wealth, superior even to one's life, and earned with difficulty, is very difficult, especially that wealth, O great king, which is justly earned.

47-49a. There is no end to (the wealth) given with faith to a deserving recipient. Faith is the daughter of Dharma, a purifying goddess and an emancipator of all. She is Sāvitrī, the mother, and a boat to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Religious merit is accomplished by means of faith and not with heaps of wealth. Indigent sages, having faith, have gone to heaven.

49b-61. O best king, there are many (kinds) of gifts. There is nothing superior to giving food which gives liberation to beings. Therefore, food, along with water, should be given, accompanied by sweet and pleasing words. There is nothing superior to giving food to a proper person with faith and proper rite for emancipation, well-being and happiness and wealth in this and the next world. A man enjoys the fruit of giving only food with a pure heart. He should give a morsel after a morsel, or a handful or of the measure of a prastha. There is no doubt

that the great fruit of that gift becomes inexhaustible. If a man, due to having nothing with him, cannot afford (to give) even a prastha or a handful, he should feed, with faith and devotion, a brāhmaṇa, after approaching him on a parvan-day. O lord of subjects, (by giving) the principal gift of food alone a man, in the next birth, well obtains food and enjoys food. Whatever is devoutly given by men in the former birth, is always enjoyed (by them) after well getting another existence. Those men (who) always give the gift of food to brāhmaṇas, enjoy sweet food and drink; they are (called) givers of food. The sages, who have mastered the Vedas call food as being life (itself), since it is undoubtedly sprung from nectar. He who has given food has given life. O great king, give the gift of food with (great) effort.

Having heard this (i.e. these words) of Jaimini, the king again asked that brāhmaṇa Jaimini, proficient in knowledge:

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Deeds Which Lead to Heaven

Subāhu said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, now explain to me the merits of heaven. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I shall do all this naturally.

Jaimini said:

2-13a. There (i.e. in heaven) are various divine, meritorious, charming pleasure-gardens, full of all objects of desire and beautiful with trees satisfying all desires. (There are) everywhere aeroplanes attended by bevy of celestial nymphs. They are variegated; they move according to the desire (of the occupant); they are controlled (by the occupant). Their colour is like that of the young sun, and they have windows (decked) with pearls. They are white like the moon's orb, and have golden beds and seats. In them meritorious men, richly endowed with all objects of desires, and free from all griefs move as on earth. Non-be-

lievers do not go there. Those who have not conquered their senses do not (go there). Wicked, cruel, ungrateful and proud (people) do not (go) there. Men that are truthful, that remain in penance, that are brave, kind, forgiving, that perform sacrifices, and are given to giving gifts go there. There nobody suffers from a disease, old age; nobody meets with death; nobody suffers from cold or heat. Nobody has hunger, thirst or exhaustion. O king, there are many merits like these and others of heaven. Now listen to the defects that are there. The entire fruit of an auspicious deed is enjoyed there only. The great defect that is said to be (present) there is that much (activity) is not done (i.e. undertaken by the residents). Also there is dissatisfaction on seeing the bright glory of others. There is a sudden fall of them whose mind is full of happiness. The fruit of that deed which is done here is enjoyed there. O king, this is known to be the land of deeds and that the land of fruits.

Subāhu said:

13b-14a. O brāhmaṇa, you have narrated these great defects of heaven. Tell (me) about the worlds that are faultless and eternal.

Jaimini said:

14b-19. O king, there are defects right from the residence of Brahmā. Therefore the wise do not desire to obtain (i.e. to go to) heaven. Above the residence of Brahmā is the highest place of Viṣṇu. They know it to be an auspicious eternal light and as the highest Brahman. Foolish men, who are full of sensual desires, who are attacked (i.e. overcome) by religious hypocrisy, delusion, fear, treachery, anger and greed, do not go there. Good people who do not have the sense of mineness and egotism, who are free from the pairs of the opposite qualities (like pleasure and pain), whose senses are controlled, and who are engaged in profound meditation, go there. I have told you all this that you have asked me about.

Having thus heard the merits of heaven, Subāhu, the lord of the earth, asked the noble Jaimini, the best among speakers:

Subāhu said:

20-23a. O sage, I shall not go to heaven; I do not also desire (to go there). I shall not do that act by which there is a fall. O noble one, charity alone is (everything). Certainly when shall I not give? A man falls from it (i.e. heaven) because of (giving) gifts and desire for (their) fruits.

Having said so, that religious-minded Subāhu, the lord of the earth, (again spoke): “By means of profound meditation I shall worship that lord of gods (i.e. Viṣṇu), dear to Lakṣmī. I shall go to Viṣṇu’s heaven which is free from tormentation and destruction.”

Jaimini said:

23b-30a. O king, you have spoken the truth, which is full of all bliss. Kings are virtuous and they worship with great sacrifices. O prince, in sacrifices all (kinds of) gifts are given. In the sacrifices, they first give food, garments, tām̐būla, gold, and also give the gift of land and cows. Those best men go to Viṣṇu’s world by means of good sacrifices. Kings are satisfied by (giving) gifts and are pleased. The noble devout ones always perform sacrifices, after having asked for good (i.e. sumptuous) alms and (after) having come to their own places. O king, (then) it (i.e. the food) is divided into parts for (distributing it) as alms. These (men) with penance as their wealth, O you very intelligent one, give one part to a brāhmaṇa, and one to those who are very near. Due to the gift of that food men enjoy (its) fruit. Free from hunger and thirst, they go to Viṣṇu’s world.

30b-32. Therefore, O best king, you (should) also give the wealth earned justly. Having acquired knowledge from (having given) gifts, one will obtain perfection from (that) knowledge. That man who would listen to this meritorious and excellent account, will obtain all objects and all his sin melts away. Free from all sins, he goes to Viṣṇu’s heaven.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

*Good and Bad Deeds and the Fate of the Performer**Subāhu said :*

1. Please tell me by (performing) which deeds men go to hell after death, (and) by (performing) which deeds they go to heaven after death.

Jaimini said :

2-5. Those brāhmaṇas who give up (leading) a brāhmaṇa's life and deluded by greed live on bad deeds go to hell. Atheists, those who have violated the norms of (good conduct), those who are intent upon (satisfying) sexual pleasures, religious hypocrites, and who are ungrateful go to hell. Men who do not give wealth to brāhmaṇas after having promised them, and also those who take away a brāhmaṇa's wealth go to hell. Wicked men, those who insult others, who tell lies and talk irrelevantly go to hell.

6. Those who snatch away the wealth of others, those who indicate others' faults and those who are adulterers go to hell.

7. Those who are always engaged in harming the life of beings and those who are engaged in reviling others go to hell.

8. Those who break good wells, lakes, places of water for travellers, or ponds go to hell.

9. Those who become averse to their wives, children, servants and guests and those who have abolished worship of dead ancestors and deities go to hell.

10. O king, those who censure the fourth stage in the life of a brāhmaṇa, or who censure the stages of life or who censure their friends go to hell.

11-13. Those who do not meditate upon Viṣṇu, the first (supreme) being, and the ruler and great lord of all the worlds; those who spoil the (principal sacrificial ceremonies like) Prayāja, or sacrifices or virgins or harm their friends or good people or the elders go to hell. Those who block the way with logs of wood or pegs or deserted stones go to hell.

14. Those who have no trust in all beings, who are always struck by desire of sensual enjoyments and are crooked towards all beings go to hell.

15-16. Those who prohibit brāhmaṇas who are badly off and who have come (to them) for food, those men who cut off a sacred place, (somebody's) livelihood or house, or affection or hope go to hell.

17-20a. O king of kings, those who make weapons, lances and bows, and those who sell (these) go to hell. Those fools who do not show pity for a helpless or a frightened or a miserable person or one afflicted with disease or an old man, those who first take up vows and later not controlling their senses violate them through fickleness go to hell. O king, I have thus told you about those who go to hell.

20b-23. (Now) learn from me about them who go to heaven. Those men who follow religion with the practice of truth, penance, forgiveness, charity or study go to heaven. Those high-minded ones who are engrossed in sacrifices and exclusively devoted to worshipping deities and those who approve of (these) go to heaven. The pure men who, exclusively devoted to Viṣṇu, recite and sing (hymns about) Viṣṇu in a pure place go to heaven.

24. Those men who respectfully always serve their mother and father and avoid sleeping by day go to heaven.

25. Those men who are averse to all (kinds of) harm, who have the company of the good, who are engaged in the well-being of all go to heaven.

26. Those men who are free from (all kinds of) greed and who help all, who give refuge to all go to heaven.

27. Those men who give respect to their elders by means of service and penance and who are averse to accepting (any gift) go to heaven.

28. Those men who clothe (i.e. give garments to) thousands, similarly those who give (in or) to thousands, and those who protect thousands go to heaven.

29. Those men who free beings from fear, sin, suffering, grief and who free (from poverty and disease) those who are emaciated due to poverty and disease go to heaven.

30. O you born in the family of Bharata, those wise men who

possess similarity with Brahman, who, though being young, have conquered their senses go to heaven.

31. O you descendant of Bharata, those men who give gold, cows and land, and food and garments also go to heaven.

32. Those men who are delighted when implored, and who talk agreeable (words) after having given (what is asked for), and those who have given up the fruit of what is given go to heaven.

33. Those men who themselves produce houses, grains and heroes and present them (to others) go to heaven, O hero.

34. Those men who never speak about the faults even of their enemies and (on the contrary) describe their virtues go to heaven.

35. Those men who are not distressed through jealousy on seeing the wealth of others, but are delighted and congratulate (them) go to heaven.

36. Those noble men who conform to the norms laid down in the Veda and the scriptures while engaged in work or abstaining from work go to heaven.

37. Those men, who do not speak disagreeable words to people, (but, on the contrary) speak agreeable words only go to heaven.

38. Those men who (even though) oppressed with hunger, thirst and fatigue share (their grains etc.) with others and make offerings to guests go to heaven.

39. Those men who construct reservoirs of water, wells, and water booths for travellers, houses and gardens go to heaven.

40. Those men who are truthful (i.e. behave truthfully) with liars, who are straightforward with the crooked, who are friendly even with their enemies go to heaven.

41. Those men who, being born in whatever family, have many sons, live for a hundred years, are kind and of a good behaviour go to heaven.

42. Those men who always make their days religiously productive and who always take up a vow go to heaven.

43. Those men who with their minds tranquil and control-

led look with equanimity upon a person shouting abuses or praising them go to heaven.

44. Those men who protect fear-stricken brāhmaṇas, women or pilgrims go to heaven.

45. Those men who offer balls of rice to their dead ancestors at obsequial ceremonies or śrāddhas performed on the Ganges or at the holy place of Puṣkara or especially at Gayā go to heaven.

46. Those men who are not under the sway of their senses, who remain controlled, who have given up greed, fear and anger go to heaven.

47. Those men who protect like their own sons, insects like lice, bugs or gadflies that prick the body go to heaven.

48. Those men (though) not knowing (the procedure) collect (wealth) according to the rule as told (in the scriptures) and who put up with all the pairs (of opposites) (like pleasure and pain) go to heaven.

49. Those pure and good men who do not dally with others' wives physically, mentally or in speech go to heaven.

50. Those men who do not perform prohibited deeds but do only those that are enjoined (in the scriptures) and who know their inherent power go to heaven.

51-52. O king, I have thus accurately told you everything as to how misfortune or good fortune is obtained by means of deeds. A man who behaves unpleasantly with others goes to a fierce, very terrible hell. For a man who always behaves agreeably, salvation, causing pleasure, is not far away.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

Subāhu Eats His Own Flesh

Kuñjala said:

1. The king, having heard all the result of good and bad conduct as told by the sage at that time, said to the sage:

Subāhu said:

2. O best brāhmaṇa, that I (who am thus advised by you) will practise righteousness; I shall (do) meritorious (acts); O sage, I shall very much worship Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu), the source of the world.

3-6. The king would worship (i.e. worshipped) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) by performing sacrifices and muttering prayers. He, having performed a sacrifice, and having practised penance, and being endowed with all desired objects gladly and quickly reached Viṣṇu's heaven (along with the queen). Having gone there he did not (i.e. could not) see the lord of gods in that great world. Great hunger arose in them, and great thirst proceeded (i.e. they felt extremely hungry and thirsty) which very much troubled their soul. The king too oppressed by hunger and thirst along with his wife and full of great grief did not see Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

7-14. O best one, the king, along with his wife, was thus very much grieved, was perturbed and perplexed and was very much oppressed by hunger. That lord of the earth, speedily ran hither and thither. That king, with his entire body adorned with ornaments, decorated with garments and sandal (-paste applied to his body), with his body (looking) lovely on account of garlands of flowers, and with necklaces, earrings, and bracelets, and with his limbs (looking) elegant due to the lustre of jewels, moved. Thus, proceeding unhappily, being praised by bards, and full of sorrow and affliction he said (these) words to his wife: "O you very auspicious one, O you beautiful lady, being praised by the sages, I have, along with you, reached Viṣṇu's heaven in an aeroplane. Due to which act (of mine) great hunger springs (in me); and (even) after having reached Viṣṇu's world I have not seen (i.e. I have not been able to see) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). O good one, what (then) is the cause due to which I am not enjoying the great fruit (of my good deeds)? This unhappiness has arisen due to (my) own deeds." Having thus heard his words, she said to the king:

The wife said:

15-19a. O king, you have said the truth. There is no fruit

of good conduct, (though) the meritorious and noble brāhmaṇas declare in the Vedas, sacred texts and Purāṇas that a man merely by the utterance of the names of Viṣṇu, the holder of the good (i.e. powerful) disc, casts off his grief and affliction, and becomes free from all blemishes. You did propitiate the god, the holder of the conch, disc, and mace; but you did not give food to brāhmaṇas, as told by them. I understand that its fruit is that you have not seen (i.e. you could not see) Viṣṇu. O king, hunger is troubling me; thirst also would dry me up.

Kuñjala said:

19b-26a. Thus addressed by his wife, the king had his senses confounded due to anxiety. Then he saw a holy hermitage, which removed fatigue, which was crowded with divine trees, which looked beautiful with lakes, and with wells, pools and tanks full of holy water, which was crowded with swans and ducks and which looked charming with white lotuses. O son, the hermitage was splendid by the presence of philosopher-sages. (He saw) the hermitage, which was crowded with divine trees and which looked beautiful with herds of deer. It was abounding in various flowers; it was full of agreeable fragrance; it was crowded with brāhmaṇas and siddhas; it was full of the disciples of sages; it was adorned with hosts of gods; it looked beautiful with throngs of the clusters of plantain trees having abundant fruits. It was full of many kinds of trees and was endowed with all desired objects; it was always beautiful with sandal (trees) having pleasing fragrance and with fruits.

26b-33. That king Subāhu entered with his wife that very meritorious forest satisfying desires, which was thus full of merit and had the characteristics of austerity. There was the best sage Vāmadeva, the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, brightening all the directions like the sun, shining like the sun with very great lustre, sitting in a posture suited to profound and abstract meditation and covered with a cloth used at the time of profound and abstract meditation, and meditating upon Viṣṇu, the giver of enjoyments and salvation. Having seen that noble Vāmadeva, the best of the sages, he quickly went with his wife to him, and saluted him. Then Vāmadeva having seen the best king bent before him, having greeted the king accompanied by his

wife with blessings, seated the best Subāhu on an auspicious seat and the sage(thus) honoured the king that had arrived with his wife, with a seat etc., (honoured him) by giving him water for washing his feet and respectful offerings. Then the great devotee of Viṣṇu asked the king:

Vāmadeva said:

34-35a. O lord of kings, by means of my divine knowledge I know you to be knowing the Vaiṣṇava practices, to be a devotee of Viṣṇu and to be the best man, and to be the lord of Cola. You, the guileless one, have come here with your wife Tārksyā.

The king said :

35b-39a. I, the guileless one, have come here, and have reached the highest place of Viṣṇu. With great devotion I have propitiated Viṣṇu, the god of gods, the lord of the world, who is pleased with devotion. O father, why do I not see the lord of gods, the husband of Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī)? Hunger is troubling me, so also very poignant thirst (is troubling me), O father. Due to them we two (i.e. my wife and I) are not obtaining peace and are not at all having happiness. O best sage, this is the cause of my unhappiness. Do me a favour and be well disposed (and) tell me the cause (of this).

Vāmadeva said:

39b-51a. O lord of kings, you are always devoted to Śrīkṛṣṇa. With great devotion you have propitiated Viṣṇu by means of devoted service, by bathing (his idol) and by means of sandal, flowers etc. also. (But) you have not honoured the lord of the worlds with offerings of eatables and fruits. When you reached the tenth day (of the month, i.e. when the tenth day arrived) you have always done (this viz.) you have not given identical good food to brāhmaṇas. Having reached the eleventh day (i.e. when the eleventh day came), you did not take food. You did not give food to a brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu. Food always remains in the form of nectar on the earth. Especially you have never made a present of food. O king, herbs are of various kinds. Listen to them: (They are) bitter, pungent, astringent, sweet, sour and saline; there are condiments like Asafoetida, and they are of

various forms, O king. All herbs causing nourishment have sprung up from nectar. Food alone, after consecrating it with Vedic hymns, and accompanied by herbal sauces is given with an intention of dedicating it to gods in the form of Viṣṇu and the manes in the form of Viṣṇu, into the hand of a brāhmaṇa. Then after giving it to the guests one should feed his attendants. After that he himself eats the food resembling nectar. O king, he has no grief after death, but has happiness. O king, brāhmaṇas are manes, and gods have the form of kṣatriyas. O king, as a farmer always carries on good agriculture, in the same way a man should do agriculture in the field of the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. He should cleave it with the plough of his innate disposition and with the weapon of faith.

51b-54. Similarly intellect and penance are always looked upon as the bulls. His truthfulness, knowledge and prowess are the controller and his pure soul is the whip. He should give it up with salutations into the great field in the form of a brāhmaṇa, O king, as a farmer, engaged in an assiduous effort in farming, cleaves, dirt, in the same way, one who desires (to reach) Viṣṇu should propitiate (him). Similarly with good, meritorious words he should please brāhmaṇas also.

55-60. O king, as a farmer desiring to sow (seeds) when the cloud showers would sow (seeds), in the same way on a parvan day or at a holy place (a present) is given to a brāhmaṇa who is pleased. O great king, as a farmer enjoys the fruit of the seed sown by him, similarly a giver enjoys the fruit (of the gift given by him). He always becomes satisfied after death (i.e. in the next world) and here (i.e. in this world) (by giving a gift and) not in any other way. Brāhmaṇas are manes and gods are of the nature of fields; there is no doubt about this. So when presents are offered to them in a sacrifice, they certainly give fruits of that nature. There is no doubt about this. O king, sweet things would not spring from bitter ones; in the same way bitter things would not be produced from the ones that are known as sweet. One gets the fruit as one sows the seed. He who does not sow (seeds in) the field, does not get its fruit.

61-65. Similarly, O king, brāhmaṇas, gods and manes of the nature of a field, present the fruit of what is given. There is no doubt about it. O king, enjoy (the fruit of) your good or bad

deeds in the same manner as you have done them. That cannot be otherwise. Formerly you never gave with a good mind (i.e. sincerely) sweet food and drink. You yourself enjoyed good purified eatables, food, articles of food that are sucked and drinks and (other) articles of food; but you never gave these (to brāhmaṇas etc.). You nourished your own body with food resembling nectar. O great king, since you did (this), therefore hunger has been produced (in you).

66-72a. O king, (one's) deeds are the cause of (one's) happiness and unhappiness, (so also) of one's birth and death. O illustrious one, enjoy the fruit of those deeds. Formerly also noble souls reached heaven due to their deeds. After the exhaustion of (the fruit of) the deeds according to their destiny, they have again gone to (i.e. born on) the earth. Nala, Bhagīratha, so also Viśvāmitra and Yudhiṣṭhira obtained (i.e. reached) heaven by means of their deeds according to their destiny. The former deeds are destined to bear fruit; and due to them one would get happiness or unhappiness. O king, which lord (even) is able to resist it? Therefore, O greatest king, you had the affliction due to hunger and thirst, even though you have come to heaven. Therefore, (it is presumed that) your deeds were bad. If, O best king, you desire to satisfy your hunger, then go and eat your own body lying in the Ānanda forest. This your great queen also seems to be very much emaciated due to hunger.

Subāhu said :

72b-74a. O glorious one, how long have I to do that act along with my wife? (Please) tell me that. When will the grace of (Viṣṇu) be perceived? O best sage, which religious merit would be obtained by giving which gift? O you highly intelligent one, tell me that if you are pleased now.

Vāmadeva said :

74b-87a. O you very intelligent one, great happiness is obtained by the gift of food (and) of water. Mortals enjoy heaven and are not at all harassed by their sins. When men might not have given gifts (during their life-time), all (men) give gifts at the time of death. (Therefore) right from the first (a man) should

give food with water. He who would offer (these) eight (kinds of) gifts (like) a good umbrella, shoes, a good vessel for (storing) water, land, pure gold, does not feel hungry or thirsty etc. in heaven. O king, by giving food hunger does not oppress (the giver, since) he is satisfied. His thirst is not acute, (since) he is fully satisfied. O king, the giver by giving the gifts of sandals and an umbrella obtains shade, and by giving shoes he obtains a vehicle, O best king. Thus I am telling something else. O noble one, by giving the gift of land he would obtain all his desired objects. O great king, by giving a cow one would always prosper with desires (i.e. desired objects). The man enjoying all pleasures would live in heaven. There is no doubt that the giver (of a cow) becomes satisfied by giving a cow. He is free from diseases, is endowed with pleasures, is content, and possesses wealth. Due to the gift of gold he becomes (a man) of good complexion; there is no doubt about it. A man would become rich, handsome, heroic, and enjoyer of gems. He who gives sesamum seeds when the time of death has come, becomes the lord of all enjoyments and goes to Viṣṇu's world. Thus by special gifts great happiness is obtained. O lord of kings, when you were alive, you did not give a cow (or) land (or) food and water to a brāhmaṇa. You did not give (any of these objects) even at the time of death. Therefore hunger has arisen in you.

87b-88a. Thus I have told you the cause that arose due to your deeds. As a deed is done so it (i.e. its fruit) is enjoyed.

Subāhu said:

88b-90a. O best sage, how will my hunger be satiated? My body, parched up with it is extremely afflicted. O best brāhmaṇa, tell us too about our hunger and about the atonement for our terrible deeds, so that I shall have peace.

Vāmadeva said:

90b-93a. O best king, there is no other atonement than eating (your own bodies). Relying on your own exertions you will enjoy all the fruit of these deeds. O king, from here you should go (there) where your body fell, so also of your wife. There is no doubt about it. O king, both of you, you and your wife, should

eat up your own inexhaustible body. There is no doubt about this.

The king said:

93b-94a. O noble one, advise me about the measure (i.e. the length of) time as to how long I, with my wife, have to eat (up our own bodies).

Vāmadeva said:

94b-95. When you will hear the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva, destroying great sins, you will obtain meritorious salvation. O king, I have told you all this. Go and eat up (your own body).

96-113. Hearing (the words) like this, the king, along with his wife ate up the flesh of his own body. Everyday like that (i.e. as already told) the body again would become (i.e. became) full, O very intelligent one. O son, the king and the queen ate up (the flesh) of their (own bodies). As the king went on eating (his own) body, the two ladies laughed. I shall tell you about their temperament. With (Śraddhā) very chaste Prajñā laughed at the behaviour of the king. The imperishable Śraddhā (also) always laughed at him. Being urged by Prajñā, you did not give with reverence food to brāhmaṇas after dedicating it to Viṣṇu. In this way (the king) everyday ate up the flesh of his own body. His wife also ate up her own body with nectar-like taste. O you of a good vow, then at the end of a hundred years, he, remembering the great sage Vāmadeva, condemned himself. (He said to himself:) 'I never gave (food) to manes and deities and to brāhmaṇas. I did not give (food) to guests, especially to old ones. I did not, through pity, give (food) to the poor and the weak.' Thus condemning his deeds, he ate his own flesh. Then seeing Subāhu, along with his wife, eating (their) own flesh, the two ladies—Prajñā and Śraddhā laughed (at them). His pure soul laughed at the fruit of those deeds. (The soul said:) 'O you of a sinful heart, (even) due to my company and close contact, you did not give (gifts).' Prajñā also with the words, 'O king, where has the great folly, by which you were deluded, gone?' laughed (at him). (A man) is thrown into the ditch of darkness due to greed along with delusion. Having

fallen there, you threw me into a painful peril. O king, having left the path of giving gifts you went to the path of greed.' Being very much afflicted by hunger eat along with your wife (the flesh of your own body).' Thus that Prajñā laughed at that Subāhu accompanied by his wife. O son, this is the reason of their laughing. When, O you very wise one, the king was eating (the flesh), the two, viz. hunger and thirst being pained always begged of him and said: 'Give (us), give (us the flesh).' The two asked the lord of kings for food mixed with milk (or water). I have told you all that you had asked me. O you very intelligent one, what else I shall (i.e. should) narrate to you?

Vijvala said:

114. O father, tell me that hymn called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva, by (reciting) which the king would reach salvation—that highest place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Vāsudeva Hymn

Sūta said:

1-7. When the glorious Vijvala uttered these auspicious words, Kuñjala, the best among speakers, told him the auspicious hymn. The hymn in honour of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is recited after meditating upon and saluting Hṛṣikeśa, who destroys all sufferings and gives entire religious merit. The hymn is called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva; it gives all virtue; it is the gate to salvation; it is possessed of happiness; it gives peace; it enhances nourishment; it gives all desired objects; it gives knowledge and increases knowledge. (Kuñjala) manifested to Vijvala the hymn of Vāsudeva. (The hymn) is called Vāsudeva (-hymn); it is boundless and increases nourishment. Vijvala, the best among birds, having learned it from his father, started to go there (and) asked (the permission of) his father. The religious minded (Kuñjala) said to his son Vijvala who had decided to go, who

had mastered knowledge and who was intent upon obliging (others).

Kuñjala said:

8-9. O son, listen, since I know the great sin of the king, go from here and recite it when Subāhu is overhearing. The more he will hear the excellent hymn the more he will be full of (i.e. he will have) knowledge of Vāsudeva, due to his (i.e. Vāsudeva's) grace. Undoubtedly I have spoken very well.

10-12. Taking leave of his father, Vijvala of a quick pace, flew and then reached the auspicious Ānanda-forest. Resorting to the shade of a tree, he, full of joy, sat (there). Having (formerly) seen the king who had come in an aeroplane (he thought to himself:) 'When will king Subāhu come with his wife? When shall I free him from the sin by means of this hymn ?'

13-14. Just then the aeroplane reached there adorned with a number of small bells, filled with the sound of bells accompanied by lute and flute, full of the sound of gandharvas and having celestial nymphs, rich in all desired objects but without food and water.

15-19. King Subāhu was seated in that plane with his wife. With his wife Sutārکش्या, he got down from the aeroplane. When he took a sharp weapon and cut off the dead body, Vijvala called out to him: "O best among men, O you resembling gods, you are doing this act which (even) cruel men cannot do. O distinguished man, what is this adverse fate! Tell me the entire reason why you have commenced this evil, rash act, always condemned in the world and opposed to the Vedic practice."

20-24. Having heard these words of the noble Vijvala, the great king said (these) words to his wife: "O dear one, I, of evil acts, have been eating this for a hundred years. Nobody ever spoke like this as he is talking. O dear one, the heart of me who am being thus oppressed by hunger (has become) eager, and gone out; (now) there is peace in (my) heart. O you of a charming smile, when I have heard his words putting an end to my grief, great joy abides in my heart. Who is he? Can he be a gandharva or Indra? The words of sages would come true, since the sage formerly had said (like this)."

25-28a. Having heard these words of her dear (husband), the wife, who was devoted to her husband, then said to the king: "O Lord, you have spoken the truth. This is the greatest wonder. As you have (an idea) in your mind so do I have in my mind. Who is this who having taken up the form of a bird, asks (you) like a benefactor?" Having heard these words of his wife, the lord of the earth, joining the palms of his hands, said (these) words:

Subāhu said:

28b-31a. O you very intelligent lord, welcome to you who have taken up the form of a bird. Along with my wife I am, with (i.e. bowing) my head, saluting both your lotus-like feet. Let us have religious merit through your grace. Who are you that are in the form a bird, talking such good (words)? O best one, (the fruit of) whatever good or bad deed is done by the former body (in a former existence) is enjoyed here only.

31b-33a. Then he told him his account. He heard it (i.e. it was) as it was told by his father Kuñjala. "Tell me the account of you who are talking to me." Then the best bird said these words to Subāhu:

Vijvala said:

33b-36a. My father, Kuñjala by name, was born in the species of parrots. Among his sons, I am the third, Vijvala by name. O you of great arms, I am not a god, not a gandharva, nor am I a siddha. Everyday I am observing (your) very terrible deed. O great king, tell me now how long you will (continue to) do this deed full of violence?

Subāhu said:

36b-38a. When I shall hear the hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn which was formerly recited by the brāhmaṇas, then, O good man, I shall find my own course (to salvation). The sage, of a controlled mind, has said that then I shall be undoubtedly free from my sin.

Vijvala said:

38b-39. For you I asked my father. O best one, listen. I shall tell you the eternal (truth) that he told me: Om, of this hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn, Nārada is (the author); anuṣṭup is the metre. Omkāra is the (presiding) deity. I employ (myself) in repeating the prayers for the destruction of all sins and for accomplishing the four goals (of human life). The hymn is: “Om Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya (My salutation to the holy Vāsudeva).

40-51. I salute Praṇava (i.e. the sacred syllable ‘Om’) that is purifying, very meritorious, that knows the Vedas, that is the abode of the Vedas, the support of learning, and of existence. I salute the highest Praṇava, which is without an abode, which has no form, which is very bright and very glorious, which is qualityless (yet) connected with qualities. I salute (the Praṇava) that is very lovely, very energetic, that destroys great delusion, that fills all the world, and is beyond qualities. He coming into existence, shines everywhere, and increases prosperity. I salute Śiva (or auspicious) Praṇava that is fearless and connected with mendicants. I salute Praṇava that is the singer of Gāyatrī and Sāman, the song and the one to whom songs are dear; and that enjoys the singing of gandharvas. I salute that Omkāra, that is the thought, that is of the form of the Vedas, that remains in the sacrifice and that is affectionate towards the devotees, and that is the origin of the entire world. I salute that Praṇava (in the form of) Hari, which, manifesting itself in the form of a boat, is the emancipator of all beings drowning in the ocean of the worldly existence. I salute that auspicious Praṇava (or Praṇava in the form of Śiva), which, living in many ways in the same form in all the worlds, is the abode in the form of salvation. I salute (that Praṇava) which is subtle (nay), subtler, pure, qualityless, the principal quality, which is free from unrefined states, and which is the abode of the Vedas (or of which Vedas are the abode). I salute that Omkāra which is always free from the losses of gods and demons and (is full of) contentment; and which is being meditated upon by gods and meditating saints. I salute Praṇava, the lord, which is (all-)pervading, which is omniscient, which is the highest pure knowledge, which is Śiva (or pure), which has auspicious qualities, and which is tranquil. I salute (that Praṇava),

having entered whose illusion, gods and demons like Brahmā, do not find the very pure gate of salvation.

52-78. (My) salutation to that very lustrous, pure, Vāsudeva, the bulb of joy, of pure intelligence, and the lord of the demi-gods. I always seek the refuge of the lord, who is shining with the Pāñcajanya (conch), with the Sudarśana (disc) lustrous like the sun and with (his) mace and lotus. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva who is concealed by the Vedas, who is possessed of qualities and is the support of qualities and of the movable and the immovable, whose lustre is like that of fire and the sun. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the receptacle of hunger, pure and handsome, shining with joy and respect, reaching whom all the worlds (like those of) gods, live. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, bright and lustrous like the sun, who destroys with his own rays masses of darkness, who is always the object of worship. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who shines everywhere (and) causes drying up with his sunlike lustres and gives water, and who is the internal air of living beings. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, the god of gods, sustains, according to his will, all worlds and all kins, and acts like a boat in helping (beings) to cross (the ocean of the mundane existence). I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, full of the worlds, is always present (in bodies) of the mobile and the immobile, and digests (food) with the mouth of Svāhā, and is the cause of the host of gods. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the pleasant one and the giver of qualities in the world, who with all very good saps, nourishes, with pure lustre, foods. That (Vāsudeva), the cause of destruction, the refuge of all, full of everything and complete is present everywhere. He enjoys the objects of sense without the organs of sense. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. He then sustains, with his own form, the mobile and immobile worlds—his own forms. He is utterly perfect, full of knowledge and very pure. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. I seek the shelter of that Vāsudeva—the destroyer of the demons, the root (cause) of the destruction of misery, the tranquil, the highest, the huge one, full of power, reaching whom the gods become humble. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) happiness, the limit of happiness, the giver of happiness, the lord of gods, the ocean of knowledge, the protector of sages, the chief of gods, the prop of truth,

and practising the virtue of truth. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) of the form of the sacrificial requisites, who is of the nature of the highest truth, (who is) endowed with the cosmic power, the lord of Lakṣmī, (who is) fierce (yet) auspicious, (who) alone (is) knowledge, and (who is) the abode of the worlds. His bed is in the ocean. He sleeps on the huge hood of snake (i.e. Śeṣa). I everyday salute the holy couple of the lotus-like feet of that Vāsudeva. The two feet of the holy Vāsudeva are full of merit, confer happiness, are always being attended upon by the holy places, and they remove sins. I always salute the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāsudeva which resemble large red lotuses, have the good marks of lotuses, are fit for conquest, and are adorned with the prints of anklets. I always salute the holy feet of the holy Vāsudeva, which are always devoutly praised by gods, good siddhas, sages and lords of serpents. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, by bathing in the water of whose feet, sages, being purified and freed from sins and well-pleased, obtain salvation. There are always (present) holy places like the Ganges where the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu remains. Those with their bodies (stained) by fierce sins, sprinkled with the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. I always salute the two feet of that highest lord only. Men obtain the fruit of the holy Vājapeya (sacrifice) on having properly eaten the offering of eatables (done in honour) of the noble (Viṣṇu), the holder of the great disc; and they become endowed with all (desired) objects. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of hells, free from illusion, perfect and knowing (i.e. appreciating) virtues, by meditating upon whom men obtain a good course (i.e. salvation). With devotion I salute the good, excellent, sanctifying couple of the feet of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) who is saluted by hosts of sages, siddhas and bards, who is always worshipped by gods, who is the chief, first lord i.e. Brahmā in bringing about the creation of the universe, and who is the affectionate emancipator of him who has fallen into the great ocean of the worldly existence. I salute the extremely purifying couple of the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) that removed, with the auspicious glances, the sin of Bali, and who was seen singing the Sāmans in the sacrificial hall by hosts of gods and who, the only lord of the three worlds and eager to sing Sāmanas (was

seen) by the groups of gods. I salute that lord Vāmana, shining in the group of brāhmaṇas at the head of the sacrifice, adorned with Brahmanic glory, full of rays with bright divine lustre resembling a sapphire, and imploring for the good of gods, that good son of Vairocana (as:) 'Give me (the land covered by my) three steps.' I praise the matchless stride of the lord, the holder of the good disc, to see which (stride) in the orb of the sun, which covered the heaven in the interval between the setting of the moon and the sun, the groups of sages reached heaven, and became merged into his body—the big sheath of the universe."

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

God Viṣṇu Appears to Subāhu

Viṣṇu said:

1-5. The king, on hearing the hymn which was pure, very ancient, which removed sins, which was full of merit and auspicious, which was blessed, which contained good words, which was greatly fit to be muttered, became happy. His great thirst, along with his hunger, vanished. The lord of the earth became like a god. His wife also shone. Both of them, freed from the bondage of sin, became endowed with good form. That god, the holder of the auspicious conch, disc, lotus, mace and sword, surrounded by great gods, brāhmaṇas, great siddhas full of the devotion of Hari came to the king whose sins had vanished. The holy Nārada, Bhārgava, Vyāsa (came there). The son of Mṛkaṇḍa (also) came there. The sage Vālmiki, Viṣṇu's devotee, (so also) Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahmā, came there. The illustrious Garga, full of devotion for Viṣṇu, Jābāli and Raibhya, so also Kaśyapa, (all) dear to Viṣṇu, and best among the followers of Viṣṇu, came there with Viṣṇu.

6-8a. They (who were) meritorious and very blessed, (who were) free from sins, (who were) full of devotion for the lotus-like feet of Hari, stood there, surrounding Hari, and praised the king in various ways. All gods led by Fire, so also Brahmā and

*Hari** and very divine goddesses (came there). Good singers like the gandharva-king sang divinely, sweetly and charmingly. Sages praised him with very auspicious hymns from the Vedas and furnished with the most sublime truth.

8b-11. Seeing the lord, the king, god Viṣṇu spoke (these) charming words: "O king, ask for the desired boon; I shall grant it to you, since you have pleased me." The king, hearing the words of Viṣṇu, a blue lotus (in complexion), the destroyer of Mura, the lord holding the conch, disc, sword and mace, the highest lord accompanied by Lakṣmī and bright with gems, adorned with bracelets and necklaces, bright like the sun, well attended upon by gods, well adorned with ornaments like costly necklaces, (with his body) besmeared with very divine sandal (pastes), and talking in front of him, went down to the earth (i.e. prostrated before Viṣṇu) with great devotion.

12-16. The great king constantly saluted (Hari) with prostrations and with the words: "Victory to you. I am your slave, your servanta, always (standing) before you. I do not know either devotion or best manners. O Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), protect me, who have, along with my wife, sought your refuge. O Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), those men who are always engrossed in meditation upon you, are blessed. From here they, being extremely pure, and uttering (your names) Bhava, Mādhava, go to Vaikuṇṭha. Those men who carry on their head the pure water coming out (i.e. flowing from) your lotus-like feet, have (certainly) bathed in the water coming from all holy places. They go to the good abode of Hari. I do not have deep and abstract meditation. I do not have knowledge. I do not have any exertion. Due to (my) contact with what (kind of) religious merit are you granting me a boon?"

Hari said:

17-18. O king, there is no doubt that you are getting salvation because you heard from the pure and sinless Vijvala, the great sin-destroying (hymn) called Vāsudeva (-hymn). In my world enjoy divine pleasures according to your desire.

The king said:

19. O god, if I, a poor person, am to be granted a boon, then first give an excellent boon to Vijvala.

*Obviously a misprint. It should be Hara (god Śiva).

Hari said:

20-22. O king, Vijvala's father Kuñjala, adorned with knowledge, everyday recites the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva. With his sons and wife, he will go to my abode. He always mutters this hymn; (so) I shall give him (its) fruit.

When these auspicious words were said (by Viṣṇu), the king spoke to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O Keśava, make this very auspicious hymn fruitful."

Hari said:

23-30. O great king, when, in the Kṛtayuga, men will praise (me with this hymn), they will undoubtedly go to (i.e. obtain) salvation (just) at that moment. O best king, those men who would mutter this hymn (in honour) of Viṣṇu, leading to salvation, for just three months in Tretāyuga, for six months in Dvāparayuga, and for a year in Kaliyuga, go to heaven. A brāhmaṇa who mutters it thrice or once (a day), gets whatever is desired by him. A kṣatriya, adorned with wealth and grains, gets victory. A vaiśya will be rich; a śūdra will be happy. He who relates this to a man of an inferior tribe, becomes free from sin. The hearer never sees (i.e. goes to) a terrible hell; and due to the grace of my hymn he will have accomplished everything. The manes of him who will recite it (i.e. get it recited) by brāhmaṇas at the time of a śrāddha, will go to Viṣṇu's heaven after being satisfied. A brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya should mutter (this hymn) at the end of presenting libations to the manes of the dead ancestors. His manes, with their minds pleased, drink nectar.

31-36a. If a man devoutly mutters this at the time of offering oblations to gods in a sacrifice, no difficulties come up there (i.e. in the sacrifice), and he will accomplish everything. One should utter this hymn in a danger in a difficult place, or in danger from a fierce tiger, or when danger from thieves has come up. O great king, that (danger etc.) will be removed. There is no doubt about it. At other auspicious (times) or when a man has gone, to the gate of a royal palace he mutters (i.e. should mutter) the hymn called Vāsudeva (-hymn) for ten thousand times. Well-

bathed, free from anger and greed, with his mind controlled, a man should, with chastity, offer a sacrifice with sesamum-seeds, rice mixed with ghee of the measure of one-tenth (of them), after having worshipped Vāsudeva. Then men should offer a sacrifice to the hymn of praise.

36b. Like a good servant I never leave their side.

37-38a. When Kaliyuga has come (the recital) will give servitude to the hymn (i.e. the hymn will be a servant). It is (i.e.) should not be given to any one indiscriminately for fear of the violation of (the sacredness of) the Vedas. He will be rich with all his desired objects here (i.e. in this world) only.

38b-42a. O king, listen, I have made this hymn fruitful. It was fashioned (i.e. composed) by Brahmā. Formerly it was muttered by Rudra. He was free from (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Indra also was free from sin. So also were gods, sages, guhyas (a class of demigods), siddhas, and the immortal vidyādhara. The serpent-demons propitiated the hymn, and obtained the complete attainment as desired by them. The donor, who will mutter my hymn, will be meritorious and blessed here (i.e. in this world). No doubt should be raised in this matter. O best king, come to my abode with your wife.

42b-45. Hari supported the king with his hand. There (at that time) drums (were) sounded; gandharvas sang lovely songs. Best celestial nymphs danced. All gods and sages showered flowers. They praised him with hymns. Then the king, along with his wife, went to Viṣṇu. That Vijaya, with his mind delighted, saw him being praised by hosts of gods and siddhas. He, of a great prowess, came there where his father and mother were.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

*Vena Asks to Hear More about Kuñjala**Viṣṇu said:*

1-8a. (Vijvala's) father (Kuñjala) lived on a banyan tree on the beautiful bank of Narmadā. Vijvala too came there, and the very intelligent, religious-minded one narrated to his father the greatness of the hymn called Vāsudeva (-hymn). With a very much pleased mind he told him as to how Viṣṇu came there and gave him (i.e., Subāhu) an auspicious boon. Kuñjala also, having heard the account of that king, was full of great joy, and having embraced his son said: "O child, by narrating the very auspicious (hymn) of Vāsudeva (to the king) you have done a meritorious deed and an obligation to the noble king." Having thus spoken to his god-like son, having congratulated him with blessings, and having repeatedly praised him, he remained on the beautiful bank of the river, while Cyavana was beholding. O great king, I have told you all this account of those devotees of Viṣṇu. What else should I tell you ?

Vena said:

8b-12a. You have given me, through the vessel of a conch, nectar to drink. Therefore, which mortal on the earth will not have a strong desire to drink it? The knowledge about Viṣṇu is always the best drink here (i.e. on the earth). I am not satisfied when it is thus being narrated by you. O lord of gods, my strong desire to hear it increases. Through grace (i.e. be graceful and) tell me about the activities of Kuñjala. What did the noble one say to his fourth son? Please tell that to me in great detail.

The lord said:

12b-14. Listen, I shall tell you Kuñjala's account, so also Cyavana's account full of great religious merit. O best of men, this meritorious account destroys sins. The man who devoutly listens to it, would get the fruit of (having performed) a thousand sacrifices.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

*Kapiñjala's Narration**Sūta said:*

1-2. Viṣṇu, the god of gods, told the best king, the son of Aṅga, the very meritorious account that destroys sins. Listen, I shall narrate to you the meritorious account, and also the account of the noble Kuñjala.

Viṣṇu said:

3-4a. And the pious Kuñjala with joy called his fourth son Kapiñjala, and said to him: "O son, tell me what wonder you saw. O best son, to which (forest) did you go for your food from here? Tell me, O blessed one, what very meritorious (event) you have seen.

Kapiñjala said:

4b-24. O father, I shall narrate to you the wonder about which you have asked, which no one has seen or heard (before) and which I have not heard from any one. I shall tell it just now. O father, listen to it now. May all (my) brothers listen to it. O mother, you (too) listen to it now. The mountain Kailāsa is the best one. It is white like the moon. It is full of many minerals, and is adorned with various trees. O father, it is washed all round with the auspicious, pleasing water of the Ganges. O father, from which (i.e. from that mountain) thousands of divine rivers of various kinds have arisen. So also various kinds (of streams of) water (have arisen from it). On the great mountain there are thousands of lakes containing water. On the best mountain there are large rivers which are resorted to by swans and cranes, which give religious merit and which destroy sins. There are various thickets of trees full of flowers and fruits, and also full of various trees, green and auspicious. (The mountain) is full of the groups of kinnaras, and is crowded with the celestial nymphs. It is well-adorned with gandharvas, siddhas, bards and hosts of gods. It is possessed of the thickets of divine trees; is full of divine objects; it is very rich with the loveliness of divine fragrances. It is very

beautiful on account of the white slabs of crystal. O king, it is full of the sun's rays and possesses brilliance. Everywhere it is adorned with trees full of flowers like sandal trees of agreeable fragrance, bukula trees with blue flowers. It is pleasant due to the good (i.e. sweet) notes of divine birds. It is pleasant due to the humming of bees and multitudes of trees. That mountain, along with the forest, looks splendid by the notes of cuckoos. There is a Śiva-temple, crowded with crores of Śiva's attendants; with rays (the mountain) was white and was auspicious; it was having auspicious slabs of a heap of virtue. It was on all sides resounding with roaring lions, with buffaloes and elephants; so also with the loud trumpets of the quarter-elephants. It was crowded with various (kinds of) deer and with monkeys. In the caves it was resounding (i.e. its caves were resounding) with the loud notes of peacocks. It was adorned with caves, plasterings and ridges and summits. It was full of many streams. It shone with herbs. It was divine, of a divine merit, and full of auspicious sites. The great mountain, the heap of merit was resorted to by pulindas, bhillas and kolas. The lord of mountains shone with frightful peaks and with huts; pure, auspicious and meritorious pleasures and a great sound of the streams of the water of the Ganges spread about.

25-26a. There (i.e. on the mountain) is the abode of Śaṅkara. To (that) Kailāsa I had gone. There I saw a wonder which was never seen or heard of (before). O father, listen to all that will be said by me.

26b-30. From the auspicious, highly rising peak of the lord of mountains (like that of Meru), a snowy, milky and golden stream flows (down) on the ground; and O glorious one, this stream of the Ganges adorned with (i.e. flowing with) a thundering sound has speedily reached the peak of Kailāsa and has expanded there. There is a great pool of water (in the stream) of the Ganges of the measure of ten yojanas. It shines with much auspicious and pure water. It has received auspiciousness from all sides and greatly shines with large swans. (It is auspicious because of) auspicious, divine, sweet utterance of the sāmāns. The swans coo there, and by that (cooing) the lake looks splendid.

31-46. O you very intelligent one, on its bank on a slab of stone was seated Himālaya's daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) with her hair

let loose, and endowed with the wealth of beauty. She, well-endowed with a divine form, virtuous, of divine characteristics, and adorned with divine ornaments shone on its bank. I do not know whether she was the daughter of the lord of mountains (i.e. Pārvatī) or the daughter of the great ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī) or was Brahmā's wife (viz. Sarasvatī) or was Svāhā (the wife of Agni) or she was the illustrious Indrāṇī (i.e. the wife of Indra) or Rohiṇī (the spouse of the Moon). O father, by all means such wealth of beauty is not observed (in the case) of other very divine young females. Such marks of beauty, qualities and character (that) were noticed in her, so also her body deluding the universe which I saw were not to be seen (even) in the celestial nymphs. That young girl, seated on a slab and full of grief, and (being) without many kinsmen, wept very melodiously. She shed many pearllike tears. The pure tears fell into the lake, O very intelligent ones. The drops (i.e. the tears), resembling pearls, fell into that great (mass of) water. From them arose lotuses which were charming and fragrant. O highly intelligent one, from the tears (that fell) from her eyes, lotuses were produced. Those innumerable (lotuses) floated in the water of the Ganges. The very pleasant ones speedily fell into the stream of the Ganges, well-resorted to by multitudes of swans. The stream of the Ganges has flowed out from that place. Reaching the top of Kailāsa, called Ratna and having pleasant caves, it is full of water and has extended over a couple of yojanas. It was crowded with groups of swans and full of aquatic birds. There are lotuses of many special colours in the pure stream resorted to by groups of sages. The lotuses which were produced from the tears in the morning were large and fragrant and floated in the pure stream of the Ganges full of water, which time and again resounded with the (notes of) beautiful swans and aquatic birds.

Sūta said:

47-53. O father, the great lord (Śiva called Ratneśvara), very venerable to gods and demons, always remains on that mountain called Ratna. O father, there I saw a sage full of religious merit, covered with a mass of matted hair, without any clothes and holding a staff. He was without any support, (lived) without food, was very weak due to penance, emaciated, (just) a bundle

of bones, and covered with skin only. The limbs of the noble one were powdered with ashes only. He, of a great penance, with an improper support and seated in devotion to Śiva would eat dry and withered leaves fallen (there). Bringing those fragrant lotuses from the water of the Ganges, he, the noble one, skilled in singing and dancing, would worship the god of gods, Ratneśvara (with them). The religious-minded one, coming to the temple and remaining at the door of the enemy of Tripura, sang and danced, and also wept melodiously.

54-57. O father, O best of speakers, this is the wonder that I saw. Through favour (i.e. being favourable to me) tell me the reason if you know it. O noble one, who is that girl? Why would (i.e. does) that man worship the great god (i.e. Śiva)? Tell me all that in detail, which is the cause of (my) doubt." The very intelligent Kuñjala, who was thus addressed by his son Kapiñjala, spoke to him, while the sage was listening.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

Aśokasundarī Is Born

Kuñjala said:

1-3. O child, now I shall explain to you all that you said: as to what their splendour originated from, O you best twice-born. Once the great goddess Pārvatī, the best among women, while sporting, said (these) words to the lord: "O great god, in my mind a great longing has sprung up. To me (please) show a grove that is best among groves."

Śrī Mahādeva said:

4. Let it be so, O great goddess. I shall show you the Nandana, crowded with gods and resorted to by brāhmaṇas and siddhas.

5-11a. Having thus spoken to that goddess, he, Mahādeva, was eager to go to Nandanavana itself with her and the atten-

dants. He, surrounded by crores of attendants, mounted his bull (i.e. Nandī) who was beautiful in all limbs, whose back was divine, who was endowed with ornaments, who was furnished with bells and garlands, who wore multitudes of small bells, who was well-decorated with chowries, silken threads and pearl-necklaces, who resembled a swan and the moon and who had pleasing characteristics. Nandī, Bhṛṅgī, Mahākāla, Skanda, Caṇḍa, Manohara, Virabhadra, Gaṇeśa, Puṣpadanta, Maṇīśvara, Atibala, Subala, Meghanāda, Ghaṭāvaha, Ghaṇṭākarna, Kālinda, Pulinda, Virabāhuka, Keśarikiṅkara, Caṇḍahāsa, Prajāpati—these and others like Sanaka, whose power was penance, (accompanied him).

11b-12. That Śiva was (thus) surrounded by attendants numbering crores. Mahādeva, accompanied by the attendants and the goddess entered Nandanavana only which was resorted to by gods and kinnaras.

13-36a. The lord of gods showed Pārvatī that beautiful Nandanavana which was rich with various trees, full of many flowers, which was charming, which was crowded with plantain-trees, and with campaka trees with flowers, with jasmine-creepers having abundant flowers, and full of a number of mālatī creepers, which always shone with branches full of flowers, and with excellent groves of pāṭala-trees, and with great sandal trees of pleasant fragrance. It was full of groves of devadāru trees, and crowded with tall trees, with sarala trees, coconut trees, also with betel-nut trees, with divine date-trees, bread-fruit trees, bent down with the loads of fruits, with trees exuding fragrance—thus it was full of big trees. It was well-adorned with saptaparna trees, resembling the lustre of fire. It was full of great rose-apple trees, nimba trees, and citron trees, with orange trees, sindhuvāra trees, priyāla trees, śāla trees and tinduka trees, udumbara trees, wood-apple trees, and was adorned with rose-apple trees. It was full of trees like mango, the king of fruits, Indian fig-trees resembling clouds, divine groves of dark-blue, also with groves of trees with un-blown flowers. It was resorted to by (i.e. it contained) large tamāla trees resembling the sun. It was beautified by other trees all resembling dark-blue groves; it was adorned with very auspicious desire-yielding trees full of all desired fruits and giving auspicious fruits. It was full of sweet notes and cries of various

birds. It resounded with the auspicious cooings of cuckoos and with bees. It resounded with the notes of birds longing for honey. It was crowded with trees of many kinds and was full of many herds of deer. O son, that (piece of) land shines with various fragrant flowers fallen from trees it is; as it were worshipped with fragrant flowers. O son, there are very auspicious wells, pure with the fragrance of lotuses. They are full of water and are resorted to by swans and ducks. The great Nandana shines everywhere with lakes resembling seas and endowed with the fragrance of water, and with hosts of celestial nymphs. The lordly Nandana grove shines everywhere with halls, white pitchers, beautiful golden staffs, whitewashed palaces and with large hosts of kinnaras. That auspicious appearing Nandana shone everywhere with gandharvas, beautiful celestial nymphs, amusements of deities and with groups of sages and good meditating saints. Magnanimous Bhava (i.e. Śiva) of a great prowess along with that great goddess (Pārvatī) saw that glorious, auspicious Nandana, the abode of the meritorious, the mine of happiness and endowed with the quality of tranquility. In the Nandana grove also the beautiful desire-yielding tree endowed with desired flowers and fruits shone along with rays like masses of lustre of the sun. Seeing such lordly tree the goddess said to Śiva: "O lord, tell (me) the auspicious name of this all-meritorious tree". That Śiva, the great sun among all the luminaries around, said to the goddess:

Śiva said:

36b-39. The great position of this is known as auspicious; and Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the chief among gods. The divine river (i.e. the Ganges) is the chief among rivers. As the beautiful moon is the chief among those that are pleasant, as the earth is the chief among the elements, as the lord of elephants (i.e. Airāvata) is chief among elephants, as the ocean is the chief among reservoirs, as, O respectable lady, corn is the chief among herbs, as the Himālaya is the chief among the mountains, as metaphysical knowledge is the chief among lores, as the lord of men (i.e. a king) is the chief among all people, in the same way this lord of trees a welcome guest of all, is dear to the lord of gods.

Śrī Pārvatī said:

40-42. O Śambhu, tell me the auspicious and pure quality of this lord of trees.

Hearing the words of the goddess he told her everything about that good tree. (He said:) “This best tree called ‘Kalpa-druma’ gives to the very meritorious gods, those that resemble gods, and best gods, whatever they resolve. All auspicious objects are produced from this (tree). The very important gods, superior due to their penance, having obtained here only the very divine (object) full of gems, superior to life (even) which is difficult to get, enjoy it.”

43-49. The goddess heard the wonderful words of Śiva. With his consent she mentally conceived a very virtuous and beautiful gem of a body. The Daughter of the Mountain obtained from that great tree a woman who was (so) lovely in all limbs, virtuous and beautiful that she, helping Cupid, had come to delude the universe. She was the treasure of sport; she was of the form of the accomplishment of happiness; she was endowed with everything; she was having large and lotus-like eyes; her face was lotus-like; her hands resembled lotuses; she was beautiful Lakṣmī; she was like a good figure of gold; like that her hair was clean and very bright in splendour, pleasantly bright, very curly and long, was very delicately tied and was covered with fragrant flowers. That young lady, with her hair tied, looked splendid with the firm knots of hair and excellent form. As on the boundary-line of the trees the line of the muktā-flowers shines, similarly on the parting line of her hair, a chaplet of pearls shone. At the root of the parting of hair of the very respectable lady there was a mark, like the bright preceptor of the demons (i.e. Venus) that had risen. On the brows were two lotuses. The lotus-like navel like that of a deer shone with its mass of lustre. The brilliance of the mark at the root of parting of hair displayed the wealth of her beauty in the good world; so also the pearls on her hair and forehead always spread out beauty.

50-52a. As the beautiful moon shines with lustre, so she of charming movements, shone. As the full moon, the mass of cool rays, shines with the canopy of the moonlight, in the same way

her face causing charm and celebrated in the universe, shone. Even the moon is having the spot, and losing the digits⁷ everyday, wanes; but her face, always joyful and spotless, is always full.

52b-54a. The lotus, having looked with disapproval at its own fragrance (and thinking)—‘This lady with a lotus-like face and endowed with all virtues is fashioned with my properties’—did not then feel happy on seeing its own exuding fragrance. The wind (moving in) the world blew from her mouth. Being suddenly ashamed, it always remained in water after resorting to it.

54b-55. Some very intelligent people with their judgement restrained by their mind (i.e. after proper thought) said: ‘O good Cupid, as the treasure of a king is full of the bits (i.e. gems) of the sea, in the same way, her mouth, looking charming with the bimba-like lower lip and with the charming smile, is looking charming with gem-like excellent teeth.’

56-64a. She had good eyebrows, her nose fine, her ears were adorned with jewels. Her cheeks having golden complexion, were possessed of brightness. The three lines existing on the neck shone very much. Here (i.e. on the neck) there were three lines with (i.e. representing) her good fortune, good character and love. Her breasts were hard, plump and resembled a round figure. They were pitchers of Cupid intended for sprinkling (water from). Her even shoulders looked very beautiful, and were in company of the heart. Her arms were good; they were round, soft, of a good complexion and possessed good marks. Her lotus-like hands were very even, had the colour of lotuses and were very cool. They were endowed with divine characteristics and possessed the marks of a lotus and swastika on them. Her fingers were straight, held lotuses and had nails. The nails were very sharp and were like drops of water. The complexion of her body resembled the interior of a lotus. Her (body) odour was like that of a lotus. The beautiful young lady looked splendid like Lakṣmī. The daughter of the tree was endowed with all good characteristics and was very beautiful. Her feet resembled red lotuses, were very soft, and very beautiful. The nails growing from the toes had the shape of the flashes (shooting) from gems.

64b-66. (Everything) as is laid down in the scientific works

(about beauty) was seen in her limbs. Her body looked beautiful due to all ornaments. She had put on a necklace, bracelets and anklets. She shone with the belt and girdle and with the sound of the (tinkling bells) of the girdle. The auspicious one attained great beauty by means of blue silken garment. She, endowed with qualities, (looked very beautiful) due to a divine and a very red bodice.

67. From the idea conceived by her, Pārvatī obtained an excellence—a great production. She obtained joy from the desire-yielding tree. She said (these) words to Śaṅkara:

68. “O god, I saw the tree as you had described it. As an object is conceived, so it is seen.”

Sūta said:

69. Then that lady beautiful in all limbs came near their side (i.e. approached them) and with devotion saluted their lotus-like feet.

70. Then she spoke affectionate, pleasant and attractive words: “O lord, O mother, tell me the reason for which I was produced.”

Śrī Devī (i.e. Pārvatī) said:

71-74. Through curiosity about the truth about the tree I conceived you. O good lady, the fruit, i.e. you, the wealth of beauty is instantly obtained. You are undoubtedly my daughter endowed with all good fortune. You will be known in the world as Aśokasundarī. Nahuṣa, lord of kings, well known in the lunar family, like god Indra, will be your husband.

The mountain's Daughter (viz. Pārvatī), thus gave her a boon and went with great joy, accompanied by Śaṅkara, to the Kailāsa mountain.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDERED THREE

*Aśokasundarī Is Saved and Āyu Gets Boon**Kuñjala said:*

1-2. At that time Aśokasundarī was born as the best woman. She, of a charming smile, skilled in singing and dancing and enjoying all pleasures along with the very beautiful daughters of gods sported in the excellent, meritorious Nandana endowed with all desired objects.

3-4. Vipracitti's son Huṇḍa, who was always violent, impetuous and very lustful entered Nandana. After seeing Aśokasundarī, endowed with all ornaments, he was, at her sight, pierced by the arrows of Cupid.

5. He, of a huge body said to her: "O auspicious one, who are you? To whom do you belong? For what reason have you come to this excellent Nandana (garden)?"

Aśokasundarī said:

6. Now listen. I am the daughter of the very meritorious Śiva. I am the sister of Kārtikeya and the Mountain's Daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) is my mother.

7. Due to childhood (i.e. being a child) I have playfully reached the Nandana grove. Who are you? Why are you asking me like this ?

Huṇḍa said:

8-11. I am Vipracitti's son, endowed with good qualities and characteristics. I am well-known as Huṇḍa, haughty due to might and power. O you of a beautiful face, even among the demons I am the best, and there is no other demon like me among gods, in human worlds or in other worlds (like that) of serpents in respect of penance, glory in the family, or wealth and pleasures. O you of large eyes, on seeing you I have been struck by the arrows of Cupid. I have sought your refuge. Be pleased to favour me. Be my dear wife, dear to me like my own life.

Aśokasundarī said:

12-20. Listen, I shall tell you the cause of all contacts

between well-born men and women; so listen, O Huṇḍa, it is the way of the world in this mundane existence that the husband of a woman would be suitable to her in respect of virtues. There is a reason why I shall not be your worthy wife. O lord of the demon-kings, listen with a subdued mind. When I was born from the lord of trees, I was thought of by Pārvatī, after properly grasping Śiva's mind. With the god's consent, the goddess also produced my husband. He will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. He will be very intelligent and religious-minded. He will be a conqueror, and will resemble Jīṣṇu of (i.e. Viṣṇu or Arjuna) in valour, and will be like fire in brilliance. He will be omniscient, veracious, and will resemble Kubera in (point of) charity. He will be a sacrificer, a lord of charity (i.e. a great donor), and will be like Cupid in handsomeness. He will be named Nahuṣa, will be righteous and a great treasure of virtues and good character. He is given to me by the goddess (Pārvatī) and the god (Śiva). My husband will be famous. From him I shall obtain a handsome son, endowed with all good qualities. Due to the grace of Śiva, I shall obtain from him a son (named) Yayāti, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, and dear to people in the world, and brave in battle.

21. O brave Huṇḍa, I am a loyal wife, and am especially the wife of someone else. Therefore, completely give up the wrong notion and go (away) from here.

22a. He just laughed and said (these) word to Aśokasundarī.

Huṇḍa said:

22b-30a. What you said (that) the goddess and the god (have given Nahuṣa as your husband) is not proper. That righteous one, named Nahuṣa will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. You are senior in age, so he who is younger is not fit (to be your husband). A younger woman is commended (to be the wife), and not a younger man (to be the husband). O good lady, when will that man be your husband? Freshness and youth will certainly perish. O you of an excellent complexion, beautiful women always become dear to men on the strength of their youth. O you of a beautiful face, youth is the great capital of women. Supported by it they enjoy pleasure and objects as desired by

them. O good lady, when will that son of Āyu come to you? Listen to me. Youth exists just (for) today. It will be useless (later). Listen, he will have to pass through conditions [like living in the womb, childhood and adolescence. When will he be endowed with the splendour of youth and be fit for you? O you of large eyes, with the splendour of youth, drink an intoxicating drink. Enjoy happily with me.

30b-38. Hearing the words of Huṇḍa, Śiva's daughter, full of fright, again spoke to that lord of demons: "When the twentieth yuga called Dvāpara will come, the righteous Bala (i.e. Balarāma), the incarnation of Śeṣa and son of Vasudeva, will take the divine daughter of Revata as his wife. O illustrious one, she is already born in the best yuga called Kṛta. She is older than he by the measure of three yugas. That Revatī has become dear to Bala (rāma) like his own life. When the future Dvāpara (yuga) will come, she will be born here. Formerly she was born as Māyāvatī, an excellent daughter of a gandharva. The best demon Śambara kidnapped and confined her. In that yuga, the best hero Pradyumna, the son of Mādhava, the lord of Yādavas, is declared to be her husband. He will be her husband. This future (event) is seen by ancient illustrious and noble (sages) like Vyāsa. Such are the words uttered about me by the goddess, the mother of the world, and the daughter of Himālaya, at that time, O demon.

39-42. And you, covetous through greed and passion are talking (words) which are wicked, full of sin, and without (i.e. not supported by) the Vedas and religious treatises. Whatever, good or bad is firmly ordained in the case of a person according to his former deeds, takes place in his case. If the words (that are) in the mouth of gods and brāhmaṇas come out and are true, they shall never be otherwise. This is ordained due to my destiny, and that of that Nahuṣa. Having thought of the union (of us two) like this only the goddess and Śiva also said (like that).

43-44. Realising this, be calm and give up the wrong notion haunting your mind. O demon, you shall certainly not be able to lead away my mind. I am a loyal wife, firm in mind; who can lead me away? I shall burn you with a great curse. O great demon, go from here."

45-48. Hearing these words of her, the mighty demon Huṇḍa thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'How would this one be my wife?' Thinking like this, the deceitful Huṇḍa vanished. Then leaving her and speedily going out from that place, the next day he came there fashioning illusion full of sin. O my son, the demon having taken up a divine, illusive form of a woman, became of the form of (i.e. turned himself into) a lady through illusion. That very beautiful young lady took up an illusory form. Engaged in laughing and sports she went to that place, where Śiva's daughter (i.e. Aśokasundarī) stayed.

49-50. As if affectionate (towards her) she said (these) words to Aśokasundarī: "O you blessed one, who are you? To whom do you belong? O young lady, why do you stay in the penance-grove and practise the penance drying up your passion? Tell me, O very fortunate one, for what reason (you are practising the penance) very difficult to practice."

51-53. Hearing those auspicious words uttered by the demon of an illusory form who had concealed his original form and who had a longing (for her), that lady, who was very much afflicted, quickly told him the account of her creation as it had formerly taken place, and also all the reason for (taking up) the penance. (She) also (told him about) the harassment done by that wicked demon. She did not recognize his illusory form, and (so) through affection she told him (everything).

Huṇḍa said:

54-57a. O respectable lady, you are a loyal wife, you are engaged in good vows. Your character and behaviour are good, your actions are pious, and you are a very chaste lady. O good lady, I am a loyal wife, and am devoted to my husband. I, a great chaste woman, am practising penance for my husband. That wicked Huṇḍa also killed my husband. For his destruction I am practising great (i.e. severe) penance. Come to my holy hermitage. I stay on the bank of the Ganges.

57b-62. That daughter of Śiva was addressed by her (i.e., Huṇḍa) with other charming and convincing words, and Huṇḍa, through friendly feeling, deluded her. Deluded through folly she was very speedily attracted by him. He brought her to his divine,

matchless and very beautiful house. O son, on the peak of Meru there is an excellent city, known as Vaidūrya, full of all good qualities, very auspicious and named Kāñcana. The entire city of the demon was thronged with tall palaces, with pitchers, staffs and chowries. It was full of dark-blue groves resembling clouds, and full of various trees, also with wells, pools and lakes and with rivers and reservoirs. It shone with great jewels and with ramparts furnished with gold, and rich in objects satisfying all desires.

63. That Aśokasundarī then saw that beautiful city. “O friend, tell me to which deity this place belongs.”

64-65a. He said: “It belongs to that lord of demons whom you have seen before. It is the place of that demon. O illustrious one, I am that best demon. O you of an excellent complexion, through illusion (i.e. by deceiving you) I have brought you (here).

65b-67. (Thus) speaking to her he took her to his golden palace, full of many mansions, and resembling the peak of Kailāsa. He, oppressed by passion, seated that beautiful lady on a swing, took up his original form, and then the lord of the demons, afflicted by the arrows of Cupid, joined the palms of his hands, and said (these) words to her:

68-70. “O good lady, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire. Resort to me who, being oppressed by passion, am attached to you, O you of large eyes.

The respectable lady (i.e. Aśokasundarī) said:

O lord of demons, you cannot at all lead me astray. Do not even entertain in your mind the delusion about me that has come (to you). I am difficult to be secured by mean demons who are great sinners. There is no doubt about this. Do not talk (like this) again and again.

71-72a. That goddess, born after (i.e. younger sister of) Skanda, endowed with penance, burning with great rage, desiring to destroy that demon, and throbbing like the tongue of Death again spoke to that mean demon:

72b-79a. “O sinner, you have done a fierce deed for (i.e. leading to) the destruction of yourself, for (i.e. bringing about) the

destruction of your family and these your kinsmen. You have brought a burning, bright flame of fire to your house. As an inauspicious, deceitful bird, risen with all (kinds of) misery, brings about the destruction of the house of one whose house it enters, as that bird would desire the destruction of (the man's) kinsmen, all wealth and family also and (then) enter (the man's) house, in the same way, I, desiring your destruction, have come to your house. Undoubtedly I shall now destroy everything belonging to you—your wealth, grain, family, life, sons and grandsons etc. O demon, since you brought me who was practising a great (i.e. severe) penance, and who, longing for a husband, was desiring (to marry) Āyu's son, Nahuṣa, my husband will destroy you.

79b-88. Formerly (only) the god had (fore) seen this remedy in my case. This popular verse, (which) the wise sing, is true. It is actually observed in the world; the wicked-minded do not realize it. There is no doubt that one who is to experience pain, pleasure etc. from one does experience it from that very person. You will go to (man). With one's finger-tip one touches a very sharp, fine-edged, good sword. Now know (that touching) me like that would cause anger (in me). Who, being rash and going to a lion who is angry and roaring loudly, would clip the hair from his face? He, who longs for death, desires to enjoy me, who am of a truthful conduct, restrained and remaining in (i.e. practising) penance. He, now, since he is prompted by Death, desires to seize the gem of a black, living cobra; and you, deluded by Death, are sent by Death, O fool. Therefore such wicked thought is produced (in your mind). Do you not realise it? Except the son of Āyu, who looks (i.e. would look at me)? Any other (man than Āyu's son) will die by looking at my form."

89-92. She, who was a chaste lady, who was grieved, who was disturbed with distress, who was controlled, and was observing a religious vow, spoke like this and went to the bank of the Ganges. "Formerly, I, who had practised a severe penance with a desire for (obtaining) a groom, will again, desiring your destruction, practise a hard penance. I shall then go to my husband, when I shall see you, killed by the magnanimous

Nahuṣa with sharp arrows like thunderbolt and resembling serpents, (and see you) the sinner, fallen on the battlefield, with your hair loose, and with blood (oozing from your body).”

93-94. Having made such a great vow for the destruction of Huṇḍa, that firm daughter of Śiva resorted to the excellent bank of the Ganges. As bright, burning flame of fire, full of brilliance would burn the great worlds, the daughter of the lord of gods, burning with rage, practised, on the bank of Ganges, a penance difficult to practise.

Kuñjala said;

95-96. O noble one, having thus spoken, Śiva's daughter, having bathed in the water of the Ganges, went to her own city, called Kāñcana. That young Aśokasundarī, of a slim body, and endowed with truthfulness, practised penance to bring about the death of Huṇḍa.

97-98. Huṇḍa also, with his heart burnt by the curse became afflicted, and, being very much tormented by the fire of words, thought. Having called his minister named Kampana, he said to him. He told him the important news of her curse:

99-100. “I have been cursed by Aśokasundarī, the good daughter of Śiva: ‘You will die at the hands of my husband, Nahuṣa.’ That child is not (as yet) born; but Āyu's wife is carrying. Act in such a way that the curse would be false.”

Kampana said:

101-104. Having kidnapped the wife of Āyu bring her (here). In this way your enemy will not be born. Or, with strong (medicines) cause her abortion. In this way also your enemy will not be born. Mark the time of the birth of that wicked Nahuṣa. Having carried him away, bring him (here) and kill him of a sinful mind.

Having thus held consultation with that Kampana, the demon (Huṇḍa) exerted himself to destroy Nahuṣa.

Viṣṇu said:

105-108. The glorious, righteous son of Aila, named Āyu,

the ornament of the Soma family, the best king and the sovereign emperor knowing all practices, engaged in the vow of truthfulness, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, ruled under one umbrella (i.e. ruled as the universal sovereign) by means of penance, glory, might, charity, sacrifices, meritorious acts and restraint on the earth. The king (Āyu) did not have a son. So he was unhappy. The righteous one thought: 'How can a son be born to me (i.e. How can I have a son)?'

109. Āyu, the lord of the earth, entertained such a thought. Being composed, he made a great effort for getting a son.

110-113. Atri's son Dattātreya, the high-souled brāhmaṇa, the great sage, with his eyes red due to (having drunk) spirituous liquor, was sporting with a woman. The virtuous one, intoxicated by wine, having seated a young, auspicious woman, best of all women, on his lap, sang, danced and heavily drank liquor. The best among the great meditating saints, the best sage, (who was) without a sacred thread, (and) with his body smeared with sandal and aloe wood paste, shone with divine garlands of flowers and appendages of pearl-necklaces.

114-118. The king, having gone to his hermitage, and seeing the best brāhmaṇa and being well-composed saluted him with his head (bent down), and falling prostrate before him. That pious son of Atri having seen that best king who had come before him with devotion, resorted to meditation. O best one, the king passed a hundred years like this. Having called him who was steady and calm and greatly devoted, he said these (words): "O king, why do you torment yourself? I am void of brāhmaṇic practices. I never had brāhmaṇahood. I am greedy of wine and flesh, and always attached to women. I do not have power to give a boon. (Please) serve (some) other brāhmaṇa."

Āyu said:

119-123. O glorious one, there is no other best brāhmaṇa like you, who grants all desired objects and are the greatest lord in the three worlds. O you illustrious one, you are Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered one, the highest lord, (born) in the family of Atri in the form of a brāhmaṇa. O chief of the lords of gods, O highest lord, I salute you. O you who are affectionate to those

who submit themselves to you, I have sought your refuge. O Hṛṣīkeśa, emancipate me. You stay (i.e. take pleasure in) causing illusion. I know you to be one who knows the beings living in the universe, who is the chief of the universe, who is the lord of the world and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. O Govinda, O you of a universal form, protect me only. My salutation to you.

Kuñjala said:

124-128. When a long time of many days passed, Dattātreya, in an intoxicated condition, said to the best king: “Do as I tell you. Give me wine in a cup; and the meal of flesh that is got cooked.” Hearing those words of him, that Āyu, the lord of the earth, being eager, speedily got wine in a cup, and quickly cut off well-cooked flesh with his hand, and, O best one, the best king gave these to Dattātreya. That best sage became happy in mind. Seeing (Āyu’s) devotion, prowess and great service to the preceptor, he spoke to that humble Āyu, the lord of kings:

129. “Well-being to you, O king, ask for a boon that is difficult to be obtained on the earth. I shall now give you everything that you desire.”

The king said:

130-135. O best sage, through pity for me you are truly granting (me) a boon. Give me a son endowed with virtues, omniscient, possessed of good qualities, having the might of gods, and unconquerable by gods and demons, kṣatriyas, giants, fierce demons and kinnaras. (He should be) devoted to gods and brāhmaṇas, and (he should) especially look after his subjects. (He should be) sacrificer, lord of charity (i.e. the best donor), brave, affectionate to those who seek his refuge, a donor, an enjoyer, magnanimous and learned in Vedas and sacred treatises, skilled in Dhanurveda (i.e. archery), and well-versed in sacred precepts. His intellect (should be) unbeaten; he (should be) brave and undefeated in battles. He should possess such qualities, be handsome and one from whom the race would come forth. O illustrious one, give me (such) a son sustaining my family, if you, through grace, want to give me another boon, O lord.

Dattātreyā said:

136-138. Let it be so, O glorious one. You will have a son, in your mansion, who will be meritorious, will perpetuate your race and show compassion to all living beings. He will be endowed with these virtues, and with a portion of Viṣṇu. He, the lord of men, will be a sovereign emperor, comparable to Indra.

Having thus given him a boon, the great meditating saint gave the king an excellent fruit and said to him: “Give this to your wife.” Saying so, and dismissing that Āyu, who had bent before him, after having congratulated him with blessings, he disappeared.”

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Indumatī's Dream

Kuñjala said:

1-4. When that illustrious great sage Dattātreyā had left, that great king Āyu came(back) to his own city. Being delighted, he entered Indumatī's house endowed with glory, rich with all desired objects and resembling Indra's house. O best brāhmaṇa, like Indra in heaven, the intelligent one ruled with Indumatī, the daughter of Svarbhānu, over his kingdom. By the words of Dattātreyā, that queen Indumatī conceived a child endowed with divine lustre as a result of eating the fruit.

5-14. O illustrious one, Indumatī saw, at night accompanied by day (i.e. in the early morning), an excellent dream giving many auspicious objects. (She saw in the dream) a man, who was a brāhmaṇa, resembling the sun, endowed with necklace of pearls, and adorned with a white garment, entering her house. A garland fashioned with white flowers shone round his neck. His body looked charming with all ornaments, and was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste). He had four hands, he had a conch in his hand, and held a mace, a disc and a sword. He, of a great lustre, adorned with divine ornaments, shone with an umbrella,

resembling the orb of the moon, which was held (over him). He appeared handsome with a necklace, bracelets, armlets and anklets. He (also) shone with ear-rings resembling the orb of the moon. A very wise man like this came (there). Having called Indumatī, he repeatedly bathed the beautiful lady with milk, with (i.e. from) a conch full of milk and having the colour like that of the moon and decked with gems and gold. He threw (i.e. put) into her mouth a white, beautiful snake, covered with a thousand hoods, endowed with a gem and full of bright flames. On her neck he also put a pearl. That very glorious lord of gods then gave a lotus into Indumatī's hand and went to his own place.

15. Like this she saw a great dream and the best son. The illustrious one narrated it to Āyu, the lord of kings.

16-17a. Having heard it, the great king thought again. Then having called his preceptor Śaunaka, the very glorious, omniscient and best among the learned, narrated the best dream to him.

The king said :

17b-18a. O illustrious one, O best brāhmaṇa, today, (late) in the night, my wife saw (in a dream) a brāhmaṇa entering the house. What is the meaning of this dream ?

Śaunaka said :

18b-23. Formerly intelligent Dattātreyā gave you a boon; and directed (you to give) a very effective fruit to the queen for (obtaining) a son. What have you done with the fruit, O king ? To whom have you given it ?

Having heard the words uttered by the king, viz. "I have given it to my good wife," the very intelligent, best brāhmaṇa Śaunaka said: "There is no doubt that, due to Dattātreyā's grace, the best son, possessed of a portion of Viṣṇu will be born in your house. O king, I have told you this meaning of the dream. A son of a divine power, and resembling Indra and Viṣṇu will be born (in your house). Your son will be the soul of all good practices and will perpetuate the lunar dynasty. He will be proficient in the science of archery and the (Ṛg-) Veda (etc.)."

24. Having spoken thus to the king, Śaunaka went home. The king, with his wife, was full of great joy.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

*Nahuṣa is Born**Kuñjala said :*

1-3a. With her friends she went to Nandana garden to sport (there). There she heard significant words, not wholesome to her father, of the bards and siddhas talking delightfully, viz. 'In the house of Āyu, the best son, of great might, resembling Viṣṇu in valour will be born; he will kill Huṇḍa'.

3b-4. Having heard such significant, unwholesome, painful words, she went (to her father) and told the painful words to her father in brief.

5-14. She narrated them to her father. The father, hearing them, was amazed. He remembered the curse of Aśokasundarī, given by her formerly. For this that Aśokasundarī practised penance. That demon who is wicked, who is dragged by Death, who is sinful, looking out for a flaw, always exerted to destroy the embryo of Indumatī. O noble one, when he saw the queen endowed with beauty and generosity, possessed of divine lustre, protected by Viṣṇu's lustre, having divine brilliance and resembling the sun's orb, he always remained by her side to watch her. From a distance the wicked demon showed her many spells and very fearful terrors and scares. She, endowed with the lustre of the child in the womb, was (thus) protected by Viṣṇu's lustre. Never again fear arose in her mind. The demon became ineffectual, and his exertion was useless. The desired object of the wicked Huṇḍa never came about. A hundred years thus passed while he was watching. That daughter of Svarbhānu gave birth to a son. At night only a son was born to her, O best son. Like the sun in the sky he very much shone with brilliance.

Sūta said :

15-18a. There was a very wicked maid in the lying-in-chamber. She was of a wicked behaviour and talked very inauspicious words. Knowing everything about her the mean demon Huṇḍa entered her body and then got into the house of Āyu. When the multitude of men, very much deluded by sleep, was asleep, he kidnapped that son, resembling a child of a god, and

went out. The mean demon reached his own city called Kāñcana.

18b-20. Having called his wife Vipulā, he said (these) words to her : “Kill this very sinful child, my enemy. Then hand it over to the cook for (cooking) a meal. Get it carefully cooked in many kinds and varieties. Later I shall undoubtedly eat it from the hand of (i.e. served by) the cook.”

21-22. Having heard (these) words of her husband, Vipulā was wonderstruck. ‘Why does my very rough husband become so cruel ? Whose boy, endowed with all good marks, and resembling a god’s child, should he, bereft of forgiveness and full of cruelty, eat, and for what reason ?’

23-24. She, full of pity, thought like this, she again asked her husband, “Why do you (want to) eat the boy ? Why do you become so much angry and shameless ? O lord of demons, tell me in truth the entire motive.”

25-27. That wicked Huṇḍa told her in brief his own fault, the account, and (about) the curse of Aśokasundarī. She understood the full motive of the demon. ‘This boy must be killed, otherwise my husband will die’. Thinking like this, Vipulā, overcome with anger, called her female-attendant Mekalā, and said to her :

28-33. “Mekalā, today kill this very wicked child in the kitchen; (and) hand it over to the cook, (to cook it) for the meal of Huṇḍa”. Mekalā took the child, and calling the cook, said to him : “Obey the order of the king. Today cook this child.” The noble cook heard like this and taking the child in his hand became ready, raising a weapon (to kill the child). This child, the son of Āyu, was protected by the lustre of Dattātreya, the god of gods. He again and again laughed. Seeing him laughing the cook was full of compassion. The female attendant also was full of pity and said to the cook : “O you very intelligent cook, do not at all kill this child. In whose good family is he, endowed with divine marks, born ?”

The cook said :

34-42a. O you good one, you have spoken the truth, full of pity. Whose is this child, endowed with royal marks ? Why will that wicked-minded, mean demon, Huṇḍa eat him ? He, who

has protected his family by means of good deeds in calamities, would live even in difficult (circumstances). This cannot be otherwise. He who is assisted by his deeds would undoubtedly live even if he is carried by the force (of the stream) of a great river or even if he has been in fire. Therefore, deeds united with piety and merit are performed. Due to that men having a long life, call it happiness. (One's) deed is one's savior and guardian. It protects and is awake. It always gives salvation and an occasion for friendship. There is no doubt that a deed always protects him only, who does a propitious deed connected with charity and merit, accompanied by agreeable words, and full of obligation. Urged by his own deed he goes to (i.e. is born in) another stock. What can a father do or what can a mother or other kinsmen and relatives do? They cannot protect him who is struck down by his deed.

Sūta said ;

42b-48a. By that deed only, by which the son of Āyu was protected, the cook, being under the influence of fate, became full of pity. Urged by his deed that female attendant also became like that. Both of them protected Āyu's son of good marks. That female servant of meritorious deeds took him from that house to Vasiṣṭha's holy hermitage that night only. Placing the excellent child (there), she then went (back) to her house. Having killed a black antelope the cook cooked (its) flesh. The lord of demons, Huṇḍa, after eating deemed the curse of Aśokasundarī to be fruitless. That lord of demons, Huṇḍa, was then full of great joy.

Kuñjala said :

48b-54. When it was the bright morning, the best religious-minded sage, Vasiṣṭha, went out of the door of his hut made of leaves, and seeing the whole, beautiful child, endowed with divine marks, like the full moon, and of charming eyes,

Vasiṣṭha said :

All you sages should come and see the child. Whose (child) is it? Who brought it to the courtyard at my door at night ?

The sages may see the child, resembling a child of a god or of a gandharva, and resembling crores of Cupids.

All those best brāhmaṇas full of great curiosity and delighted, saw that son of that noble Āyu. That pious Vasiṣṭha, seeing the son of the noble Āyu, knew through his (supernatural) knowledge, the boy to be the son of the magnanimous Āyu, and endowed with (good) conduct and also knew the account of that wicked and evil-minded Huṇḍa.

55-60a. When that best brāhmaṇa, Brahmā's son, picked up the boy with his hands through pity (for him), gods showered flowers on the boy. Gandharvas and kinnaras sang charmingly and melodiously. Sages praised that king's son with Vedic hymns. Seeing him, Vasiṣṭha granted him a boon at that time. "Your name will be famous in the world as Nahuṣa. Due to your childlike feelings, you were not destroyed by him. Therefore your name will be Nahuṣa, and you will be honoured¹ by gods." The best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) performed the ceremony at his birth, and taught him vows, charity and sent him away as a pupil to the teacher.

60b-64. Having fully studied as a student the Vedas with the six limbs and with the pada and krama² (ways of reciting them), having studied all the sacred books from Vasiṣṭha, the best brāhmaṇa, archery with its secrets, and (the use of) divine weapons and missiles, along with the manner in which they are held and released, and the excellences like various branches of knowledge, science of logic, politics that handsome and devoted son of Āyu thus became fully accomplished. Due to the grace of Vasiṣṭha, he became the holder of (i.e. skilful in using) a bow and arrows.

1. Huṣita—The word is not clear.

2. Padakrama—*Pada* is the detachment of the Vedic words from one another and *Krama* is the particular manner of reciting Vedic text.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

Indumati's Lamentations on the Loss of Her Child

Kuñjala said :

1-2. The glorious wife of Āyu, Svarbhānu's daughter of an excellent complexion, not seeing that excellent, matchless child, resembling a god, wept, making a loud wailing : "Who has taken away my son of excellent marks, endowed with good characteristics.

3-4. I had obtained the son by penance, charity, sacrifices, and vows difficult to practise, and with hard efforts. Who has kidnapped the son given to me by the magnanimous, pious Dattātraya, (after) being pleased." (Thus) she wept piteously.

5-9. "O son, O child, O dear child, O habitation of virtues, where are you ? Who has taken you away? Talk to me. You are undoubtedly the ornament of the entire lunar dynasty. Who has taken you away, you united with my life ? Who has today kidnapped my son, full of divine, good marks of a king and having lotus-like eyes ? What shall I do ? Where shall I go ? I distinctly know the deed I did in the previous existence: I (must) have repudiated a deposit; therefore my son is kidnapped. Or did I, a sinner, cheat someone in the former existence ? I am suffering a calamity due to that deed only, and not otherwise (i.e. not due to anything else).

10. I had become the snatcher of a gem. (Therefore) the gem in the form of my divine son, the mine of matchless virtues, is snatched away by destiny.

11. Or did I argue with a brāhmaṇa ? (And) is it the fruit, attended by the great grief for my son, of that act, that I have undoubtedly got ?

12. Or did I obstruct a child in my previous existence? Am I getting such a fruit of that sinful deed?

13. Or did I not give the food before the rite of the offering of food to all gods accompanied by the (seven) sacred utterances, to one who had asked for it ?"

14-15. Thus, O noble one, Svarbhānu's daughter Indumati full of tenderness due to grief, being perturbed and heaving sighs like a cow bereft of her calf, fainted.

16. That king Āyu (also) was full of great grief and sorrow. Hearing that the boy was kidnapped the king gave up courage.

17. 'There is certainly no fruit of penance, nor is there the fruit of giving gifts, since my son has been thus kidnapped.

18-19. Through grace, Dattātreyā formerly gave me a boon (in the form) of an unconquerable son, endowed with success and all virtues. How is that grant of boon impeded ?' Engrossed in thought like these, the king who was distressed, wept very much.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Nārada Assures of Nahuṣa's Return

Kuñjala said :

1-2. Then that Nārada came from heaven to king Āyu. Having come he said to him : "O king, why are you bewailing? O great king, O very intelligent one, knowing that the kidnapping of your son is beneficial to gods and others, do not bewail.

3-4. Being omniscient, virtuous, and equipped with all worldly knowledge, and full of (i.e. endowed with) all arts, your son wilt come (back). O great king, he who has taken away the boy, having virtues like those of a god, to his house, has certainly taken Death.

5. He, of a great valour and might, will bring about his end. O king, along with Śiṣya's daughter he will come to you.

6. Due to his own lustre the son will be like Indra and Viṣṇu. Due to his righteous acts he will enjoy the position of Indra."

7. Speaking like this to king Āyu that best divine sage suddenly left as the king with his servants was seeing.

8. When that holy Nārada, resembling a god, had gone, Āyu came to that queen and told her all that (Nārada had said).

9-15. (He said :) "O queen, due to Viṣṇu's grace, Dattātreyā gave you, the auspicious one, a son, (like) the best god. O

you of an excellent face (i.e. O you beautiful one), my virtuous son will again come back, taking (with him) the head of that one who has kidnapped him. Nārada told (me) like this. O good one, do not grieve; and give up this great delusion of your mind which destroys the (fruit of the) good works that ought to be done.” Hearing the words of her husband, queen Indumatī, was full of joy (due) to the (assurance of the) coming of her son. ‘It shall be as is told by the divine sage. Dattātreyā has given me the son, who will be ageless and immortal. There is no doubt about it. It appears to me like this about him.’ Thinking like this, she saluted the best brāhmaṇa. “My salutation to that noble son of Atri, the giver of great prosperity, by whose grace I obtained a very wise, very virtuous and very meritorious son.”

16. Speaking like this, that respectable lady, who was very much afflicted, knowing that son Nahuṣa would come back, ceased (speaking).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

Vasiṣṭha's Instruction to Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said :

1. Brahmā's son Vasiṣṭha, of great lustre and the best among the speakers, called that Nahuṣa and spoke these words (to him).

2. “Quickly go to the forest, and bring many sylvan products.” Hearing the words of the sage, Nahuṣa came (i.e. went) to the forest.

3-4. There that mighty Nahuṣa heard some good (i.e. agreeable) account : “This is that pious and mighty Nahuṣa, the very wise son of Āyu, separated from his mother (right) from his childhood. Due to a great (i.e. painful) separation from him, the wife of Āyu is weeping.

5. Aśokasundarī practised a very difficult penance. When will that virtuous queen Indumatī see her son named Nahuṣa,

conversant with the practice of righteousness, and formerly kidnapped by the demons ?

6-7. For the sake of Āyu's son the excellent, young daughter of Śiva i.e. Aśokasundarī practised, all alone, penance. When will she be united with this one (i.e. Nahuṣa) ?”

8-13. That pious Nahuṣa, full of doubt, heard such worldly words uttered by bards in the sky. Having taken sylvan products, having gone to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, having presented the sylvan products to pious Vasiṣṭha, and having joined the palms of his hands and with his neck devoutly bent down, he said to that wise Vasiṣṭha, the best among the ascetics : “Revered sir, listen to the words formerly uttered by a spy : ‘This is Āyu's son, named Nahuṣa, who has been separated from his mother, Indumatī, by the very troublesome demons. That young daughter of Śiva practised very difficult penance for (obtaining) this wise Nahuṣa (as her husband).’ O preceptor, I heard all this that they talked.

14-16a. Who is that pious Āyu ? Who is that virtuous Indumatī ? Who is that Aśokasundarī ? Who is called Nahuṣa ? This is a doubt in my mind. You please dispel it. (Nahuṣa seems to be) some other very wise person. Where is that Nahuṣa ? Tell me all that, O father and other things also (if any).”

Vasiṣṭha said:

16b-18a. That pious Āyu is a king, the mighty ruler of the earth. His wife is Indumatī, of a truthful nature and famous. On her, you, a son, abode of virtues and ornament of the lunar dynasty, were begotten by Āyu, the king of kings.

18b-22a. Śiva's beautiful, amiable daughter, adorned with virtues and form, and of a charming smile, by name Aśokasundarī, all alone practised penance in a penance-grove to obtain him (as her husband). The creator has fittingly and definitely fashioned you as her husband. She practised profound meditation after resorting to the bank of the Ganges. Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, seeing that chaste, lovely lady with lotus-like eyes, and bright with penance, and endowed with beauty, generosity and virtues, all alone, was very much tormented by Cupid's arrows.

22b-26a. Going near her, he said to her : “Be my wife.” Hearing these words of him, that devout lady said to him : “O Huṇḍa, do not do a rash act; do not talk like this again and again. O hero, you cannot get me, especially (when I am) someone else’s wife. Destiny has formerly fashioned for me (i.e. as my husband) Āyu’s son named Nahuṣa. There is no doubt that that very lustrous, intelligent Nahuṣa, a divine gift, will be (my husband). If you do otherwise (i.e. other than what I tell you), I shall give you a curse by which you will be reduced to ashes.”

26b-33a. Hearing these words of her, he, very much tormented by Cupid’s arrows, cunningly kidnapped her and took her to his own house. Having come to know about it she cursed that mean demon, O glorious one : “You will die at the hands of Nahuṣa.” When you were not born (i.e. before your birth) she was born, as you are (now) telling. O hero, you are that son of Āyu, who was kidnapped by the sinful Huṇḍa, who was protected by the cook, and was sent to my hermitage through the female attendant. O child, I have again told you what the bards and kinnaras had made (you) hear (i.e. described) in the forest on seeing you. Kill that mean demon Huṇḍa, the doer of evil things; and wipe off the tears (of your mother who is) shedding them from her eyes. From here go to the bank of the Ganges and (you will) see the very mighty one (there). Having killed the lord of the demons, bring (her) from his gaol. Be the husband of her who is (known as) Aśokasundarī.

33b-35. I have told you all this—the origin of this question.

Speaking (thus) to Nahuṣa, the very intelligent brāhmaṇa ceased (speaking). Having heard all that wonderful (account) told by that sage, the son of Āyu, thinking and desiring to kill him, became angry.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Vidvara, a Kinnara, Dispels Aśokasundarī's Apprehensions

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Having saluted, having propitiated and having taken the leave of Vasiṣṭha he, an archer, with arrows in his hand, went out (to the forest). Having well cooked the flesh of a black antelope that child, the good, virtuous, handsome son of Āyu, resembling a god, and endowed with godly qualities, was cleverly protected by her (i.e. that female attendant). With that meat which was well cooked, well dressed, boiled and tasty, the cook very gladly fed that wicked (demon) after talking to him. The demon ate that tasty and sweet meat. He was full of joy also. He went to Aśokasundarī.

5-6. With his mind overcome with passion he quickly said to her : “O auspicious one, your husband, Āyu’s son, has been eaten up by me. O you of a charming body, resort to me only, and enjoy pleasures as desired by you. What will you do with that human being that is (already) dead?”

7-8a. Having heard (these words) the helpless daughter of Śiva replied : “The ageless and faultless husband is given to me by deities. Even the magnanimous gods have not perceived his death.”

8b-10a. Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) her, that demon of wicked deeds, repeatedly laughing, said to her : “O beautiful lady, today only I ate up the flesh of the wicked Nahuṣa, Āyu’s son, as soon as he was born.”

10b-12. She, having heard these words, became extremely and fearfully angry. She who (always) stood by truth, and was purified by penance said : “With my mind restrained, I have practised penance. Āyu’s son shall truly live long. O you of wicked deeds, if you desire to live, go from here. Otherwise, I will again curse you.”

13-15. These (words addressed) by her to the king were heard by the cook. (He said :) “O great king, leave her, and resort to someone else.” The wicked-hearted demon, Huṇḍa, directed by him quickly went out to his own wife. He did not at

all know the thing which the female attendant and the cook had done. He told the whole account to his wife.

Sūta said :

16-22a. That helpless Aśokasundarī, thinking about her dear lover and tormented by grief and sorrow, became emaciated due to that great (i.e. severe) penance. Repeatedly she thought: 'What would the demons, who know the means, not cleverly do by various means, and by exertion ? The best demons always live in various states of being. By the application of illusory methods I was formerly kidnapped by the demon. Like that the son of Āyu might have been killed. Thinking that luckily he might have been unharmed, he would even observe with great effort whether he has or has not perished. Is the exertion superior ? Or is the fruit of deeds superior ? How would an object, that is to be, perish ? Thence the Veda stands firmly. The speciality is conceived by gods. How will it be otherwise ?'

22b-24. The noble one again and again thought like this. (At that time) a kinnara named Vidvara, belonging to a great family, having a large body, having half human body (but) without wings, having two hands, and a flute in one hand, adorned with necklaces and bracelets, with his body besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), came (there) with his wife.

25-37. He said to that unhappy daughter of Śiva : 'O respectable lady, what are you thinking about ? Know me, who have come here, to be Vidvara, a kinnara and Viṣṇu's devotee, sent by best gods. You need not at all be sorry about Nahuṣa. That sinful Huṇḍa has done every act to kill that intelligent (Nahuṣa); and O auspicious one, he has kidnapped Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa); but he has been protected by the gods by various means. O you auspicious one of large eyes, Huṇḍa thinks like this : 'I have kidnapped Āyu's son and have eaten him up.' That mean demon left after having told you (like this). That your very glorious husband will live due to the ripening of his own deeds and merit earned in his former existence. O glorious one, the wicked, very sinful killers, contaminating others' lustre, everyday show forth to destroy the glory of those to destroy whose life produced due to the strength of their merit earned by themselves (in the former existence), they desire. By many means like poison and

weapons they then desire to kill the meritorious person protected by means of meritorious deeds. O glorious one, the great sinners like Huṇḍa harass, with many kinds of delusions and obstructions, full of power, the meritorious one, who is well-protected by the employment of (i.e. because of his having done) good deeds and religious merit. O auspicious one, means—like amulets, spells, charms, weapons, fire, poison, binding—become useless. (Deities) protect the magnanimous one who is (already) well protected by divine merit. The doers of (charms etc.) are reduced to ashes, (while), he, the meritorious one, remains (unharmd).

38-47. O auspicious one, all deities are the protectors of Āyu's son. He is the store of religious merit and the treasure of penance. Therefore the brave Nahuṣa, the best among the mighty, is protected by means of that truthfulness, penance, merit, controls and restraints. Do not have agonizing pain; give up your groundless sorrow. The religious-minded one is living in a forest even without his mother and father. He lives alone in a forest, (is) looked after by ascetics. He knows the philosophy of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas and has mastered archery. O you of a beautiful (i.e. slender) waist, as the moon shines with his digits and lustre, he is shining with his arts. He, the killer of his brave enemies, the killer of his foes and dear to gods, shines by means of his lores, great religious merit, penance and glory also. He will have you after killing Huṇḍa, the lord of demons. The great devotee will be the sole ruler of the earth along with you, as Indra is in heaven. O auspicious one, from him you will obtain a good son, resembling Indra, knowing Dharma, eagerly engaged in protecting his subjects, named Yayāti; also a hundred daughters endowed with beauty, generosity and (other) virtues, due to whose merit you will go to Indra's heaven. O you respectable lady, Nahuṣa of a virtuous valour will enjoy Indra's position.

48-54. Your son will be religious-minded Yayāti, the great king, protector of the subjects and very kind to all beings. He will have four sons of great prowess, endowed with strength and valour and masters of archery : The first will be Turu, the second will be Puru, the third will be Uru, and the fourth will be brave Yadu. Like this, the sons will be very brave, lustrous, very

powerful, noble, and endowed with full lustre. Yadu's sons will be brave, valourous like lions. Well-being to you. Now listen to their names when I am telling them to you : Bhoja, Bhimaka and Andhaka and Kuñjara also. (The fifth one) will be Vṛṣṇi by name, religious-minded and prop of truth. The sixth will be Śrutasena, and the seventh will be Śrutadhara. (The eighth will be) Kāladamṣṭra, very powerful, mighty and conqueror of (even) Death in a battle.

55-60. O you of an excellent face, Yadu's sons called Yādavas will be very brave. They will have thousands of sons and grandsons. O respectable lady, such will be the dynasty of Nahuṣa. Thus giving up sorrow, proceed happily. O you of an auspicious face, having killed the demon Huṇḍa, your very wise husband will come (to you) and will marry you. Hot tears due to grief fall from the eyes of Indumatī. He, the remover of the pride (of the haughty), will wipe them. Having made his father happy he will protect his subjects. O auspicious one, I have told you all this that the gods had said. Giving up your grief and sorrow, carry on happily."

Aśokasundarī said :

61. If he is ordained to be my husband by the deities when will he come ? O you who know Dharma, tell me the truth; increase my happiness.

Vidvara said :

62. O beautiful lady, listen. You will soon see your husband.

Speaking like this, the gandharva (? kinnara) went to the abode of gods.

63. Aśokasundarī, the daughter of Śiva, giving up desires, anger and greed, practised penance there only.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

Nahuṣa Gets Divine Weapons from Gods

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Having taken leave of all the sages and of Vasiṣṭha, the best of the ascetics, Nahuṣa being eager desired to go to the demon. Then all the sages like Vasiṣṭha, with penance as their treasure, congratulated the very mighty son of Āyu with blessing. All the deities in the sky joyfully beat drums and showered flowers on Nahuṣa's head.

4-5. Then the thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra) came there with gods and gave him weapons and missiles resembling the sun's lustre. O best twice-born, the best king took those divine missiles from the god, and due to that he became one of a divine form.

6. Then all the deities said to Indra: "O lord of gods, give a chariot to this Nahuṣa."

7-9a. Knowing the view of the gods, Indra, having called his charioteer, Mātali, ordered him, O twice-born: "O you very wise one, go to him, and carry him—the son of Āyu, ready to fight, in the chariot with the flag;" and he said to Indra: "I shall carry out your order".

9b-11. Speaking thus, he quickly went to Āyu's son, ready to fight. He told the king the words of the king of gods: "O you who know Dharma, 'be victorious in the battle by means of this chariot.' O lord of kings, thus, Indra has told you. Kill in the battle the demon Huṇḍa of a wicked heart."

12-13. Hearing (these words) the lord of kings, with horripilation due to joy (said:) "By the grace of the lord of gods, of the magnanimous Vasiṣṭha I shall kill in the battle the demon of a wicked heart, who deceived gods and especially me."

14-20. When Nahuṣa uttered these great words, the god holding a conch, a disc and a mace himself came there. Drawing out from (his own) disc a great disc resembling the sun's orb, blazing with burning lustre, with round spokes and bringing auspiciousness, the god gave it to Nahuṣa with great joy. Śiva gave him a very sharp lance endowed with lustre. With that excellent lance, he, ready to fight, shone like another lord Śiva,

the killer of Tripura. Brahmā gave him (the missile called) Brahmāstra. Varuṇa (gave him) an excellent noose, resembling the moon's lustre and a conch with an auspicious sound. Indra (gave him) the thunderbolt and (a kind of missile called) Śakti. Vāyu (gave him) a bow with arrows. Vahni (i.e. Fire) gave the magnanimous one, the fire-missile. (Thus) the divine weapons and missiles of various kinds were given by gods to that great-souled king of great glory.

Kuñjala said:

21-25. Then Āyu's son, the hero honoured by gods and greeted by sages knowing the true nature of Brahman with blessings, got into the chariot that was divine, lustrous, decked with gems, making a big sound due to the bells, and full of small bells. With that divine chariot the prince shone like the sun by means of his lustre on the divine path. Blazing like him with his lustre, he rushed quickly and speedily, with that magnanimous charioteer Mātali, towards the heads of the demons, like Vāyu that moves constantly, to the place where that sinful demon stood with his army.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

Nahuṣa Enters Mahodaya, the City of Huṇḍa

Kuñjala said:

1-5. When that brave Nahuṣa, comparable to the lord of gods, was going out to fight (with Huṇḍa), all women out of curiosity and with (i.e. singing) auspicious songs went there. The excellent women of gods, and kinnaris, (all) eager through curiosity sang melodiously, O best one. Also the gandharva women endowed with beauty and ornaments went there where the king stood, through curiosity. The city of that wicked Huṇḍa was Mahodaya by name; it was everywhere adorned with divine groves (like) Nandana. It looked pleasant with houses having

seven apartments and with pitchers. The best city shone with great staffs with banners. The best city shone with (mansions) shaped like the peaks of Kailāsa, lofty, reaching the sky, divine and endowed with all glory.

6-10a. It was adorned with thickets of trees, groves, divine lakes resembling oceans and full of water and charming with lotuses and red lotuses. It shone with ramparts, great jewels and hundreds of upper stories and with moats full of clear water. It also shone with other great jewels and elephants and horses. It was crowded with good women and men of great brilliance. That (city) Mahodaya shone with many divine grandeurs.

10b-15. Nahuṣa, the great hero and best among kings, saw the city and a divine grove adorned with divine trees in the outskirts. The great hero entered it as a god enters the Nandana grove. The virtuous lord of kings entered the grove on the bank of a river in chariot along with that Mātali. Those divine, beautiful women came there. Gandharvas, the knowers of the essentials of music, extolled the best king with songs. All the (bards like the) sūtas and māgadhas praised the best king, Āyu's son, shining like the sun. Nahuṣa heard the sweet song repeated (i. e. sung) by the kinnaras.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

Aśokasnudarī has a Glimpse of Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Hearing that song sung by the celestial women and being affected by the songs and their introductory stanzas, that beautiful daughter of Śiva, pondering, quickly getting up from her seat, and being full of great enthusiasm, possessed of penance and devotion, and seeing the prince who resembled a god, whose lustre was like that of a divine form, whose body was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), who was adorned with divine garlands, who was graced with divine ornaments and garments, who was bright like the sun, who was having divine marks, (thought:)

5-7. 'Can he be a god, or a very wise gandharva? May he be the son of a nāga (snake) or a vidyādhara? How can he be born among the yakṣas, (when) I do not observe (such a form) even among gods? Even Indra might have been born as this hero (as is seen) from this ease (of him). May he be Śiva or is this Cupid? Or is he Kubera, Pulastya's son, and my father's friend?'

8. When she, the most beautiful and virtuous one was thinking like this, Rambhā, having come there with her great friends, smiled and said to her:

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Rambhā Acts as Aśokasundarī's Messenger

Rambhā said:

1. O auspicious one, abandoning the penance, what are you looking at? By pondering over a man your penance would perish.

Aśokasundarī said:

2-5. My mind was completely absorbed in penance. Gods, demons or serpents could not lead me away (from it). (But) O you glorious one, on seeing this one my mind becomes very uneasy. Going to him I desire to dally with him. It has become thus (i.e. so much) eager. O you beautiful one, such a change was (there) in my mind. Therefore, tell me its cause, if you know it well. The magnanimous gods have created me as the wife of Āyu's son. Why is my mind eager to dally (with this man)?

Rambhā said:

6-11. O you glorious one, O you beautiful one, the ancient soul, Brahmā himself, of the form of knowledge lives in all embodied forms. Though he is bound by the organs of sense functioning to assist him, and full of the nooses of delusion, yet he is always perfect. He, (when bound by sense-organs) does not at all

know the Nature—the portion of the highest and the worldly knowledge: (yet) O beautiful one, this pure righteous soul knows (it). Though you, seeing this very intelligent one, have mental anguish, he abandons sin and runs to truth only. This son of Āyu is your husband. This is the truth. There is no doubt about it. (A lady like you) would entertain doubt by seeing any other man of sinful characteristics. Such is the ordinance, bound by the noose of truth which the gods have made that the son of Āyu will be her (i.e. your) husband.

12-16a. Like this was heard by the soul, O beautiful lady. Knowing the truth of its substance, he remained (there). It does not recognise that your husband has come. Knowing this your chief soul today only runs (after him). The soul knows everything. The soul is the ancient god. This is just that brave Nahuṣa, the lord of heroes. Therefore your heart goes to him; it desires a contact with the truth. Knowing that Āyu's son (will be your husband), it does not at all go to anyone else, O good lady.

16b-19. I have thus told you all that is perpetually in your mind. Killing the very fierce, mean demon Huṇḍa in a battle, he will take you to his own place—Āyu's excellent house. The best hero was kidnapped by the demon; (but) survived because of his religious merit. The best hero was separated from his relatives from his childhood. In the great forest he grew without his mother or father. Now with you only he shall go to his father's house.

20. Having heard these words of Rambhā, the daughter of Śiva full of great joy, said to (Rambhā) born from the ocean:

21-24. "This certainly is my very brave husband of a truthful nature. My mind, very much perturbed due to being full of grief, runs (to him). There is no other god like the mind that knows (things) definitely. O you of a charming smile, I really saw a fine picture—a man of divine characteristics and resembling Cupid. O friend, as my mind runs (after him) on seeing him, it does not run to any other man, O good lady. It does not think highly of any other man. We two shall go to him. Let our friends go home."

25. Knowing her to be eager to go to Nahuṣa, that Rambhā spoke like this and started going.

26a. Then that Rambhā said to her: "O respectable lady, why do you not go (with me)?"

Sūta said:

26b-28a. Reaching well with her friend Rambhā, Nahuṣa with marks of a hero, she sent her dear friend to his vicinity (i.e. to him): “O you illustrious one, go to Nahuṣa of a godly form, and tell him the account, and that I have come for him.”

Rambhā said:

28b-29. O you (my) friend of a good vow, I shall do this which is very dear to you.

Saying so Rambhā went to prince Nahuṣa holding a bow and arrows, and as it were another Indra.

30-36a. Rambhā went to him and told him the excellent words of her friend: “O you glorious son of Āyu, I am Rambhā who has come to you. I have been sent by that daughter of Śiva, O hero. For you the lord of gods, the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī), the god have created this excellent and best gem of a woman in the form of your wife, difficult to be obtained in the worlds. This gem is difficult to be obtained by best men, gods along with Indra, devotees, gandharvas, serpents, siddhas and bards of meritorious marks. For you, it has come of its own accord. This gem of a woman is perfect and created with merit, O you very wise one. (It's) name is Aśokasundarī, who remained in penance for (obtaining) you. She practised very severe penance. She always longs for you. Realising this, O illustrious one, honour her who adores you. That beautiful lady does not at all solicit any other man than you.”

36b-44. Nahuṣa heard and understood what she said; and replied: “O Rambhā, listen to my words. I know all that you have said before (i.e. to me). Formerly the noble Vasiṣṭha had told me. I know everything—her excellent penance (also). O auspicious one, listen to the reason by which there will be happiness (for both of us). ‘Without killing the demon Huṇḍa I shall not go to the excellent lady. I know all this account and also that you are created for me, and that you have practised penance. There is no doubt that destiny has made you my wife. Resolving for (getting) me as your husband, you practised penance. From there the very wicked one took you, following restraints, away. That mean demon separated me, who was a child, from my father and

mother, (kidnapping me) from the lying-in-chamber, O respectable lady. Therefore I shall kill that Huṇḍa, the mean demon. Then I shall take you to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage.' Well-being to you, O Rambhā, tell like this to her who has done what is dear to me."

45-48. Thus dismissed by him, Rambhā again quickly came (back) so Aśokasundarī and told her all his (good words) in brief, O best dvija. That Aśokasundarī, understanding the good words of that great hero Nahuṣa, was full of joy. Then she stayed there with her good friend, Rambhā. (She said:) "I shall ever see what kind of valour my husband has."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Fight between Nahuṣa and Huṇḍa Starts

Kuñjala said :

1-3. Then all the demons, Huṇḍa's attendants, told Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, the good words—the conversation—between Nahuṣa and Rambhā as they had heard them. Having heard them, he got angry and said (these) words to his messenger : "O hero, go and know that man who converses with that daughter of Śiva."

4-8. Hearing the order of his master the demon left quickly. In a solitary place he said these words to Nahuṣa : "You stand round with a chariot along with horses and the charioteer, and with a bow and divine arrows, and you are fearful in an assembly. To whom do you belong ? By whom are you sent, and for what purpose ? Tell clearly to me all that this Rambhā and the other (one i.e.) Śiva's daughter told you today. How is it that you are not afraid of Huṇḍa, the destroyer of gods ? If you desire to live, tell me all this. Leave quickly, do not remain (here). The lord of the demons is difficult to put up with."

Nahuṣa said :

9. Know me to be the son of that powerful lord Āyu, who

is the king of the earth, (and know me) to be the destroyer of all demons, worshipper of gods and brāhmaṇas, and well known by the name Nahuṣa. O demon, in my childhood I was kidnapped by Huṇḍa, your master.

10-14. This daughter of Śiva also was formerly kidnapped by (that) demon. She practised severe penance for the death of Huṇḍa. (Tell Huṇḍa :) “O wicked one, I, who was taken away (when I was) a child from the lying-in chamber, and was handed over to the female attendant and the cook by you, the wicked-minded one, have today come to kill (you) the wicked demon Huṇḍa of sinful acts. I shall also take to Yama’s abode other fearful demons.” Tell the demon (Huṇḍa) like this : “O most sinful one, know me to be like this.”

15-19a. That wicked-minded (messenger) having heard all those words of (i.e. spoken by) the magnanimous Huṇḍa, narrated them to Huṇḍa, after going to him. Having heard them from his mouth (i.e. as told by the messenger), the lord of the demons (i.e. Huṇḍa) got angry. (He thought :) ‘Why was he not killed by the wicked cook and the female attendant ? Now he, a disease, that was ignored by me, has augmented. Now I shall kill in a battle this wicked son of Āyu along with this daughter of Śiva with these arrows sharpened on a grindstone.’ Thinking like this, he said (these) words to his charioteer : “Make ready the chariot (yoked) with excellent and lucky horses.”

19b-21a. Calling the chief of the army he, who was over-anxious, said to him : “Make my army ready; make ready the brave snakes, and horses with the riders, and the soldiers with the umbrellas and chowries. Quickly make ready today my army with (all) its four constituents.”

21b-24a. Hearing the words of that Huṇḍa, the swift and very intelligent chief of the army did everything according to the proper procedure. He (i.e. Huṇḍa) surrounded by the complete army went to the battlefield to (fight) with the active hero Nahuṣa, wielding a bow and arrows, (seated) in Indra’s chariot, best among the warriors, ready (to fight) on the battlefield, difficult to be obtained by (i.e. unassailable to) gods and demons. Gods of great prowess seated in their aeroplanes in the sky saw him full of bright flames, and as it were another sun.

Sūta said :

24b-30. Then all the demons showered him with excellent arrows. In the battle they fought with the magnanimous Nahuṣa by means of swords, nooses, large lances, (missile called) śakti and battle-axes. They were excited, and roared like clouds on a mountain. Seeing their heroism, the brave son of Āyu stretched his bow resembling Indra's weapon, with the twang of its string. O brāhmaṇas, Nahuṣa also made the sound of his great bow like the bursting (sound) of the thunderbolt. Due to that loud sound the demons trembled. They were dejected in mind and had their spirits broken in the great war.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Huṇḍa is Killed in the Battle

Kuñjala said :

1. Then that great soul, holding a bow, ready to fight and shining in the battle, like Death that was angry and desired to destroy the worlds, desired to kill the great demons.

2-3. He killed the demons with a number of mighty weapons resembling the sun's lustre and very bright. As the wind uproots trees, he killed the demons. As the wind shakes the divine mass of clouds, the king destroyed the intoxicated demons with very sharp excellent arrows.

4. All the demons could not (stand) the shower of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the magnanimous one. Some died, some fled, some escaped from the great war.

Sūta said :

5. Seeing the prince of a great lustre, very intelligent, and destroyer of great demons, the wicked-minded Huṇḍa became angry.

6. Going (near him) he stood there after saying these words: "Stop, stop, O son of Āyu, I shall today take you to Yama."

Nahuṣa said :

7. I am standing in the battlefield. See, I have come to kill you. I shall kill you, a wicked-minded demon.

8-9 Speaking thus, he, taking a bow and arrows like the flames of fire, shone in the battle with an umbrella being held (over his head). He said these words to Mātali, the charioteer of Indra: "Today you drive my chariot in front of Huṇḍa."

10-12. Thus addressed by the hero, the quick-footed Mātali drove the horses having the speed of a strong wind. Then the horses jumped as swans would fly in the sky. Reaching the sky with the chariot having a flag and with an umbrella having the moon's colour, the son of Āyu shone in the battle with lustre and valour as the sun shines (in the sky).

13-18a. Huṇḍa too, even when he remained in the chariot, shone with his own lustre, was equipped with all weapons and remained in a hero's vow. O you very wise one, at that time the battle between the two heroes caused amazement to the gods, was fierce and caused fear. At that time Huṇḍa struck the king between his two strong arms with well-whetted, sharp, excellent arrows with heron's feathers attached to them and with darts. When pierced on his large forehead with five arrows he got angry. The king wounded with arrows shone more at that time, like the rising ruddy sun with clusters of rays. With the golden arrows stuck into his body and with his body smeared with blood, the king shone like the sun in the sky in the morning.

18b-20. Seeing his valour, he said (these) words to the demon : "O demon, wait, wait for a moment; (just) see my dexterity." Thus speaking to the demon in the battle, he struck him with ten arrows. He struck him on the face, on the forehead. Due to that the very mighty (demon) fainted and fell down on the chariot, when gods from heaven were seeing.

21-24. Gods and bards and siddhas gave out cry of victory with joy. (They cried :) "Victory, victory, to you, O lord of kings;" (and) they blew conches repeatedly. That tumultuous noise made by the gods entered the cavities of the ears of Huṇḍa who had fainted. Hearing it, he took his bow and an arrow like a snake, and saying, "Wait, wait, I am not dead though you have

struck me in the battle”, he endowed with quickness, struck Nahuṣa with twentyone arrows.

25-27. The demon pierced Nahuṣa with one arrow into his fist, with four sharp arrows between his arms; (pierced) his great horses with four sharp arrows, his umbrella with one arrow; (pierced) Mātali with five sharp arrows, the interior of the chariot with seven sharp arrows and the staff of the flag with three sharp arrows. Seeing the wicked one’s seizing and aiming and discharging (the arrow) and his quickness, the deities were amazed.

28. Seeing his valour, the king (said to) the best demon : “You are brave, you are learned, you are wise, and are clever in fighting.”

29. Speaking thus to the demon, the king, of sharp valour, stretched his bow, and pierced him with ten arrows.

30-33a. With three arrows he cut off the flag and it fell on the ground. With four arrows he knocked down his horses. The king of sharp valour cut off his umbrella; and with ten arrows sent his charioteer to Yama’s abode. Having cut off his armour with ten arrows, he splithim. He pierced the lord of demons in all his limbs with thirty arrows. With his horses killed, he became chariotless.

33b-38. The archer, with arrows in his hand, and showering (Nahuṣa) with sharp arrows, ran to him. That demon holding a sword and a shield, ran to the king. The king cut off the sword of Huṇḍa, who was (thus) running (to the king). The king cut off his shield with sharp arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. Then that wicked-minded Huṇḍa, seeing around, took a mallet and he of sharp valour, quickly discharged it. The king then saw it coming with the speed of the thunderbolt, and by his valour he caused to fall down that mallet making a sound, with ten sharp arrows and with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows. Seeing the mallet, fallen in ten pieces on the ground, he raised his mace and ran to the king.

39-43. With a sharp-edged sword he cut off his arm, which fell down on the ground, with the mace, armlets and bracelets. Then, making a great sound like the bursting of the thunderbolt, and with his body smeared with blood and running in the great battle, he, full of great anger, desired to destroy the king. He,

the irresistible one, came near the king. The demon, struck on his chest by Nahuṣa with a missile called Śakti, suddenly fell on the ground like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt. When that demon fell on the ground, other demons went (i.e. fled) away. Some entered inaccessible places, some resorted to the other world.

44-45. When the magnanimous Nahuṣa had killed that great sinner, gods, gandharvas, siddhas and cāraṇas became very joyful. When the great demon was killed in the great war, all gods became very joyful; (and) Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa) having obtained her, of a divine form and thriving with penance, became glad.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Nahuṣa Marries Aśokasundarī

Kuñjala said :

1-3. That devout Aśokasundarī, auspicious and joyful, reaching, along with Rambhā, the powerful Nahuṣa, said to him : “I am your legal devout wife, as ordained by the gods. O hero, if you desire merit here (i.e. in this world, then please) marry me. Always thinking of you, I remained in penance. O best king, by virtue of my merit I have obtained you.”

Nahuṣa said :

4-5a. If you, O good lady, are directed to be my wife, and for that you remained in penance, then after a short time, in accordance with the words of my preceptor, I shall be your husband. O you beautiful lady, we two shall go with this Rambhā.

5b-8. He, of a great glory, putting her and the beautiful Rambhā in his chariot, quickly went with the two in that excellent chariot to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. He, of a great lustre and full of great joy, saw the brāhmaṇa (Vasiṣṭha) in the hermitage and with her (i.e. Aśokasundarī) saluted him. He narrated everything

to that magnanimous Vasiṣṭha as to how the battle took place on the battlefield and how that mean demon was killed by him.

9-12. Vasiṣṭha too, hearing about the activities of Nahuṣa, was full of great joy, and having congratulated him with blessings, the best sage got them married on an auspicious day when the auspicious moment had arrived in the presence of brāhmaṇas and fire. After congratulating the couple with blessings he sent them (telling Nahuṣa), “O you very intelligent one, go quickly and see your mother and father. Seeing you, let that your mother and your father grow with joy as the ocean grows on a full moon or a new moon day.”

13-14. Thus (saying) the sage, the son of Brahmā, sent the hero (to his parents). He, of a quick pace, after saluting that best brāhmaṇa, went with Mātali in that excellent chariot to see his father and mother also.

Sūta said :

15. At that time the deities sent a celestial nymph by name Menikā. Āyu's wife (Indumatī) fell, due to great grief, into the ocean of sorrow.

16-18. To that illustrious queen Indumatī, she (i.e. Menikā) said : “O you fortunate one, give up your sorrow; see your son, with your daughter-in-law, (your son) who has come, endowed with a hero's glory, to the assembly after having killed the sinful demon who had kidnapped your son (i.e. Nahuṣa himself).” Menikā narrated to that Indumatī the good account of what Nahuṣa had done in the battle.

19-20. Having heard the words of Menikā, she, who was full of great joy, said in a faltering voice : “O friend, you are telling the truth. You have said to me what is very dear and like nectar and encouraging to my mind. I should give you my life etc. and even everything that I possess.”

21-22. Having thus spoken to her (i.e. Menikā), she said these (words) to the king : “O great king, this excellent celestial nymph tells me that your very brave son has come now.” Speaking thus to her husband, she, who was very much delighted, ceased speaking.

23-28. Hearing her words, the lord of kings said to his wife : “O you glorious one, formerly sage Nārada had told me :

‘O king, you should never be worried about your son. Your son will come after having very bravely killed that demon.’ The words which the sage had uttered formerly have come true. O queen, how will his words be otherwise (i.e. untrue) ? Dattātreyā, the best among sages, is actually a god. Formerly, O queen, you and I served him by means of penance. He has given (us) this gem of a son, having Viṣṇu’s portion. He shall always kill a great wicked-minded demon. Dattātreyā has given me the best and very powerful son who is Viṣṇu’s portion, and killer of all demons, and will look after his subjects.”

29-31. Speaking thus to queen Indumatī, the king celebrated with great festivity his son’s arrival. Being full of great joy he again remembered Viṣṇu, endowed with everything, accompanied by groups of gods, of the form of joy, the only highest object, the remover of pain, giving happiness and the great giver of salvation to good followers of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Nahuṣa’s Consecration

Kuñjala said:

1-10. Nahuṣa with his wife and Rambhā came in that excellent, divine chariot of Indra to the city called Nāga which was endowed with all beauty, divine auspicious objects, which was adorned with mansions, which possessed golden portals, which was beautified with banners, and with the sounds of many musical instruments, and with panegyrists and bards. It was also adorned with auspicious men resembling gods in form, with women of divine forms and with elephants, horses and chariots. It was full of many auspicious sounds and sounds (of the recitation) of the Vedas, the sounds of music and musical instruments, and of flutes and lutes. He entered the best city full of all (kinds) of beauty. The hero honoured with the auspicious Veda recitation by brāhmaṇas saw his father and very meritorious mother. Being full of great joy, he saluted his

father's feet. That beautiful Aśokasundarī devoutly saluted the feet of both of them again and again. That Rambhā also saluted them and expressed her affection (for them). The prince having saluted his father and having talked to him inquired about the health of his mother and father. With horripilation due to joy the illustrious one (i.e. Āyu) spoke thus :

Āyu said :

11-12. On seeing you, O son, today only all (my) ailments have disappeared; both (my) grief and sorrow have gone (away); the world is delighted with great satisfaction. When you of a great prowess were born, I became blessed. Emancipating your race you have also emancipated me.

Indumatī said :

13-14. O illustrious one, as when the full moon and the new moon (day) arrives, the great ocean, seeing the lustre of the moon increases, similarly I have grown (with joy) on seeing you. I am glorified; I am very glad; I am full of joy. O you, destroyer of the pride (of your enemies), O you very wise one, on seeing you I have become blessed.

15-16. Then that auspicious queen Indumatī, having spoken like this to that son, embraced that excellent son, having smelt him on his head, as a cow smells her calf, and having greeted that son of the form of Nahuṣa, honoured him with blessings.

Sūta said :

17-19. Then that very glorious son narrated to his mother, the auspicious queen Indumatī, the account of his being kidnapped, the birth and acquisition of his wife, his battle with Huṇḍa, and the destruction of Huṇḍa. He himself told in brief all that account giving delight, to his mother and father.

20-24. The mother and father, having heard about the valour and exertion of their son, were full of great joy and their hearts were full (of delight). Taking his bow and (seated) in Indra's chariot, Nahuṣa conquered the earth spreading over the seven islands along with towns. He presented the earth, full of wealth, to his father. Always giving joy to his father by means

of good acts, he made his father perform sacrifices like Rājasūya. Āyu's son made his parents rich by means of great sacrifices, gifts, vows, restraints and curbs, glory, meritorious and very prosperous sacrifices.

25-30. Then the gods having come to the excellent city called Nāga consecrated the noble Nahuṣa, the destroyer of heroes. The sages possessing great faculties and king Āyu consecrated him on his throne with Śiva's daughter. The very glorious and pious king Āyu, united with his wife, went with his own body to heaven, well honoured by gods and siddhas. Leaving the place of Indra he again went to Brahmā's world. Then well-honoured by sages and gods he went to Śiva's heaven. Due to his own deeds and the great lustre of his son the great king went to Viṣṇu's heaven, and the king lived (there) due to his religious merit. O illustrious one, men should produce such excellent merit by (performing) meritorious acts like this, not by other acts causing grief.

31-33. I have told you all the account of that king, as to how that pious Nahuṣa became the emancipator of his father, the supporter of the entire family, and very learned. O my son Kapiñjala, tell me what other things I shall tell you. The man who listens to such pious, pure account, endowed with glory, of Āyu's son, enjoys pleasures and obtains the place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

The Story of Kāmoda

Kapiñjala said :

1-6. O father, a beautiful lady was formerly weeping at the mouth of the Ganges. From her eyes tears fell into the great water. They sank into the Ganges and became lotuses. (These) flowers were of a divine nature, great, and fragrant. O father, O illustrious one, why did the pure tears fall from her beautiful eyes into the water of the Ganges ? A bearded man, having but

bones and skin left (on his body) and clothed in a long strip of cloth, collected those fragrant lotuses. Taking those divine (lotuses) of golden colour, he would worship Śiva with them. O you very intelligent one, tell me who that lady is and who that man is. Why does he lament after having worshipped Śiva ? If I am dear to you tell all this to me.

Kuñjala said :

7. O child, listen. I shall tell you the account of happenings relating to gods. (I shall also tell you) the account of the noble Viṣṇu that destroys all sins.

8-9. That Vihunḍa, the well-known son of that very mighty Hunḍa who was killed by Nahuṣa in the battle, practised penance, after hearing that his father (i.e. Hunḍa) along with his ministers and retinue was killed by the brave and mighty Nahuṣa, Āyu's son.

10-13a. Ready to kill the gods he angrily practised penance. All gods knew the valour of the wicked one which was augmented by means of penance, and knew him to be irresistible in the battle. (They said :) "Vihunḍa, the son of Hunḍa, is out to destroy the three worlds." (Vihunḍa thought :) 'I shall wreak revenge for my father and shall kill human beings and gods.' The sinful one, a source of vexation to gods and brāhmaṇas, got ready and started doing harm, and harassed the beings.

13b-15a. Gods scorched by his lustre only and led by Indra, sought the shelter of the noble Viṣṇu, the god of gods; and they said to the god of gods, the lord of the world, and the holder of a conch, a disc and a mace : "Always protect us from the great fear due to Vihunḍa."

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

15b-19a. May all deities and great gods prosper with great happiness. I shall destroy the most sinful Vihunḍa, the source of vexation to the gods.

Speaking thus to those gods the very glorious Viṣṇu produced illusion and himself remained in the Nandana (grove). He took up an illusory form of a female endowed with merits. Viṣṇu's Māyā is glorious and deludes the entire universe.

Viṣṇu's Māyā took up a matchless form having a good figure and beauty to kill Vihunḍa.

Kuñjala said :

19b-24a. To kill the gods he went up the divine path. Then the lord of the demons saw the Illusion in the Nandana grove. The demon deluded by her with his heart rent by Cupid's arrows did not realise that the excellent woman was of the form of Death and his destruction. Seeing her shining like gold and shining with the wealth of beauty, Vihunḍa longed for her and he, the sinner, said to that excellent lady: "Who are you ? To whom do you belong? O you beautiful lady, O you who torture my heart, give me company. O you beautiful lady, by your company protect me, protect me. O you chief of deities, O you illustrious one, I shall give you all that, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons, which you ask for."

Māyā (Illusion) said :

24b-27a. O demon, if you have a desire to enjoy me, give me a present. Worship Śiva with seven crores of divine, fragrant flowers grown on Kāmoda, and difficult to be obtained (even) by gods. O noble one, put around my neck the garland made of those flowers. Give me this present. Then I shall be a very dear wife of you.

Vihunḍa said :

27b-31a. O respectable lady, I shall do so. I shall give you the present asked for (by you).

Overpowered by love the lord of demons wandered through groves that were auspicious and divine; but he did not find the tree called Kāmoda. He himself went everywhere and asked (people) about the tree. Distinguished people told him that there was no tree called Kāmoda. Thus asking (people) the wicked-souled one being very much tormented by the arrows of Cupid, went to Śukra, and with his neck bent down through devotion asked him (about the tree). (He said) : "Tell me about the charming tree called Kāmoda and full of flowers."

Śukra said:

31b-37a. O demon, there is no tree (called) Kāmoda. (However) there is a lady (named Kāmodā). When delighted by some incident she laughs, then, O demon, from her laughter are produced fragrant, excellent flowers. These divine flowers are of Kāmodā. There is no doubt about it. They are charming yellow flowers and have fragrance. Śiva fulfils the great desire of him who worships Śiva even with one flower (of Kāmodā). O demon, from her weeping also similar large (but) reddish flowers are undoubtedly produced. O demon, they have no fragrance. One should not touch them.

Hearing these words uttered by Śukra, he said : “O you son of Bhṛgu, where is that Kāmodā ?”

Śukra said:

37b-41. In the very auspicious Gaṅgādvāra, the destroyer of great sins, the city named Kāmoda is fashioned by the architect of gods. In that city called Kāmoda, lives a lady graced with divine possessions; she also shines with ornaments, and is well-honoured by all gods. You should go there only, and should worship that excellent celestial nymph. O demon, with some auspicious means, make her laugh.

Speaking thus to the demon, that lord of meditating sages, Śukra, possessing great lustre, ceased (speaking), and became engaged in his own work.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN

The Birth of Kāmodā

Kapiñjala said:

1-4. O father, from her laughter are produced very charming, divinely fragrant flowers, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods and demons; but, O you very intelligent one, why do all

deities long for them? Śiva is pleased when he is well-worshipped with the flowers (produced) from her laughter. Tell me in detail as to what merit the flower possesses. Who would be (i.e. is) that Kāmodā? Whose daughter is that excellent lady? (Tell me how) from her laughter good flowers are produced. Tell me about the merit. Tell me in detail her complete story.

Kuñjala said:

5-16. Formerly gods and great demons formed a great friendship and eager for (obtaining) nectar, they churned the milky ocean. Due to the churning done by the gods and demons four maiden-gems (came out), whom Varuṇa first pointed out and again Soma also. Then the nectar-containing pitcher was pointed out. The ancient group of the four maidens desired the well-being of the gods. The first one was Sulakṣmī by name. The second was Vāruṇī. (The third) was known as Jyeṣṭhā. The other one was called Kāmodā. Among them the excellent and best one was produced first. Therefore, O very intelligent one, she is known as Jyeṣṭhā, and is always worshipped in the world. Vāruṇī is of the form of a drink, and has come up from the foam of water. The one called Kāmodā, has come up from the ripple of the nectar. King Soma (i.e. the Moon) and Lakṣmī similarly sprang from the nectar. Soma became the ornament of the three worlds and dear to Śiva. Similarly Vāruṇī became the remover of death and disease among the gods. Jyeṣṭhā gave great merit to people desiring well-being. The goddess Kāmodā, giver of merit, sprang from the nectar. In the future she will have the form of a tree for the love of Viṣṇu. She will always delight Viṣṇu. She, the auspicious one, will be certainly (known) by the name Tulasī. There is no doubt that the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) will dally with her. Kṛṣṇa regards the obligations of him who takes (just) one Tulasī-leaf and offers it to Kṛṣṇa, who thinking, 'What should I give him?' becomes dear to him.

17-23. Thus this one named Kāmodā, formerly sprang up from the ocean. When the goddess, speaking in a faltering way due to joy laughs, charming, fragrant flowers fall from her mouth. He who, a diligent one, takes fresh, good flowers and would worship Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu (with them), has gods pleased with him, and they give him whatever he desires. When

she, grieved due to some misery, weaps, tears are produced in her eyes and they fall from them. O glorious one, they are also (turned into) charming, large flowers (but) without fragrance. He who worships Śiva with them, has sorrow and tormentation. There is no doubt about this. There is no doubt that gods give misery to that wicked-minded one who (even) once worships gods with such flowers. I have told you this excellent account of Kāmodā.

24-26. Then Kṛṣṇa thought after seeing the valour and cruelty of Vihunḍa, the exertion and violence of the sinner, and sent Nārada (to him telling Nārada): “Delude this irresistible one.” Hearing the words of that magnanimous Viṣṇu, Nārada went to that wicked lord of demons, who was going to Kāmodā, and with a smile, said to him :

27-28. “O lord of demons, where are you, (so) eager, now going hurriedly and for what work? For whose work (are you going)? Who has prompted you?” Having saluted Nārada, the son of Brahmā, with the palms of his hands folded, he replied: “O best brāhmaṇa, I have set out for Kāmodā-flowers.”

29-36. The pious one (i.e. Nārada) said to him: “What purpose will the flowers serve for you?” He again told the best brāhmaṇa the reason for his act. “In the region of the Nadana-grove, there is an excellent lady. On seeing her I am influenced by (the passion of) love. O best brāhmaṇa, she told me: ‘With seven crores of flowers growing in Kāmodā, worship Śiva. Then I shall be your very dear wife. There is no doubt about this.’ For that I am today proceeding to the city called Kāmodā. Listen, now I am longing for her, born from the ocean. I shall make her laugh with loud laughs delighting the mind. The illustrious one, being pleased will repeatedly laugh. Her faltering laughter will augment my undertaking, O brāhmaṇa. From that laughter divine flowers will fall (down). With them I shall properly worship (Śiva) the lord of Umā. Śiva, the lord, the controller of all beings and the creator of the world being pleased by that offering of worship will give me (its) fruit.”

Nārada said ;

37-43. O demon, you should not go to that best city called Kāmodā. The very intelligent Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all demons

stays there. O demon, I shall tell you about the way by which the flowers called Kāmodā will fall into your hand. There is no doubt that the divine flowers will fall into the water of the Ganges. Being drifted by the divine water (of the Ganges) they will come (to you) immediately. You (please) take those very charming and large (flowers). Taking those flowers you accomplish what is desired by your mind.

That pious Nārada, having (thus) deluded that best demon, again thought to himself : ‘Being grieved in what way will she shed tears ?’ When Nārada was thinking like this, that moment an idea struck him, and he went to the city of Kāmodā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTY

Nārada on Dreams

Kuñjala said :

1-4. Then Nārada saw the divine city called Kāmodā, which was crowded with gods and rich objects satisfying all desires. Reaching Kāmodā’s house, the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada) entered it. Then he saw Kāmodā, possessing all desired objects. She honoured the brāhmaṇa with good words like ‘Welcome (to you).’ The best brāhmaṇa, seated on a divine seat asked her : “Are you living happily, O good lady, sprung from Viṣṇu’s lustre ?” Having greeted her with blessings he (also) asked her about her well-being.

Kāmodā said :

5. By your grace and Viṣṇu’s grace, I am living happily. O you highly intelligent one, tell me the reason for which (you made me) answer (your) questions.

6-9. O best sage, a great delusion is produced in my body. It is greatly destroying my body, and is pervading all the worlds. Therefore sleep is generated (in my body) as it well abides in a mortal. O sage, I who was asleep saw a fearful dream. O best brāhmaṇa, someone having come before me said : “The unmani-

fest Viṣṇu will desire contact with the worldly existence. Since then I am occupied with grief, O you very intelligent one., Tell me the reason for that. You are best among those who possess knowledge.

Nārada said:

10. O good lady, dream (of four kinds), viz. gouty, bilious, due to excess of phlegm, and having a complicated derangement of the three bodily humours, is (seen) among human beings. There is no doubt about it.

11-15a. O beautiful lady, neither dream nor sleep exists among gods. The best dream is seen at the time of sunrise. A good (i.e. an auspicious) dream gives human beings the fruit of their religious merit. O you auspicious one, I shall tell you (about) another cause of dream. O you beautiful one, water shakes due to the rockings of great wind. From that mass of water small drops of water are split. O auspicious one, these pure drops of water fall out. They again disappear. Thus they become manifest and unmanifest. O beautiful lady, listen. The occurring of a dream is said to be like that.

15b-19. The (supreme) soul is pure, detached, and is free from love and hatred. After having excelled the objects consisting of the five elements, he remains quite steady. He shines among the twenty-six good elements. The pure soul is alone, eternal and is united with Prakṛti (i.e. the original source of the material world). When due to her modes of the nature of wind he moves from his place, another lustre resembling that of the soul is produced. The auspicious name 'inner soul' is given to it only. O auspicious one, as the drops of water are separate from it, in the same way the lustre of the soul is called the inner soul.

20-26. He is the earth, he is the wind, he is the ether, he is the water, he alone shines. These five great ones are fashioned formerly. They have come up from the lustre of the magnanimous soul, and they become united when they are associated with him. Due to the great fault of the natural temperament they destroy that body, and repeatedly desire another. This is their sport and pastime which is the cause of (their) connection with creation. The ripple of water is produced and disappears. It rises and again it disappears. There is no doubt that their (behaviour) is

like the illustration of the water. O respectable lady, the soul does not perish; fire or wind also does not perish. Earth and ether do not perish, nor does water perish. All the five come up and go away with the soul. O auspicious one, these soul etc. are of eternal nature.

27-43a. It is the body alone that would perish; it is an aggregate of them. He is miserable due to the blemishes of the objects of sense and love and hatred. There is no doubt about it. After the end of the body lives the (individual) soul that is similar to it. As like the spark of fire the soul shines, so the manifest and unmanifest comes to light—(or) is created. The pure soul is the highest Brahman, it is eternally awake; but the inner soul is bound by the great constituents of Prakṛti. When they are well-fed after having eaten food, the inner soul would be happy. Due to great happiness delusion is produced and due to it the mind errs. Then is produced sleep, which is of the nature of darkness (or ignorance) and increasing repose. When the sun would go along the path of Nādī (?) after having crossed Meru, then night would occur till the sun does not shine. The inner soul, when free from the darkness of the objects of sense, shines with the modes of the nature of the elements. The soul is seized by bodies of the former existences and nourished by the five elements. O you highly intelligent one, he goes to a high or a low position. The soul bound by faults is taken to the worldly existence. The individual soul protects the body, the middle one remains behind. The strong (vital air called) udāna throbs, and from that sound is produced. As a dry bellows when filled with air heaves, similarly samudāna strongly breathes due to sound. Udāna would be powerful due to the prowess of the soul. The body thus deluded becomes almost dead. Then that very delusive sleep goes (i.e. spreads) over his limbs. It proceeds over the heart, neck, mouth, tip of the nose. Contracting his hands he would remain. The air named Udāna is produced in the circle of the navel due to the prowess of the soul. He is very strong and checks power. There is no doubt that as the holder of a wooden wedge remains when tied with a rope, similarly, the vital air is well-connected with the soul. O you of an auspicious face, the vital air is connected with the inner soul. Having knowledge and reddened the inner soul runs. Recollecting the abodes obtained in the

former existences, he runs there. Remaining there the very wise one enjoys as he likes.

43b-50. Thus the inner soul sees dreams of various kinds. He sees the excellent ones, opposite of them, (all) united with his acts. He sees mountains, great inaccessible places, and high and low places. Know that to be due to wind. I shall now tell you about (the dream) caused by phlegm. He sees water, a river, a lake and places of water. O respectable lady, he sees fire and ample, excellent gold. Know that (dream) to be caused by biliousness. I am telling you what will happen (when a dream is seen). When a dream is seen in the morning, something nice will take place. It is united with one's acts, and shows gain or loss, O beautiful lady. O you of an excellent complexion, I have told you about the period of a dream. That which will happen will happen in Viṣṇu's case also. For that you saw the dream—you saw that bad dream.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

The End of Vihunḍa

Kāmodā said :

1-3. He is said to be soul, whose limit or form (even) all deities do not know, and in which all this is merged; and the expansion of whose illusion is this worldly existence. Listen, O Nārada. For what reason does my lord, the master of the world go to the worldly existence ? A man, who is bound by sinful and even meritorious acts, moves to the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, tell (me) why Viṣṇu would go to worldly existence ?

Nārada said :

4. O respectable lady, listen, listen to what the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) did. In front of Bhṛṅgu he took a pledge : "I shall protect the sacrifice."

5-8. But at the words of Indra, Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) suddenly left the best sacrifice and went to fight with demons. When the god left the sacrifice and went (to fight with the demons),

then the best wicked-minded demons came and destroyed the entire sacrifice. That Bhṛgu, the best among the meditating saints, cursed him : “Censured by my curse, have ten existences. Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) will take the fruit of his own act.” For that reason, O respectable lady, you saw the bad dream.

9-21. Saying so, that brāhmaṇa, Nārada, went to Brahmā’s heaven. Due to the great misery of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) she was afflicted at that time. The young lady wept piteously and repeatedly (expressed her grief by) uttering words like ‘alas’. O son, listen, she sat on the bank of the Ganges near the water; and due to grief she shed tears from her beautiful eyes. Those tears shed by her fell into the water of the Ganges; and her tears sank just into the water, and they again sprang up in the form of lotuses. Drifted in (the stream of) the water of the Ganges, they flowed. The best demon, deluded by Viṣṇu’s Māyā, saw them. Though told by the sage (viz. Nārada) he did not realize that they were due to grief. The demon being full of great joy, took them. That lord of demons, deluded by Viṣṇu’s Māyā, would worship (i.e. worshipped) Girijā’s husband (i.e. Śiva) with those seven crores of blooming lotuses. Then the mother of the world got angry, and said (these) words to Śiva : “O you highly intelligent one, see the impious act of this demon. With his mind overpowered by the passion of love, he is taking the lotuses, sprung from grief, and gone to (i.e. found in) the water of the Ganges. With those flowers, sprung from grief and sorrow, and causing distress and tormentation, the wicked-minded one would worship (you). How would great felicity be possible for him ?” “He will succeed in the same manner as he would worship me. He is bereft of truth and meditation. He has set his mind on Kāmodā. He has been (a demon) of a bad behaviour. O goddess, kill him with your lustre.” Hearing these words of the noble Śiva, (she said :) “O Śiva, by your order, I shall destroy him only.”

22-29. Saying so, the goddess (Pārvatī) remained (there) desiring to kill that Vihunḍa. She thought of a means to kill him. Taking up an illusory form of a magnanimous brāhmaṇa, she would worship (i.e. worshipped) lord Śiva with good flowers of Pārijāta. That wicked demon, overpowered by passion of love,

very much afflicted, thinking about her, and his mind set upon her would come (there) and destroy that divine worship. The sinful demon, tormented by Cupid's arrows remembered that great Illusion of Viṣṇu, seen before. Merely by remembering her, he (tormented) by strong Cupid (i.e. feeling of love), and afflicted by the grief due to separation (from her), he wept again and again. Overpowered by Death, the wicked-minded one took those (lotuses) sprung from grief, came there, desiring to worship the great lord (Śiva). Having destroyed the worship offered by goddess (Pārvatī), he would worship (i.e. worshipped Śiva) with (the lotuses) sprung from grief, through great greed. Tears fell continuously from the eyes of the wicked one on the top of the Phallus.

30. The goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) with (i.e. who had taken up) the form of a brāhmaṇa said to him, O you very intelligent one : “Who are you that worship the god with your mind always full of grief.

31. Your tears, impure, due to grief, are falling on the head of the god. Tell me the meaning of this.”

Vihunḍa said:

32-36a. Formerly I saw a lady, the wealth of all blissful things, endowed with all (good) marks, and a great abode of Cupid. Through attraction for her, being parched by Cupid, I became distressed. She said (to me) : “For union (with you) give me an excellent share (of your wealth). Worship the great lord with flowers springing from Kāmodā and difficult to be obtained. Throw round my neck the garland made of those flowers. Worship the great lord with flowers numbering seven crores.” For her I am worshipping the lord who gives the fruit (of one's act) with the flowers of Kāmodā, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons.”

Śrīdevī (i.e. Pārvatī) spoke :

36b-38a. Where is the devotion, where is the meditation, where is the knowledge of you, the wicked-minded one ? God has absolutely no connection with you. Tell me now as to how the excellent form of Kāmodā is. Where did you get the good flowers sprung from her laughter ?

Vihunḍa said :

38b-41a. I do not know devotion or meditation. I have never seen her. I have been everyday collecting them from the water of the Ganges. With those I worship Śiva alone. (This is what) I (have to) say. Magnanimous Śukra also told it to me. On his word I am everyday worshipping the lord of gods. I have now told you all that you asked me about.

Śrīdevī said :

41b-51. O wicked one, every morning you are worshipping the Phallus with flowers sprung from the weeping of Kāmodā due to grief. Obtain the fruit in the same way as you have worshipped the lord of lords with flowers. Having destroyed the divine worship you are worshipping (the lord) with flowers sprung from grief. This very terrible sin has arisen in your case. Therefore I will give you punishment. Enjoy the fruit of your deed!

Hearing her words he, dragged by Death, said to her : “O you wicked one, O you of a bad conduct, O you who are spoiling my undertaking, I shall undoubtedly kill you with this sword only.” Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, he took the sharp sword and the wicked-minded demon, desiring to kill him, ran to him. That goddess, the spouse of the lord, who was in the form of a brāhmaṇa, got angry. Seeing Vihunḍa to have come to her seat, she sent out a ‘hum’ sound. Due to that ‘hum’ sound, the mean demon fell down unconscious, like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt by (Indra) taking many forms. When that demon, destroying all people, fell down, people obtained peace, free from all misery and tormentation. For this reason, O child, that beautiful lady, with her mind full of grief, is lamenting on the bank of the Ganges. I have told you all this that you had asked.

Viṣṇu said :

52. O king, speaking thus to his good son, very intelligent Kuñjala, the lord of birds, ceased (speaking). He did not say anything more.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Dharmaśarman's Account

Viṣṇu said :

1-5. That righteous and very intelligent bird Kuñjala, having thus spoken to his sons, ceased speaking. He did not say anything to them. The best brāhmaṇa remaining under the banyan tree said to that great parrot : “Who are you, explaining Dharma while remaining in the form of a bird? Are you a god, or a gandharva, or are you a vidyādhara? Due to whose curse did you obtain this very sinful birth in the form of a parrot? O parrot, due to what do you possess such knowledge which is beyond the reach of senses? Of what great religious merit or penance is it the fruit? O you very intelligent one, why are you staying here in this disguise? Tell me the origin: whether you are a siddha or a god.”

Kuñjala said :

6-12. Oh! you have secured divine faculties; I know you, your excellent family and your name. (I know) your learning, and the power of your penance. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you everything as to why you are roaming over the earth. O you of a good vow, welcome to you. Sitting on an auspicious seat, resort to the cool shade. The origin of Brahmā is the Unmanifest one. From him Prajāpati was born. He the twice-born was Bhṛgu, endowed with virtues and a brāhmaṇa resembling Brahmā. His (son) was Bhārgava, who knew the essential nature of Dharma. In his family, you, Cyavana, are (born and) are famous in the world. O brāhmaṇa, I am not a god, I am not a gandharva, nor again I am a vidyādhara. O brāhmaṇa, listen to what I am going to say. A best brāhmaṇa was born in the family of Kaśyapa. He knew the sum and substance of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He explained all acts. He was well-known as a vidyādhara and was endowed with a (noble) family and character. O brāhmaṇa, he then shone (i.e. became famous) by his wealth, conduct and penance.

13. Three sons were born to that vidyādhara: Vasuśarman, Nāmaśarman and Dharmaśarman were the three (sons).

14. Of them I am the youngest, Dharmaśarman destitute of virtues. My brother Vasuśarman knew the meaning of the Vedas and sacred treatises.

15. He was well-endowed with conduct (i.e. was endowed with good conduct), and with excellences like learning. Nāmaśarman was very wise and like him (i.e. Vasuśarman) excelled in virtues.

16-17a. O you best one, listen, I alone was born a great fool. O brāhmaṇa, I never learnt the excellent purport of scriptures. Nor did I ever go to the excellent abode of a preceptor.

17b-18. Therefore, my father thought about me like this: 'The name of this son, viz. Dharmaśarman is meaningless. On the earth he is born neither as a learned one nor as a mine of virtues.'

19-24. Thinking like this, the pious one being very much afflicted, said to me : "O son, go to the preceptor's house (and) obtain the import of learning." Having heard these good words of my father, (I said to him :) "O father, I shall not go to the preceptor's house, which is very painful, where there is beating everyday, where there is knotting of the eyebrows etc. and where there is crying (daily); food is not seen there (even) by (doing) work; O best one, (please) listen. There is no sleep by day or at night; and there is no means of pleasure. Therefore, O father, it is full of grief. I shall not go to the preceptor's house. I shall not learn, I am eager to play. O father, by your favour, I shall eat, sleep and play happily and vigilantly day and night with children.

Knowing me to be a fool the pious one, being extremely grieved, said to me :

Vidyādhara said :

25-26. O son, do not act rashly. Exert yourself for (getting) knowledge. By means of learning happiness, glory, matchless fame, knowledge, heaven and salvation are obtained. Therefore, obtain learning (i.e. be learned). Knowledge is a source of unhappiness in the beginning, but later it gives happiness.

27-31. Therefore, O son, acquire knowledge, go to the preceptor's house.

I did not follow the words (of advice) of my father. Everyday I stayed here or there, and squandered money. O brāhmaṇa, people ridiculed and condemned me. I had then a sense of shame destroying life. O brāhmaṇa, I was ready to obtain knowledge. 'Which preceptor should I request ?' With this thought I was anxious and full of grief and sorrow. 'How shall I acquire learning ? How shall I have virtues ? How will heaven be possible for me ? How shall I achieve salvation ?' O brāhmaṇa, thinking like this, I reached old age.

32-39. Some time, I being grieved, sat in a temple. Impelled by my good fortune, a siddha came (there). He was without refuge (i.e. alone); he had overcome his hunger; was always joyful and desireless; O brāhmaṇa, he resorted to solitude; he possessed deep abstract meditation and had controlled his senses. He had been completely absorbed in the highest Brahman, and possessed knowledge, meditation and concentration of mind. O brāhmaṇa, I resorted to him who was of the form of knowledge and very intelligent. With a pure heart, and with devotion, I, having bowed my head, saluted the illustrious one and stood before him. I had become miserable and also luckless. O brāhmaṇa, he asked me : "Why are you suffering ? For what purpose are you experiencing misery like this ?" O best brāhmaṇa, that learned meditating saint thus spoke to me. I, a great fool, told him all my former account; (and asked him). "How can one be omniscient ? For this reason I am very unhappy. You are always my refuge." The illustrious one told me the entire means of knowledge.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Kuñjala's Story: A Preceptor Is a Holy Place

The siddha said:

1-16. Listen, I shall tell you the nature of knowledge. Knowledge has no body, no hands, no feet, and no eyes. It has no nose, no ears. Knowledge does not have the collection of bones. Who

indeed has seen knowledge ? What are its characteristic marks? It is without any form, it is eternal. The omniscient one knows everything. The sun illumines by day; the moon illumines at night; a lamp would illumine (i.e. illumines) the house. These remain in the world. O best one, listen, (I shall tell you) by what lustre is that place seen ? Fools, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā do not obtain it. Knowledge remaining in the body is inflamed by concentration and is matchless. That (highest) place will be seen through that (knowledge) and not by means of the moon, the sun etc. Knowledge is without hands and feet. It is eyeless, and is without ears. It moves everywhere. It grasps and sees everything. O best brāhmaṇa, it smells everything; it does hear; there is no doubt about this. There is no lamp like knowledge for the destruction of all darkness (of ignorance). It is seen in the heaven, on the earth, in the nether world—at every place. Those of wicked minds are not conscious of the knowledge that remains in the body. I shall explain to you the place of knowledge, from which knowledge springs up. O brāhmaṇa, it has always been kept in the hearts of beings. He who always desires to burn with the fire of discrimination the great sensual pleasures like sex and great allurements, becoming full of all tranquility, would crush objects of senses. Then would knowledge be born manifesting the full truth. This knowledge has the first principle as its basis; it is spotless and it manifests everything. Therefore have tranquility which enhances all pleasures. Be equanimous towards your enemy and your friend; and always restrict your food and control your senses. You should not form friendship (with anyone); enmity should be cast at a distance. Being without attachment, being desireless, and having resorted to a solitary place, you will possess spiritual knowledge, explaining everything. O child, there is no doubt that by my grace you, remaining at one place, will know the account of what is taking place in the three worlds.

Kuñjala said:

17-19. O brāhmaṇa, that siddha showed me the nature of knowledge. I always remained within his words (i.e. obeyed him). I am pervaded by his existence. By the favour of that good preceptor, I, (even though) seated at one place, know everything

that takes place in the three worlds. I have told you my entire account. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what else I should tell you.

Cyavana said:

20. How did you, the best among the learned, reach (i.e. get birth in) the species of parrots ? Tell me the reason of it that will dispel all my doubt.

Kuñjala said:

21-27. Sin is produced through contact, and also merit is produced through contact. Therefore an honest person should avoid a worthy (person) or the opposite of him. (Once) a sinful hunter had brought a young one of a parrot after catching it. He was eager to sell it. Seeing it to be beautiful and speaking agreeably and cleverly, a brāhmaṇa took (i.e. purchased) it, and affectionately gave it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, everyday I remained in intellectual meditation. Due to its child-like nature it perched on my hand out of curiosity. O you best brāhmaṇa, I, with my mind always set upon the parrot of the form of (i.e. like) my son, was infatuated by its impatient words. It too used to instruct me : “O father, father, (please) be seated; O glorious one, go for a bath; now worship the god.” It would talk to me in such pleasant words. Due to the diversion caused by its words I forgot my excellent knowledge.

28-33. (Once) I went to a forest for (collecting) flowers and enjoying fruits. The bird was taken away by a cat to cause me (i.e. which caused me) grief. I heard from my well-behaved associates living in my company that the bird was killed by a cat and eaten by it only. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, hearing that the bird talking agreeably was dead I was extremely afflicted with great grief and unhappiness. I was bewildered due to grief on this account and was very much pained. O best brāhmaṇa, I was caught in a great mesh of infatuation. With my mind moved by infatuation I cried: ‘O Rāmacandra, O king of parrots, O lord of celebrity’, O brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, now listen: then I became tormented with grief and separation due to my act.

34-38. I forgot the knowledge made clear to me by the siddha also. I, tormented with grief, remembered that parrot

speaking agreeably. O Bhārgava, crying like: 'O child, O child, who, except you, will now advise me with sentences, with well-formed words. O lord of birds, having pleased me with wonderful stories, and abandoned me in this solitary garden, where have you gone? Tell me now by which fault I am stained.' Being perplexed I lamented with (i.e. uttering) such piteous words, and was very much tormented with grief.

39-42a. Due to that embarrassment and deluded by affection for it I died. O best brāhmaṇa, I was born with that temperament and thought with which I died. I was put in the womb which caused knowledge and remembrance (in me). I remembered the former deed done by me—a sinner and a fool. (I thought:) 'What have I, whose spirit is not disciplined, to do?' Being in the womb, I thought about it only.

42b-53. Due to that I obtained knowledge which was pure and which manifested everything (to me); and by the grace of that preceptor I got excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, by the clean water of his words the dirt of my body—internal and external—was washed, and it was made pure. I obtained the birth of a bird as a parrot. O brāhmaṇa, when I, thinking of the parrot—thus conceiving thoughts about it (only), died, I was again born on the earth in the form of a parrot. Beings are born with that form, and are intent upon that, have those virtues, that appearance, about which thoughts occur to them at the time of their death. O best brāhmaṇa, O you very intelligent one, there is no doubt that due to the thought at the time of my death I obtained incomparable knowledge here (i.e. in my existence as a parrot). Therefore, I (am able) to see what has taken place and what will happen. There is no doubt that even though I am staying here I know the entire present due to my knowledge. O very wise and very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, for the emancipation of human beings moving in the mundane existence there is no holy place cutting the bonds (of karman) like a preceptor. O Bhārgava, listen; I have told you all this. O Brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you all that you had asked. The holy place (in the form) of a preceptor removes all external dirt from a place on the land or in water. The holy place in the form of a preceptor would

destroy sins committed in other (i.e. former) births. This moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor) is excellent.

Viṣṇu said :

54. O best king, that very intelligent parrot, having thus explained the truth to that noble Cyavana, ceased (speaking).

55. I have explained to you this excellent moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor). Well-being to you; ask for a boon that you have in your mind.

Vena said :

56-57a. I do not desire a kingdom; nor do I long for anything (else). O Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), with my body (intact) I desire to reach your body. If you desire to grant a boon I think (you should give me) this boon.

Viṣṇu said :

57b-62. O king, perform a horse sacrifice and Rājasūya sacrifice. O you very intelligent one, make presents of cows, land, gold, water and grains. By making presents a terrible sin like killing a brāhmaṇa perishes. There is no doubt that by making gifts all the four goals of human life are definitely accomplished. Therefore, O king, presents should be made dedicating them to me. I fulfil the intention of the person with which he gives (presents) dedicating them to me. Due to your having seen the sages and having come in contact with them, the heap of your sins has dropped down. There is no doubt that at the end of the sacrifice you will reach my body.

Speaking thus to that Vena Viṣṇu vanished.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Prthu's Righteous Rule

Sūta said :

1. When Viṣṇu disappeared, that very intelligent king Vena became anxious as to where the lord of gods had gone.

2-3a. Being full of great joy and having pondered the best king having called the greatest king with sweet words, then said to that magnanimous one with great joy.

3b-6. "O son, you my son have emancipated me from a great sin in the world. O Pṛthu, now you have made bright my dynasty. I ruined it with my faults; you have illumined it with your virtues. I shall perform a horse-sacrifice and shall give many presents. Due to your graciousness I shall today bodily go to Viṣṇu's heaven. O you best and very prosperous king, gather the necessities (for the sacrifice). O you blessed one, invite brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas."

7. Thus was ordered Pṛthu by the noble Vena. The high-souled (Pṛthu) respectfully said to his father :

8. "O great king, rule over the kingdom; enjoy divine, human and righteous pleasures agreeable to you. Offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu."

9-14. Speaking thus to his father, intent on knowledge, and saluting him, the lord of the earth (i.e. Pṛthu) carefully took his bow with arrows and ordered all his soldiers : "Proclaim (my order) on the earth: No sin should be committed through the deeds of three kinds. He who, having violated the order of king Vena, will commit a sin, will be killed. There is no doubt about this. Gifts should be given; and O all men, setting your mind on him and being free from jealousy, offer sacrifices to Viṣṇu." O brāhmaṇas, having given such an instruction Vena's son went to a penance-grove for (practising) penance. Giving up all faults and restraining his senses from their objects, he remained without food for a hundred years.

15. Being pleased with his penance, Brahmā said to Pṛthu : "Tell me the reason for which you are practising penance."

Prthu said:

16-20. My father Vena is very intelligent and glōrious. Let Viṣṇu (himself) cut off the head of that person who in Vena's kingdom commits a sin. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible disc. Let the heads of those who desire to commit sins mentally, through (physical) deeds or words, be snapped like a ripe fruit from a tree. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible great disc. Listen, O lord of gods. I desire this boon only from you. If you, O lord of gods, desire to grant a boon, then do that by which my father is not stained by the sins of his subjects. O you four-faced (Brahmā), give (i.e. satisfy this) best desire; my salutation to you.

Brahmā said :

21-26. Let it be so, O glorious one; your father is absolved. He is guided by Viṣṇu and by you, his son, O Pṛthu.

Having thus told (i.e. given a boon to) Pṛthu, the lord left. Pṛthu came back and became (engaged) in royal duties. O best brāhmaṇas, nobody committed a sin in the kingdom of the son of Vena. The head of him who conceives a sin through the deeds of three kinds, is cut off as with disc (by Viṣṇu). Since then nobody committed a sin. Thus was the order of the magnanimous son of Vena. All people always behaved well. Being intent upon all religious duties they lived by giving gifts and food. By the grace of that king they thrived with all pleasures.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

The Merit of Listening to or Reciting This Purāṇa

Sūta said :

1-4a. Having well received the order of Vena that very religious prince, Pṛthu, collected all auspicious necessities (for the sacrifice). Having invited all brāhmaṇas born in various countries, king Vena performed a horse-sacrifice. He gave various

kinds of gifts to brāhmaṇas. The lord of the earth physically went to Viṣṇu's heaven. The religious-minded one eternally lives with Viṣṇu.

4b-12a. I have thus told you the entire account of that king, which terminates all sins and destroys all misery. That religious-minded king Pṛthu ruled the earth. The best king milked the earth with the three worlds. He pleased his subjects with virtuous and religious deeds. I have narrated to you the entire Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The first is the Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa and the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa. I shall again tell you the greatness of Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The sin of the best man who (just) listens to one verse of this Khaṇḍa everyday, perishes. O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the religious merit of him who, the wise one, listens devoutly to a chapter (of this Khaṇḍa). He gets that fruit which is obtained by a gift of a thousand cows to brāhmaṇas on an auspicious parvan-day; and Viṣṇu is pleased with him. A man who everyday reads this Padma Purāṇa, will not meet with difficulties in the Kali Age.

Vyāsa said :

12b-13a. O you lotus-born one, why is it that very terrible dangers do not come to the meritorious man who listens to the Padma Purāṇa?

Brahmā said :

13b-28. That fruit, O dear one, which is said to be the fruit of a horse-sacrifice, is seen in (the recital of or listening to) the Padma Purāṇa. That auspicious sacrifice, viz. the horse-sacrifice does not at all exist in the Kali Age. That which is (the Padma) Purāṇa is indeed equal to the horse-sacrifice. Sinful men sticking on sinful ways do not enjoy that meritorious fruit of the horse-sacrifice which gives salvation. O best brāhmaṇa, in the Kali Age, men do not enjoy the merit of this meritorious Purāṇa called Padma like the merit of the horse-sacrifice. In the Kali Age sinful men have to go to the ocean of hell. Why will they (then) listen to the meritorious (Purāṇa), accomplishing the four goals (of human life). He, who has listened to this Purāṇa called Padma, has acquired the entire means of the four goals (of human life). Therefore, sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice have disappeared in the Kali Age, O highly intelligent one. They have,

with the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and their notes, gone to heaven. Great faith is produced (even) before in a pious man to listen (to the Padma Purāṇa) who, being endowed with goodness, having faith, and devoted to the lord, desires to listen to it with his sons and wife. No great danger would come to a man who listens (to it). But faithlessness is first produced in the reciter and the listener (who are impious). O best brāhmaṇa, even greed is produced in the listener. Great and terrible delusion caused by god Viṣṇu always ruins the listener. Polluters and revilers and sinners are coming up everyday. O Vyāsa, the good-minded one should realise: 'Oh ! A danger appears to have come up to me', (and) he should perform a sacrifice. With great sacred prayers (in honour) of Viṣṇu and hymns (addressed to) Viṣṇu, which give great merit, with the hymn '*Viṣṇorarāṭa*' (from the Viṣṇu-sūkta), with the hymn '*Sahasrasirṣā*' (from the Puruṣasūkta), with the good hymn '*Indam Viṣṇu*', with the hymn '*Ā Brahma*', with the hymn sacred to Śiva—he should thus perform a sacrifice. So also with the Bṛhat Sāman hymn and with the hymn of twelve letters (viz. *Om namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*). He should perform the sacrifice with the hymn sacred to the particular deity to whom the sacrifice is offered.

29-35a. He should perform the sacrifice with more than eight sesamum seeds, (ladles of) ghee, and sacred wood-sticks of the palāśa (tree). O brāhmaṇa, he should also instal the (representations of) planets and worship them. There (i.e. in the sacrifice) he should worship (Gaṇeśa) the destroyer of calamities, and Śārādā—the chief goddess. He should also worship Jātaveda, Mahāmāyā Caṇḍikā, and the lord of the soil with sesamum seeds, rice and ghee and with the hymns (in honour) of those (deities). He should perform the sacrifice in this way. He should give presents to brāhmaṇas. He should give a gift along with a cow according to his capacity. Then calamities disappear and the Purāṇa would accomplish perfection. I shall tell you about the calamity of (i.e. which befalls) him who does not do like this : A disease giving great pain is produced in his body; grief due to (the death of) his wife or son takes place; so also his wealth is lost; undoubtedly he suffers from many severe diseases. He in whose house there is no wealth (to be given to brāhmaṇas) should observe a fast.

35b-41a. When Ekādaśī arrives properly, he should worship Viṣṇu with a devout mind in the sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity. According to his wealth he should then feed the brāhmaṇas. Then having offered it with a solemn vow and offerings to Viṣṇu, he should take food with relatives, sons and wife. Then he will attain perfection. Those who are devoted to Dharma should listen to the entire text of the Purāṇa. By (doing) that the four goals (of human life) are accomplished, not otherwise. Listen, O brāhmaṇa; in the Kṛta Age sinless men listened to the Purāṇa called Brahma, which consisted of one lakh and twenty-five thousand verses.

41b-49. When the Tretā Age arrived, men listened to the entire Purāṇa called Pādma, the number of verses in which was half a lakh and two thousand. Enjoying the fruit of the four goals, they would again reach Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, in the Dvāpara Age, the text called Padma is said to have twentytwo thousand verses narrated by Brahmā, the highest soul. In the Kali Age, men, devoted to Viṣṇu, will read the text called Padma, consisting of twelve thousand verses only. In all these four texts there is the same import and there is the same sentiment; the remaining (portion) is simply the expansion of the account. The twelve thousand (verses) will disappear, O best one, and, when Kali Age has arrived, the first (text) will again appear. Having listened to the Bhūmikhanda, a man is free from all sins, is free from all sorrows and gets rid of all diseases. Giving up all other (activities) like the muttering of the names (of a deity), giving gifts, and (studying) sacred texts, a man should carefully listen to (the Purāṇa) called Padma. The first is Sṛṣṭikhanda, the second is Bhūmikhanda, the third is Svargakanda, the fourth Pātāla, the fifth is Uttarakanda, destroying all sins.

50. One who devoutly listens to the five Khandas in the serial order, obtains the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows.

51. O brāhmaṇas, with great luck, the five Khandas, are obtained (by a man). They are said to give salvation. This is true, (quite) true. There is no doubt about this.

III SVARGAKHAṆḌA

(Section on the Heavens)

CHAPTER ONE

Sūta Romaharṣaṇa Agrees to Narrate Padma Purāṇa

1. Om, salutation to (Gaṇeśa) the remover of obstacles. Salutation to the glorious one. I salute the lotus-like feet of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), which are always saluted by Indirā (i.e. Lakṣmī), which are called ‘the best’, which are fixed in the hearts of people, and which are the only, absolutely excellent abode of the great people.

2-6. Once all the sages resembling blazing fire, all the sages living on the Himālaya mountain and masters of the Vedas, knowing(events) of (all) the three times (viz. past, present and future), magnanimous ones, resorting to (i.e. doing) many meritorious (acts), those who lived on the Mahendra mountain, the Vindhya mountain, in the Arbuda forest, in the Puṣkara forest, on the Śrīśaila mountain, in Kurukṣetra, in Dharmāraṇya, in Daṇḍakāraṇya, Jambumārga, in Satya(-loka)—these and many other spotless sages came along with their disciples, as they were eager to see Śaunaka.

7-8a. The ascetics, having duly worshipped Śaunaka, and being well-honoured by him, sat, in due order, on beautiful seats meant for holy sages and offered by Śaunaka.

8b-12a. They told one another stories about Kṛṣṇa. At the end of (the narration of) the stories by the sages of pure hearts, there came the very bright, very lustrous Sūta, Vyāsa’s disciple, named Romaharṣaṇa, and well-versed in the Purāṇas. He duly saluted them ; they also honoured him. The great, glorious sages, the ascetics, like Śaunaka, asked Romaharṣaṇa, Sūta, Vyāsa’s disciple, who was properly and comfortably seated:

The sages said :

12b-15. O very intelligent Romaharṣaṇa of a good vow and well-versed in the legends of the past, formerly we have heard

from you stories from the Purāṇas. Now we, who are delighted, are engaged in (narrating) the story of Viṣṇu, since the devotion to Hari is the greatest Dharma of all men. (Please) narrate (to us) again the Purāṇa connected with the account of Viṣṇu. Any other story about Viṣṇu, O Śūta, is said to be like a crematory. That is a sacred text which in itself remains in the form of Viṣṇu's story.

16-18. Tell us the name of holy places giving merit. Wherefrom has this mobile and immobile world sprung? By whom is it looked after? In which (object) is it dissolved? Which places of pilgrimage are meritorious? Which mountains are venerable? Which rivers are very meritorious, auspicious and remover of the sins of men? O distinguished one, tell us all this in the proper order.

Śūta said:

19-21. Well, well, glorious ones, you have asked well, O ascetics. Having saluted that (Vedavyāsa) I shall narrate to you the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma. I always salute that Vedavyāsa, Parāśara's son, who is the greatest man, who is the only source to be known by all, who is the support of learning, who gives great knowledge, who is to be known by the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, who is always tranquil, who is the object of his own intellect, who is great due to pure lustre, whose glory has spread. My salutation to that revered Vyāsa of unlimited lustre, by whose grace I shall narrate this story about Nārāyaṇa.

22-24. I shall narrate the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma which contains fiftyfive thousand verses and has six khaṇḍas (i.e. sections). There (i.e. in that Purāṇa) the first one is the Ādikhaṇḍa. Then comes the Bhūmikhaṇḍa. After that is Brahmakhaṇḍa. Then follows the Pātāla Khaṇḍa. The next one is known as Kriyākhaṇḍa, and the last one is Uttarakhaṇḍa. This is the great, wonderful lotus, of which the world is full.

25. It is based on the account of that (lotus); therefore the wise call it 'Padma'. This Purāṇa is spotless and excellent, (describing) the greatness of Viṣṇu.

26-31. (It is the Purāṇa) which, formerly, Viṣṇu, the god of gods, narrated to Brahmā, which Brahmā told to Nārada, and

which Nārada narrated to my preceptor. Vyāsa taught me, very dear to him, all the Purāṇas with (treatises on) history, and collections (of verses). I shall narrate to you that Purāṇa, very difficult to obtain, hearing which a man is free from such sins as killing a brāhmaṇa. He who listens to it gets (the merit of) having bathed at all the holy places. It gives salvation just by listening to it with great faith and devotion. Even if a person listens to it without faith and devotion, he gets a heap of merit. Therefore make all efforts to make the Padma Purāṇa the (honourable) guest of your ears (i.e. make all efforts to listen to Padma Purāṇa). In (i.e. from) it I shall narrate the Ādikhaṇḍa which destroys all sins. The sages, who are here, should, along with their disciples, listen to it.

CHAPTER TWO

The Creation of the Elements, Prakṛti etc.

Sūta said :

1. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall first tell you about the first creation, by which the eternal lord, the highest soul, is known.

2-4. O best brāhmaṇas, in the creations there was nothing (left) after the universal destruction. There was only one lustre called Brahman, the cause of everything. It was the ocean of joy, it was pure, and that which those longing for salvation, desire. It was omniscient because it was of the form of knowledge; it was unlimited, immutable. It was indestructible, always very clear, fixed, great and pervasive.

5-16a. At the time of creation that modification of the form of knowledge merged in itself; it began to create. From it came up Pradhāna (also called Prakṛti). From it sprang Mahān. Mahān is of three kinds: Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. As the seed is covered with the skin Mahān is covered with Pradhāna. From the principle of Mahān came up Ahaṁkāra of three kinds : Vaikārika, Taijasa and Bhūtādi. As Mahān is covered by Pradhāna, so is Ahaṁkāra covered by Mahān. The Bhūtādi (i.e. Ahaṁkāra)

then produced the subtle element of sound. From that subtle element space having the characteristics of sound was produced. Ahaṁkāra covered the subtle element of sound and (the gross element of) ether. The subtle element of ether similarly produced the subtle element of touch. (Then) very strong Vāyu (air) came up; it is said to be having the characteristics of touch. The subtle element of space covered the subtle element of air. The air, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of colour. Fire is produced from Vāyu; that is called the quality of colour. The subtle element of Vāyu (air) covered the subtle element of colour. Fire, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of taste. Therefrom the subtle element of water came up. The subtle element of taste covered the subtle element of colour. The (subtle element of) water, effecting a change, produced the subtle element of smell. From that this earth, with more qualities than possessed by all (other) elements came up. Since it is an aggregate of that, therefore smell is said to be its quality.

16b-19. They are called subtle and primary elements because they remain (in that condition) in the respective (elements). The subtle elements are devoid of specific perceptible characters. The specific characters are later and are in accordance with the order. These (five) subtle elements are derived from the Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra. O superior sages rich in penance, I have told (you) in brief (about the creation). The ten organs of sense are said to be Taijasa (or Rājasa) and Vaikārika (or Sāttvika). The philosophers have enumerated the mind as the eleventh (organ) here (i.e. in addition to the ten). There are five organs of knowledge and five organs of action.

20-30. O you purifies of your families, I shall enumerate them and their functions. (The organs of knowledge are:) hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell. They become joined with intellect for getting perception like sound. (The organs of action are:) anus, sex organ, hands, feet, and mouth is said to be the fifth. Their functions are said to be : excretion, joy (due to sexual act), grasping, movement and speech (respectively). O brāhmaṇas, ether, air, fire, water and earth are united with successive qualities like sound etc. They have various kinds of strength; remaining separate i.e. without combining themselves,

they were unable to create beings. These beginning with Mahat and ending with specific characters, having all come together, being united with one another, resorting to one another, coming together, having the same target, and having complete union due to the direction of Puruṣa and being favoured by Pradhāna, produce the egg. O very wise ones, that egg always grew like a water-bubble from the elements. It, remaining in the water, grew, having risen from Prakṛti, and an excellent place of Viṣṇu in the form of Brahmā. In it the lord Viṣṇu, the master of the universe, and of an unmanifest form, remained after having taken the form of Brahmā. Of it, of the essence of Mahat, those generated by sweat were the egg, the mountains were the outer skin, and the oceans were the fluid in the womb. Oceans with mountains and islands, the group of the worlds with the luminaries, all (this) along with gods, demons and human beings—was (present) in that egg.

31-34. By the desire of Śrī Viṣṇu that golden egg turned into the lotus which rose from the navel of Viṣṇu having neither beginning nor end. The highest Viṣṇu having the Rajas quality, and taking the form of Brahmā, himself proceeds to create the world; and protects what is created as long as the duration of the kalpa (i.e. the day of Brahmā) lasts; he would annihilate it in the form of Narasimha or Rudra. The great soul of the form of Brahmā creates, (then) desires to protect the entire world by taking the form of Rāma etc. Then he became (i.e. becomes) Rudra to swallow it.

CHAPTER THREE

Various Mountains and Regions of the Earth

The sages aid:

1-2. O best one, tell us fully the names of the rivers, mountains of the countries, and of those who have resorted to (i.e. are living on) the earth, O you who know the measures, the full measure of the earth, and about the forests also.

Sūta said:

3-10. O very wise one, the gross elements in the universe are five in all; and the wise say that they are equal. (They are:) earth, water, and air, fire and ether. All of them are attended with attributes. Earth is the chief of them. The sages knowing the essential nature (of things) have said that the attributes of earth are sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. O brāhmaṇas, four attributes are (found) in water. It does not have smell. Fire (or light) has three attributes: sound, touch and colour. Air has (two attributes, viz.) sound and touch. Ether has (the attribute of) sound only. O brāhmaṇas, in the five elements these five attributes (are found), and (depending) on them the creatures in all the worlds exist. There is homogeneity when they do not overcome one another; but when they, becoming uneven, enter one another, then the beings spring up (into life) with bodies. This is not otherwise. They are destroyed in order. They come into existence in order (i.e. they are destroyed in the same order as they come into existence). All of them are immeasurable. Their form is the lord (himself).

11-17. Wherever the creatures consisting of the five elements are seen running about, men speak about their measures with (the help of their) reason. One should not, however, (seek to) understand matters that are inconceivable by reason. O best sages, (now) I shall describe to you the island of (i.e. called) Sudarśana. O illustrious ones, this island is circular—has the form of a wheel. It is covered with river waters, and with mountains resembling oceans, also with cities of various sizes and delightful countries; it is full of trees endowed with flowers and fruits; is having grains and (other) wealth. It is surrounded on all sides by the salt ocean. As a man would see his own face in a mirror, in the same way the circular Sudarśana island can be seen (in the ocean). Two of its parts (appear) like a pippala tree and two like a large hare. On all its sides it is surrounded by all (kinds of) herbs. Other than this (portion) all else should be known to be water. I shall describe the rest in brief.

The sages said:

18-20a. O intelligent one, you have briefly and duly given

an exposition of it. You know the essential nature of all things. (Now) O Sūta, tell us (about it) in detail. (First) tell us about dimension of the space which looks like a hare. Then you will describe (the land resembling) the pippala (tree).

Thus asked by them Sūta said (these) words :

Sūta said :

20b-24. O very wise ones, these six jewelled mountains stretching (from) east (to west) have gone into the eastern and western oceans. (They are:) Himavat, Hemakūṭa, the best mountain Niṣadha; so also Nīla abounding in lapis lazuli, Śveta resembling the moon; and the mountain named Śṛṅgavat covered with all (kinds of) metals. O brāhmaṇas, these mountains are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The distance between them measures thousands of yojanas. There are many kingdoms. O best ones, they are called Varṣa. Beings of various species live in them at all places.

25-31a. This is (called) Bhāratavarṣa. Beyond it is Haimavat. The land beyond Hemakūṭa is called Harivarṣa. To the south of Nīla, and to the north of Niṣadha, there is a mountain called Mālyavat stretching from the east. Beyond Mālyavat there is the mountain Gandhamādana. Between the two (i.e. Mālyavat and Gandhamādana) there is the golden mountain Meru globular in shape. It is bright like the (young) morning sun, and like fire without smoke. It is eightyfour thousand yojanas high. O best brāhmaṇas, its depth (also) is eightyfour thousand yojanas. It stands covering the worlds lying above, below and in the horizontal direction. By its side these four islands are situated, O brāhmaṇas: Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla and Jambudvīpa, O best ones; so also Uttarakuru which is resorted to by men who have practised virtuous deeds.

31b-41a. The bird Sumukha, the son of Supārśva, on seeing the big birds of golden colour (on Meru) thought: 'I shall abandon this mountain Meru since the birds there have no difference among them like good, middling and bad ones.' The Sun, the best among the luminaries, constantly goes round it. So also the Moon with the constellations, and Vāyu go round it. O very wise ones, the mountain is endowed with divine flowers, it

is covered with all auspicious golden houses. On that mountain hosts of gods, gandharvas, deities and demons always sport, accompanied by the bevy of celestial nymphs. Brahmā, Śiva and Śakra, the lord of gods gather there, and perform various sacrifices with munificent gifts. (The gandharva) Tumbura, Nārada, (and the two gandharva brothers) Hāhā and Hūhū, having gone there, praise with various hymns the best (of the gods). Well-being to you; the seven high-souled sages and Kaśyapa, the lord of created beings always go there on a parvan-day (i.e. the full-moon day or the new-moon day). On the summit of that mountain only Uśanas or Kavi (i.e. Śukra) is honoured by the demons. It has jewels with gold; so also other jewelled mountains are (parts) of Meru. The lord Kubera gets the fourth part of it. Of that wealth he gives the sixteenth part to human beings.

41b-45a. Adjacent to this mountain is the Karṇikāra grove, which is divine, which is full of flowers of all seasons, which is charming and is elevated with a mass of rocks. There the revered lord Śiva himself, the cause of beings, surrounded by divine beings and accompanied by Umā, and wearing a garland of Karṇikāra flowers reaching his feet, and shining with his three eyes resembling three risen suns, sports. Truthful siddhas, practising severe penance and of good vows (alone can) see him. The great god cannot be seen by those of a wicked conduct.

45b-48. From the peak of the mountain, O best brāhmaṇas, flows, like a stream of milk, the pious, auspicious Ganges, also called Bhāgīrathī, of a universal form, immeasurable, flowing out with a fearful noise, resorted to by the most pious beings, (and falls) with a great speed into the charming lake of Candramas. She has produced that auspicious lake resembling an ocean. The bearer of Pināka (i.e. Śiva) held on his head for a hundred thousand years that Ganges which was incapable of being borne even by the mountains.

49-54. O best brāhmaṇas, Ketumāla is on the western side of Meru; (and) O brāhmaṇas, the country called Jambukhaṇḍa is there only. O best ones, there the span of human life is ten thousand years. The men are of golden complexion and the women resemble celestial nymphs. Human beings there are healthy, free from sorrow and always of cheerful minds. Men born there are of the brightness of heated gold. Kubera, the lord

of guhyakas, surrounded by groups of the celestial nymphs, rejoices with the demons on the peaks of Gandhamādana. By the side of Gandhamādana (there live) other (people) with their sin destroyed. They have a long span of life of eleven thousand years. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are dark in complexion, lustrous and very strong. All the women have the complexion of lotus and are very beautiful.

55-67a. Śveta has blue lotuses; beyond Śveta is the excellent country called Hairaṇyaka. (Beyond that) is Airāvata having several countries, O brāhmaṇas. O glorious ones, there are two countries, of the form of a bow on the south and the north. Ilāvṛtta is in the middle. (Thus) there are five divisions. Of these the succeeding country excels (preceding ones) in attributes like span of life, health, righteousness, desirable objects and material things. (In spite of differences) O best ones, beings in all these countries live together (amicably). O glorious ones, this earth is covered with mountains. The great Hemakūṭa is (also) the mountain called Kailāsa. There god Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubera) rejoices with guhyakas. To the north of Kailāsa and near the Maināka mountain there is the very great, divine mountain called Maṇimaya having golden peaks. By its side there is a large, divine, bright, charming lake called Viṣṇusaras, with golden sands (on its banks), where Bhagīratha, having seen Gaṅgā, (also called) Bhāgīrathī, lived for many years. There are sacrificial pillars decked with gems, and lands full of gold. The very glorious thousand-eyed (god, i.e. Indra) performed sacrifices there, and attained perfection. The eternal creator, of a bright lustre, and the lord of beings, is worshipped there by (beings in) all the worlds. There (reside) Nara, Nārayaṇa, Brahmā, Manu and Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva) as the fifth. The celestial (Gaṅgā) taking three paths, first appeared there after moving from Brahmā's heaven, and flowed in seven streams : Vaṭodakā, Sarasvatī, Pārvatī, Jambūnadī, Sītā, Gaṅgā and Sindhu as the seventh. She is inconceivable, has a divine appellation, and is endowed with prowess.

67b-71a. There, at the end of the yuga (i.e. at the time of creation), a thousand sacrifices are performed (by gods and sages). Sarasvatī (in her course) appears at places and disappears at (other) places. These seven (streams of) Gaṅgā are well-known

in the three worlds. Demons live on Himavat and guhyakas on Hemakūṭa. Serpents and snakes reside in Niṣadha; and Gokarṇa is a penance-grove. The mountain Śveta is said to be (the abode) of gods and demons. Gandharvas always live on Niṣadha, and the brāhmaṇic sages on Nīla. O glorious ones, Śṛṅgavān is (said to be) a place where gods move.

71b-75. O illustrious ones, these are the seven countries according to the division (of the world). Mobile and immobile creatures have encamped here. Prosperity of various kinds—both providential and human—of these (creatures) is seen (there). It cannot be enumerated. The graceful ones are to be believed. O brāhmaṇas, (I have told you) about the divine form of the hare about which you had asked me. I have also told you about the two countries lying adjacent to the country (having the form like that) of a hare in the south and in the north. They are (the hare's) ears. They are Karṇadvīpa and Kāśyapadvīpa. O Brāhmaṇas, the beautiful Malaya mountain has rocks of (as in) Karṇadvīpa. This other country looks like the hare's form.

CHAPTER FOUR

Uttarakuru, Bhadrāśva, Mālyavat

The sages said:

1. O Sūta, O you very intelligent one, tell us in full (about the countries) to the north, west and east of Meru, so also about the Mālyavat mountain.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇas, on the south of Nīla, and the northern side of Meru there is the auspicious land called Uttarakuru, where siddhas have resided.

3. The trees there have sweet fruits and always have flowers and fruits. The flowers are very fragrant and the fruits are tasty.

4-5. O best brāhmaṇas, some trees there give all the fruits as desired by (one who approaches them). O best brāhmaṇas, there are other trees called kṣīrin (i.e. yielding milk). All they always ooze milk that resembles nectar. They also yield clothes and in their fruits are ornaments.

6. The entire land is full of gems and has fine golden sands, O you ascetics, and there are trees bearing no fruit (but) pleasant to touch in all seasons.

7. Men that are born there have dropped from the world of gods. They are born in pure, noble families, and are very handsome.

8-11. There twins (of opposite sexes) are born and women resemble the celestial nymphs (in beauty). They (i.e. the men and women) drink the nectar-like milk of those milk-yielding trees. The twins that are born there grow equally during the (proper) period. Both have similar beauty, virtues and dresses also. They are fit for one another like the cakravāka birds, O brāhmaṇas. Those people are healthy and always of a cheerful mind. O glorious one, they live for ten thousand and ten hundred years, and do not desert each other.

12. Birds called Bhāruḍa, having sharp beaks and great strength, carry them away when dead and throw them into valleys.

13. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you in brief (the country called) Uttarakuru. I shall now duly describe to you the eastern side of Meru.

14. O ascetics, in the country called Bhadrāśva which is the chief (country), there is a grove (called) Bhadrāśāla, where there are huge trees called kālāmra.

15-18. O glorious ones, the kālāmra trees always bear flowers and fruits and are auspicious. They are a yojana tall and are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there are white (in complexion), bright and very strong. The women have the complexion of lotuses, are beautiful and pleasant to look at. They have complexion like that of the moon, have four (principal) colours and their faces are like the full moon. Their bodies are cool like the moon and they are skilled in dancing and singing. O best brāhmaṇas, the span of life there is ten thousand years. They who drink the juice of kālāmra, always remain young.

19-21a. On the south of Nīla, on the north of Niṣadha there is a huge, ancient, Jambu tree. It is auspicious, and grants all desired objects. It is resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The ancient country Jambudvīpa is so called after its name. (The height of the jambu tree) is a thousand and a hundred yojanas, O best brāhmaṇas.

21b-26. Similarly on the eastern peak of Mālyavat there are small mountains. O brāhmaṇas, Mālyavat measures fifty thousand yojanas. Men born there resemble gold (in their complexion). All of them have fallen from Brahmā's heaven and all expound the Vedas. They practise divine penance and live in perpetual celibacy. They enter the sun for protecting the beings. Sixty thousand and sixty hundred of them surround the sun, and go before Aruṇa. Being heated with the sun's heat for sixty thousand years they (ultimately) enter the moon's orb.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ramaṇaka, Hiraṇmaya, Airāvata

The sages said:

1. O best one, tell us duly the names of countries and mountains, so also (about) those that live on those mountains.

Sūta said:

2-4. On the south of Śveta and on the north of Niṣadha there is the country named Ramaṇaka. The men there are born in pure noble families, and all of them are handsome; and all the men that are born there are without enemies. O glorious ones, they being always cheerful, live for eleven thousand and five hundred years.

5-6a. On the south of Nīla and on the north of Niṣadha there is a country called Hiraṇmaya, where there is the river Hairaṇvatī, where, O very wise ones, lives this best bird, the king of birds (i.e. Garuḍa).

6b-8a. The brāhmaṇas there follow (i.e. perform) sacrifices, and the archers are handsome. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are very strong and always have cheerful hearts. O you great ascetics, they live for a span of twelve thousand and five hundred years.

8b-11a. O best brāhmaṇas, the mountain has only three sacred summits. One of them is full of jewels; (another) one, golden and wonderful; (still another) one is full of all gems and looks beautiful with mansions. There the respectable self-luminous lady Śaṇḍinī always lives. O best brāhmaṇas, beyond the Śṛṅgavat mountain, and on its north and near the ocean is the country called Airāvata.

11b-14a. The sun has no scope there; men do not decay. (Only) the moon with the stars covers it like a light. The men there are born with the splendour of lotuses, with the complexion of lotuses and with eyes resembling lotus-petals, and with the fragrance of lotuses. They are unfallen, of agreeable fragrance (possessed by their bodies); they do not eat food and have their senses controlled. O brāhmaṇas, all of them have fallen from the world of gods, and are without any blemish.

14b-15a. O best brāhmaṇas, those most religious men live a span of life of thirteen thousand years.

15b-19. So also to the north of the milky ocean lives the lord, Vaikuṇṭha, Viṣṇu, in a golden car. The car has eight wheels, has (celestial) beings on it and has the speed of mind. It has a colour like fire, is very effulgent, and is decorated with gold. O best brāhmaṇas, he is the lord of all creatures. He is the withdrawal and the expansion, so also he fashions and gets fashioned (i.e. he is the cause of the destruction and creation of) the earth, water, ether, air and fire. He is the sacrifice for all creatures and fire is his mouth.

CHAPTER SIX

Bhāratavarṣa : Its Rivers and Regions

The sages said:

1. Tell us about the auspicious Bhārata country which endows merit, (since) you are intelligent in our opinion.

Sūta said:

2-6. I shall now describe to you the excellent country Bhārata of the god dear to his friends, of Manu the son of Vivasvān, of Pṛthu, of the wise Vainya; also of the high-souled Ikṣvāku, of Yayāti, Ambariṣa, Māndhātṛ and Nahuṣa; also of Mucakunda, Kuberośinara, Ṛṣabha; also of Aila, and king Nṛga; of Kuśika, of the royal sage Gādhi the magnanimous one, also of Soma, and of the royal sage Dilipa; also, O glorious ones, of other powerful kṣatriyas and is dear to all beings.

7-8a. Now I shall describe the country as I learnt about it, O brāhmaṇas. These seven are principal mountains; Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, and also Ṛkṣavān; so also Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

8b-9a. O brāhmaṇas, there are thousands of (other) mountains near them. They are not (so well)-known, (but) possess excellences and have many variegated peaks.

9b-27a. Other smaller mountains are known (to exist) and they are inhabited by low tribes. Aryans and Mlecchas and many men of mixed (blood) drink (the water of) the pure rivers Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī; also (of) Godāvarī, Narmadā having profuse water, (of) the great river Śatadru, Candrabhāgā, (of) the great river Yamunā, (of) Dṛṣadvatī, Vitastā, and Vipāpā of pure sands; also (of) the river Vetravatī, Kṛṣṇaveṇī, (of) Irāvati, Vitastā, Payoṣṇī and Devikā; also (of) Vedasmṛti, Vedasirā, Tridivā, Sindhulākṣmi, Kariṣiṇī, Citravahā, and (of) the river Trisenā, also Gomatī, Dhūtapāpā, and (of) the great river Candanā, Kauśikī, the charming Tridivā, Nācitā, Rohitāraṇī, Rahasyā, Śatakumbhā, and Śarayū also, O best of brāhmaṇas; similarly (of) Carmaṇvatī, Vetravatī, Hastisomā, Diś; Śārāvati, Payoṣṇī, Bhīmā; also Bhīmarathī, Kāverī, Culukā, and Abitāpī, and also Śatamalā; and Nivārā, Mahitā, also (of)

the river Suprayogā, Pavitrā, Kṛṣṇalā, Sindhu, Vājinī and Puramālinī, Pūrvābhirāmā, Vīrā and Bhīmā, also Mālāvatī, Palāśinī, Pāpaharā, Mahendrā, Paṭālāvatī, Kariṣiṇī, Masiknī, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrī, Marutā, Pravarā, Menā, Hemā; also Ghṛtavatī, Anāvatī, Anuṣṇā, and Savyā, O best brāhmaṇas; and Sadāvirā, Adhṛṣyā, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrā, Rathacitrā, Jyotirathā, Viśvāmitrā and Kapiñjalā, Candrāvahaphalī, and (of) the river Kucīrā, Vainadī, Piṅgalā, and (of) the great river Tuṅgavegā, Vidiśā, Kṛṣṇaveṇā, and Tāmrā and Kapilā also; Dhenu, Sakāmā, Vedasvā, Havisrāvā, and Mahāpathā; also (of) Śīprā, Picchalā, and the river Bhāradvājī, Kaurṇikī, the river Śoṇā, Bāhudā and Candramā; Durgā, Antaḥśilā, and Brahmamedhyā and Dṛṣadvatī, Parokṣā and Rohī; also Jambūnadī; Sunāsā, Tamasā, Dāsī, Sāmānyā, Varāṇā, Asī, Nīlā, and Dhṛtikarī, and the great river Paṇḍāsā, Mānavī, Vṛṣabhā, Bhāsā, Brahmamedhya, Dṛṣadvatī.

27b-30. These and others are the many great rivers, O best brāhmaṇas. (Aryans and Mlecchas drink the water of) the always pure Kṛṣṇā, Mandagā, Mandavāhinī, Brāhmaṇī, Mahāgaurī, and Durgā also, O best ones; (and of) Citrotpalā, Cīrarathā, Atulā and Rohiṇī; Mandākinī, Vaitaraṇī, and the great river Kokā, Śuktimatī, Anaṅgā, also Vṛṣasāhvayā; Lohityā, Karatoyā, also Vṛṣakātvayā; Kumārī and Ṛṣitulyā, and Mārīṣā and Sarasvatī; Mandākinī, Supuṇyā, and Sarvā, Gaṅgā, O best ones.

31-33a. All these are the mothers of the (whole) world. Like these there are hundreds and thousands of renowned rivers. O brāhmaṇas, I have thus described (to you) the rivers as I remembered them.

33b-65. Hereafter listen to the description of the countries when I am giving it. Among them are Kurupāñcāla, Śālva, Mādreya, Jāṅgala, Śūrasena, Pulinda, Baudha, and Māla also; Matsya, Kuśīla, Saugandhya, Kutsapa, Kāśī-kośala; Cedi, Matsya, Karuṣa, Bhoja, Sindhu and Pulindaka, and Uttama, Daśārṇa, Mekala with Utkala, Pañcāla, Kośala, Nikapṛṣṭha, Yugandhara, Bodha, Madra, Kaliṅga, Kāśā, Parakāśa, Jāṭhara and Kukura, also Daśārṇa, O extremely good ones; Kuntī, Avanti, also Aparakuntī, Gomanta, Mallaka, Puṇḍra, Vidarbha and Nṛpavāhika; the (South) and North Aśmaka, and the

smaller Goparāṣṭra, Adhirājya, Kuśaṭṭa, Mallarāṣṭra and Kerala ; Mālava, Upavāsya, Cakra, Vakra, Ālaya and Śaka; Videha, Magadha, Sadma, Malaja and also Vijaya; Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kalinga and in the same way Yakṣllomāna; Malla, Sudeṣṇā, Prahlāda, Mahiṣa and also Śaśaka; Bālhika, Vāṭadhāna, Ābhira, Kālatoyaka, Aparānta, Parānta and Paṅkala and Carmacaṇḍika, Aṭaviśekhara, and Merubhūta, O best ones; Upāvṛta, Anupāvṛta, Suraṣṭra and also Kekaya; Kuṭṭa, Aparānta, Māheya, Kakṣa, Samudra, Niṣkuṭa; O brāhmaṇas, Andha and the many hilly tribes, also the tribes residing in the mountains, Aṅga, Malada, Magadha, Mālava, Arghaṭa, Sattvatara, Prāvṛṣeya, and Bhārgava, O best brāhmaṇas; Puṇḍra, Bhārga, Kirāta and Sudeṣṇa and Bhāsura; Śaka, Niṣāda, Niṣadha, also Anārta and Naiṛta; Pūrṇala, Pūtimatsya, Kuntala and also Kuśaka ; Tarigraha, Śūrasena, Ījika, Kalpa and Kāraṇa ; Tilabhāga, Masāra, Madhumatta, Kakundaka, Kāśmīra, Sindhu, Sauvīra, Gāndhāra, and Darśaka ; Abhisāra, Kudruta, Saurila and Bālhika, Darvī and Mālava, Darva, Vātaja and Amarathoraga; also, O brāhmaṇas, Balarāṭṭa, Sudāman, Sumallika, Bandha, Kariṣa and also Kulinda and Gandhika, Vanayu, Daśa, Pārśvaroman, Kuśabindu; Kāccha, Gopālakaccha, Jāṅgala, Kuruvarṇaka; Kirāta, Barbara, Siddha, Vaideha, Tāmraliptika, Auḍra, Mleccha with Sairindra, Pārvaṭiya (mountaineers), O best ones. O best sages, and other countries are on the south : Draviḍa, Kerala, Prācyā, Mūṣika and Bālamūṣika; Karṇāṭaka, Māhiṣaka, Vikandha and Mūṣika also; Jhallika, Kuntala, also Sauhṛda, Anala and Kānana; also Kaukkuṭaka, Bola, Kokaṇa, Maṇivālaka; Samaṅga, Kanaka and Kuṅkura, Aṅgāra and Māriṣa; Dhvajinyutsavasamketa, Trivarga and Mālyaseni; Vyūḍhaka, Koraka, Proṣṭa, Saṅgavegadharma also; also Vindhya, Rulika, Pulinda with Balvala; Mālava, Malara also, and also Aparavartaka; Kulinda, Kālada, also Candaka and Kuraṭa; Muśala, Tanavāla, Satīrtha, Pūtiṣṭhijaya; Anidāya, Śivāṭa, and also Tapanā and Sūtapā; and Ṛṣika and Vidarbha, Taṅgana and Aparataṅgaka; O best sages, the others at the north are Mlecchas; the Yavanas with Kāmbojas are terrible Mleccha tribes; Śakṛghṛhas, Kulatṛyas Hūṇas with Pārasikas, also Ramaṇas and others (like) Daśamālikas are other tribes. There are kṣatriya colonies and also the

families of vaiśyas and śūdras. (There are the tribes called) Śūra, Ābhīra, Darada, Kāśmīra with Paśu; also Khāṇḍika, Tuṣāra, Padmaga, Girigahvara, Ādreya with Bharadvāja, also Stanapoṣaka; Droṣaka, Kaliṅga, and Kirāta tribes, (those) killing with javelins and Karabhañjaka. These and others are the countries which are on the eastern and northern sides; O brāhmaṇas, I described them by way of an illustration; so (I explained) the great fruit, according to their virtue and power, the three goals (of human life).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Span of Life in the Four Yugas

The sages said:

1-2. Tell us, in detail, of the measure (i.e. span) of life, strength, the auspicious and inauspicious, the future, past and present (of the residents) of Bhāratavarṣa, Himavat, and also Harivarṣa.

Sūta said:

3-8. There are four yugas in Bhāratavarṣa. The first yuga was Kṛta; then there was Tretāyuga, O brāhmaṇas. After that Dvāpara sets in; then comes Kali. The span of life, O best sages, was known to be four thousand years, in Kṛtayuga. O ascetics, similarly they know that the span of life in Tretāyuga is three thousand years. The span of life at present in Dvāpara is two thousand years; for that much period men live on the earth. However, in Tiṣya (i.e. Kali)-yuga, men die while in womb, and also they die as soon as they are born.

9-11. In Kṛtayuga, O brāhmaṇas, very strong, very powerful men, having the attribute of wisdom were born and begotten in hundreds and thousands. O brāhmaṇas, strong and handsome brāhmaṇas were born and begotten in Kṛtayuga. Ascetics with penance as their treasure were born and begotten endowed with great perseverance, high souls, pious and truthful

in speech. The kṣatriyas also are born handsome, able-bodied, of great valour, skilled in archery and brave in battles, and esteemed by the brave. In Tretāyuga, all the kṣatriyas were emperors.

12-15. In Dvāparayuga, however, all the castes were always born with great energy, power and desire to kill one another. Men born in Kaliyuga will possess little lustre, are said to be wrathful, greedy, untruthful. Human beings in Kaliyuga will have jealousy, pride, and also anger, deceit and malice, O brāhmaṇas; in the middle yuga, Dvāpara, a small portion remains. In qualities, Himavat is superior (to Bhārata-varṣa) and Harivarṣa is superior to that.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Śākadvīpa: Mountains, Rivers and Countries

The sages said:

1-3a. O best one, you have duly described (to us) Jambukhaṇḍa. Tell us correctly the extent of its dimensions. You who see the whole, tell us properly about the extent of the ocean, as well as about Śākadvīpa and the sacred Kuśadvīpa: also tell us properly about Śālmala and about Krauñca-dvīpa.

Sūta said:

3b-6. O brāhmaṇas, there are many islands which have covered the earth. I shall describe the seven islands: Listen, O best brāhmaṇas. The measure of the mountain Jambu is full eighteen thousand and six hundred yojanas. The extent of the salt sea is said to be double this. It is crowded with many countries, and is beautified with gems and corals. It is also adorned with mountains variegated with many minerals. Crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas, the ocean is circular in form.

7-10. O best ones, I shall now duly describe Śākadvīpa. O pious ones, today listen properly when I am describing it. O

best brāhmaṇas, it is twice the size of Jambudvīpa. O glorious ones, best sages, the milky ocean too which surrounds it is like that with its divisions. The communities there are righteous, and the men there never die. Then whence can there be dearth? The men there are endowed with the lustre of forgiveness. O best sages, I have duly told you this brief description of Śākadvīpa. O glorious ones, what else should I tell you?

The sages said :

11. O you righteous one, you have duly given us a brief description of Śākadvīpa. O very intelligent one, now describe it correctly and in detail.

Sūta said :

12-13a. Like that here also, O brāhmaṇas, there are seven mountains. They are jewelled mountains. Also there are oceans, rivers. I shall (now) tell their names; O righteous ones, you are asking about a very useful thing.

13b-18. The first mountain having gods, sages and gandharvas (as its residents) is called Meru. O glorious ones, (the other) mountain stretching towards the east is Malaya. From it clouds proceed in all directions and there they are generated. O sages, beyond it the large mountain is Jaladhāra. From it Indra always takes excellent water. O best brāhmaṇas, from that rain is produced in the rainy season. (Then there is) the high mountain Raivataka, where (i.e. over which) the constellation Revatī is eternally fixed in the firmament. The grandsire himself has made this arrangement. O best brāhmaṇas, on the north is the great mountain called Śyāma. It has the brightness of new clouds; it is high; is rich and has a bright body; due to it the people there are dark (yet) cheerful.

The sages said:

19. O Sūta, a great doubt has come to us (i. e. arisen in our mind): How have they entirely become dark?

Sūta said:

20-39. O very wise, best sages, in all the islands (men of) dark and fair complexion may be found; but since dark comp-

lexion (among people) prevailed, it is called Śyāma (i. e. dark) mountain. O best sages, next to this there is a large mountain Durgaśaila. Then there is the mountain Keśarin, from which breezes (fragrant) with saffron blow. The measure of (each of) them is twice (that of the one mentioned before). O best brāhmaṇas, the wise have said that there are seven countries in them (i.e. in the island). That of the great Meru is Mahākāśa; that of the giver of water (i.e. Malaya) is Kumudottara; O very wise ones, the country of Jaladhāra is known as Sukumāra; (the country) of Raivataka is (called) Kaumāra; and of Śyāma is (called) Maṇikāñcana. O best brāhmaṇas, in the centre of the island there is a great tree called Śāka having height and breadth which can be measured with that in the Jambudvīpa. Beings always go to it. The countries in it are holy, and Śiva is worshipped there. Siddhas, cāraṇas and deities go there. All the subjects there are pious; and the four castes, free from jealousy are engaged in their own duties. A thief is never seen there. The people there, O very wise ones, have a long life and, being free from old age and death, grow like rivers during the rainy season. The rivers there have holy water and the Ganges flows there in many streams. O brāhmaṇas, they are Sukumārī, Kumārī, Sītā, and Śitodakā, also Mahānadī, similarly the river Maṇijalā, and the river called Ikṣuvardhanikā, O best sages. From there proceed rivers having holy water and very beautiful, in hundreds of thousands, from where Indra showers. It is not possible (for me) to remember and recount their names. (All) these excellent rivers are holy. Then there are four holy countries well-known in the world: Mṛga, Maśaka Mānasa and Mallaka. Mṛga is mostly populated with brāhmaṇas who are engaged in their duties. In Maśaka live kṣatriyas who are pious and grant the desires (of supplicants). O glorious ones, in Mānasa live vaiśyas acting according to the rules of their caste. With all their desires satisfied, they are brave and settled in the ways of virtue and material gains. In Mallaka live śūdras, and (these) men behave righteously. O best brāhmaṇas, there is no king, no punishment, nor those who inflict punishment. Those men, knowing what is right, protect one another. This much only can be said about that island.

CHAPTER NINE

*Śālmalika, Krauñca, Kuśa and Puṣkara Dvīpas and
Their Mountains*

Sūta said:

1. O illustrious ones, now listen to the account of the northern islands from me who am telling it.

2. There is an ocean having the water of clarified butter; another has the water of curds; then there is an ocean having the water of wine; and one more is an ocean of milk.

3. O best brāhmaṇas, these islands have double the size of one another (as they proceed northwards). O highly intelligent ones, there are also mountains surrounded by oceans.

4-6. In the middle island there is a large mountain (made of) minerals. In the western island there is the mountain Kṛṣṇa, that is the friend (i.e. favourite) of Nārāyaṇa, O brāhmaṇas. There Viṣṇu himself guards divine gems; and there, being pleased, he bestows happiness on creatures. In the centre of the country in the Śaradvīpa there is a clump of Kuśa (grass); O brāhmaṇas, the Śālmali (tree) is worshipped in the Śālmalika island.

7-9a. O best brāhmaṇas, on the Krauñca island is the Mahākrauñca mountain, which is a mine of heaps of gems. It is always adored by all the four castes. O brāhmaṇas, then there is the Gomanta mountain full of all minerals, where the glorious, lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) always lives. The lord Nārāyaṇa, (also called) Hari is always in the company of those who have secured salvation.

9b-11. O best brāhmaṇas, in Kuśadvīpa is the mountain Sunāma (literally, of a good name) which is full of corals and is inaccessible. Another mountain, the golden mountain, is Dyutimān, O best of brāhmaṇas. The third is Kumuda mountain. The fourth mountain is called Puṣpavān, the fifth one is Kuśeśaya. The sixth is Harigiri. These six are the chief mountains.

12-14a. The distance between each of them becomes double (as we proceed from one to another). The first country is Audbhida; the second in Reṇumaṇḍala; the third one is Suratha, and the fourth one is known as Lambana. The fifth country is

Dhṛtimat, and the sixth country is Prabhākara. The seventh country is Kapila. These seven are in a straight line.

14b-16. O brāhmaṇas, in these gods and gandharvas and (other) creatures are cheerful and sport and enjoy. No man dies in these (divisions). O brāhmaṇas, there are no thieves there, nor the Mleccha tribes. O best ones, the people there are almost white and delicate. O best brāhmaṇas, O very wise ones, I shall describe as I have heard about the remaining islands.

17-20a. O illustrious ones, in Krauñcadvīpa, there is a large mountain called Krauñca. Next to Krauñca is the (mountain) Vāmanaka; next to Vāmana (or Vāmanaka) is Andhakāraka; next to Andhakāra (or Andhakāraka) is the best mountain Maināka, O brāhmaṇas. Next to Maināka, O brāhmaṇas, is the best mountain Govinda. Beyond Govinda is the great mountain Puṇḍarīka. Next to Puṇḍarīka is said to be the (mountain called) Dundubhisvana. Towards the east the distance between any two of the mountains becomes double.

20b-24a. I shall tell you about the countries there. Listen to me who am describing them. The country of Krauñca (i.e. in which Krauñca is situated) is Kuśala; that of Vāmana is Manonuga; O ascetics, the country beyond Manonuga is Uṣṇa. Beyond Uṣṇa is Prāvaraka. Andhakāraka is next to Prāvara. Munideśa is said to be next to Adhakāraka country. Dundubhisvana is said to be next to Munideśa. It is crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there have almost a white complexion. These regions are said to be resorted to by gods and gandharvas.

24b-32a. In (the island of) Puṣkara there is a mountain called Puṣkara which is rich in gems and jewels. The lord of beings himself moves there. All gods and great sages always wait upon him. O best brāhmaṇas, they worship him with agreeable words. Various gems proceed uninterruptedly from Jambudvīpa. O best sages, due to celibacy, truthfulness and restraint of the brāhmaṇas the span of life and the quality of health of the people in those islands go on doubling (as one goes) on (towards the north). O best ones, I have described to you the countries in which only one religion exists. The lord, the creator himself, having raised the rod of punishment always protects these islands. O brāhmaṇas, he is the king, he is the final beatitude, he is the father and the grandfather. O best

brāhmaṇas, he protects the creatures along with the brāhmaṇas and the wise. O glorious ones, the beings here daily eat the food that is ready and that itself approaches them.

32b-41. Beyond that a region called Samā (Or, beyond that a great mountain, the habitation of people) is seen. It is symmetrical and is round on all sides. O best brāhmaṇas, the four quarter-elephants, dear to the world and with their cheeks and mouths in rut, live there. O best sages, O brāhmaṇas, (they are:) Vāmana, Airāvata, Añjana and Supratīka. I do not venture to count their measure. The proportion—breadthwise, lengthwise and heightwise—is ever incalculable. There winds blow irregularly from all directions. O best sages, the elephants take them. They draw them with the very lustrous trunks resembling lotuses. Then they always again quickly let them out in a hundred ways. O best brāhmaṇas, the winds (thus) let out by the breathing elephants come (down), and the creatures live (by them). I have described to you the world along with its creation as desired (by you). O best brāhmaṇas having heard this measure of the earth, which gives merit and is agreeable, a rich person gets emancipated, has his objects accomplished, and is liked by the good. His span of life, strength, glory and lustre increase. The (fore-)fathers and grandfathers of him, who, having taken a vow, listens to this when narrated on a parvan-day, are pleased.

CHAPTER TEN

Dialogue between Nārada and Yudhiṣṭhira

The sages said:

1-2. Having heard the measure and the position of the earth, so also (having heard) about the rivers from you, we have just drunk nectar. We have heard that there are holy places on the earth. Describe them to us and also how they are fruitful. O very wise one, we desire to hear about them in detail from you.

Sūta said:

3-4. O you ascetics, you have asked about an excellent, meritorious, great account. I shall narrate it to the best of my knowledge, suitably and as I have heard it. I shall tell you the ancient conversation of the celestial sage Nārada with Yudhiṣṭhira. O best brāhmaṇas, listen.

5. The Pāṇḍavas, the sons of Pāṇdu, the illustrious great heroes, deprived of their kingdom, lived in the forest with Draupadī.

6. They saw the high-souled celestial sage Nārada, shining with brāhmaṇic lustre, and bright like blazing fire (who had come) there.

7. That celebrated descendant of Kuru, surrounded by those brothers (of him), shone with glowing splendour as Indra surrounded by gods in heaven.

8. As Sāvitrī did not abandon the gods, or as the sun's light does not leave Meru, Yājñasenī (i.e. Draupadī) did not, due to her piety, forsake the sons of Pṛthā (i.e. of Kuntī, i.e. the Pāṇḍavas).

9-10. That revered sage Nārada, having accepted the homage, consoled that son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) with proper, well-formed and agreeable (words), and spoke to the noble Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira: "O best among those who practise piety, what do you desire? What should I give you?"

11-14. Then king (Yudhiṣṭhira), the son of Dharma, having along with his brothers saluted Nārada, and with the palms of his hands joined, spoke to Nārada, resembling a god: "O you illustrious one, when you, revered by all the worlds, are pleased, then I think, (everything) is affected through your grace, O you of a good vow. O best sage, O sinless one, if you (are going to) favour me with my brothers, then (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) tell (us) fully about the fruit that he who, devoted to the holy places, goes round (over) the earth, gets."

Nārada said:

15-18. O king, listen attentively as to how formerly Dilipa heard all this from Vasiṣṭha. In ancient times the best and very

lustrous king Dilīpa took up a religious vow and lived like a sage, O great king, at the auspicious, holy place Gaṅgādvāra on the bank of the Ganges resorted to by gods and gandharvas. He, of a great lustre, pleased (by offering oblations) his dead ancestors and gods. He also satisfied (by offering oblations) the sages with religious rites.

19-25. When the large-minded one was muttering (the names of a god) for some time, he saw the best sage Vasiṣṭha, resembling Śiva. When he saw that priest (of him) shining with glory, he was very much delighted and amazed. That best one among the righteous ones, took, according to the religious rites, the materials of worship on his head, and being pure and with his mind controlled, told his name to that best brāhmaṇic sage: "Well-being to you, I am Dilīpa, I am your servant, O you of a good vow. Just by seeing you I have become free from all sins." O great king Yudhiṣṭhira, that Dilīpa, controlled in speech, and best among men, speaking thus, folded the palms of his hands, and remained silent. Seeing that Dilīpa, the best king, emaciated due to his vow and muttering to himself, the sage was pleased.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Puṣkara, the Holiest of Holy Places

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. O you knowing what is right, O you illustrious one, I am fully pleased with you due to this your civility, restraint and truthfulness.

2. You who have such piety have emancipated your forefathers. Therefore, O son, you (are able to) see me; and O descendant of Manu, you are fit to be a sacrificer.

3. My affection for you increases; tell me today what I should do for you. O you sinless and best among men, I shall give you what you will ask for.

Dilīpa said:

4-7. O you who know the essence of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, O you who are adored by all the worlds, I (think my desire) is satisfied in that I have seen you the lord. O best among the pious ones, if I deserve to be favoured by you then I shall ask you about a doubt (lurking) in my mind. Please remove it. I desire, O revered sir, to hear (your explanation) about the doubt that I have about the piety of each of the holy places. You should tell me separately (about each holy place). O best brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇic sage, O you abode of penance, tell me what fruit he, who goes round the earth, obtains.

Vasiṣṭha said:

8-12. I shall tell you who are devoted to me among the sages. O dear one, listen with a concentrated mind, the fruit (that one) gets by (visiting) holy places. He whose hands, feet and mind are well-restrained, and has learning, penance, and glory gets the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. He who keeps himself away from accepting (things from others), is contented, controlled and pure, and free from pride, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. He who is sinless, who goes without food, does not accept food, has his senses controlled, and who is free from all blemishes obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. O lord of kings, he, who never gets angry, who is given to truthfulness, who is of a firm vow, who looks upon (other) beings like himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place.

13-15. The sages have prescribed (certain) sacrifices even among (i.e. for) gods in due order. They have correctly and fully told about their fruit. O king, those sacrifices are not within the reach of the poor; (since) sacrifices require many implements and extensive preparations. They are within the reach of kings, or sometimes of rich people. They cannot (be performed) by groups of poor people independently (since they have) no means.

16-19. O king, listen to the rite which is within the reach even of poor people and which resembles (i.e. gives) the pious fruits of sacrifices. O best among the righteous, this, i.e. visiting the holy places, is pious and is the great secret of the sages,

and is superior even to (performing) sacrifices. A man, who visits a holy place without fasting for three nights, without giving gold and cows (to a brāhmaṇa) is born poor. A man does not obtain that fruit by performing sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma, where large gifts are given, which he obtains by a visit to a holy place.

20-35. A man would become like a god by reaching Puṣkara tīrtha which is a well-known holy place of the heaven, that (has come) to the earth and that is well-known. O king, there are ten thousand crores of holy places, which live by Puṣkara at all the three times of the day, O you descendant of the solar dynasty. O lord, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhya with hosts of Maruts, also gandharvas and celestial nymphs are present there. There, O great king, gods, demons and brāhmaṇic sages have practised penance and have secured divine contact due to great religious merit, O brāhmaṇas, and got what they desired. O wise ones, the Puṣkaras purify all the sins. They are valued in heaven. O glorious one, the grandsire, very much pleased and liked by gods and demons always lived at this holy place. O illustrious one, gods with sages going before them, have attained great accomplishment, and become endowed with great religious merit. The wise say that he who, engaged in honouring his forefathers and gods, bathes there, gets merit which is tenfold of (i.e. got by performing) a horse-sacrifice. If, while resorting to the Puṣkara forest he feeds just one brāhmaṇa, he thereby goes to honoured people living in Brahmā's abode. O king, he who, with the palms of his hands joined, remembers Puṣkaras in the morning and evening, has bathed (i.e. has acquired the merit of having bathed) in all the holy places. All that sin of a woman or a man, (committed) from birth perishes by just going to Puṣkara. O king, as Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is said to be the first among all the gods, similarly Puṣkara is said to be the first of the holy places. He, who, being restrained and pure, has lived at Puṣkara for twelve years, obtains (the fruit of) all sacrifices and goes to Brahmā's heaven. One who would practise (the vow of performing) Agnihotra for a hundred years, or would just live on one full moon day of Kārtika at Puṣkara, would have the same (merit). It is difficult to go to Puṣkara; it is difficult (to practise) penance at Puṣkara; it is difficult to give gifts at Puṣkara; it is

difficult to stay at Puṣkara. The three peaks are bright, and also the three streams, and the holy places like Puṣkara; we do not know the reason for that. One, being restrained, and controlled in food, having lived (i.e. who lives) for twelve years at Puṣkara, becomes free from all sins and would get the fruit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Visit to Some Holy Places and Its Merit

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-8. Turning round and moving to the right, he would approach the way to Jambu. Approaching the path of Jambu, adored by manes, gods and sages, he obtains (the fruit of) Aśva-medha and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man going (from there) after having stayed there for five or six nights, does not meet with ill luck, but obtains best success. Returning from Jambumārga, he should go to Dulikāśrama. He does not meet with indigence and is honoured in heaven. O king, he who engaged in worshipping the forefathers and gods observes a fast for three nights after reaching the hermitage of Agastya, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. By subsisting on vegetables or fruits he obtains the fruit of youthfulness; after reaching Kanyāśrama nourished with glory and revered by people, he is free from his sins the moment he enters it, since, O king, it is a meritorious and the best sacred grove. Being controlled and having limited food, he, after having worshipped his forefathers and deities, gets the fruit of a sacrifice full of (i.e. that satisfies) all desires. Having turned to the right, he would then go to Yayātipatana.

9-11. There he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Being restrained and having controlled his diet, from here he should go to Mahākāla. After having bathed in Koṭitīrtha he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Then, O you righteous one, he should go to the holy place, the abode of the lord of Umā (i.e.

Pārvatī). It is known as Bhadravaṭa, and is well known in the three worlds. Having approached Śiva there he would obtain the fruit of (a present of) a thousand cows.

12-13. O best man, by Mahādeva's (i.e. Śiva's) grace he would obtain the leadership which is fruitful and without a rival. Having reached Narmadā, well-known in the three worlds, and having offered oblations to his forefathers and gods (there) he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Greatness of Narmadā

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. O Nārada, I desire to hear again about the best, well-known holy place called Narmadā, that rends the mountains of sins, which Vasiṣṭha described to Dilipa. (O Nārada,) describe it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, also (tell me about) the greatness of Narmadā as described by Vasiṣṭha. O Nārada, tell me how this very pious river, known as Narmadā, is famous everywhere.

Nārada said:

4-5. Narmadā is the best of rivers; she destroys all sins; she would liberate all beings—immobile and mobile. I have heard the greatness of Narmadā as told by Viṣiṣṭha. O great king, know (i.e. listen to) it; I (shall) tell you the whole (of it).

6-14. Gaṅgā is holy at Kanakhala; Sarasvatī at Kurukṣetra; (but) Narmadā is holy everywhere—whether in a village or a forest. The water of Sarasvatī purifies (a man) within three days; that of Yamunā within seven days; that of Gaṅgā instantly; but that of Narmadā just by looking at it. In the western part of Kaliṅga country on the Amaraṇṭaka mountain Narmadā is beautiful, charming and holy in the three worlds. O great king, the sages, with penance as their wealth, having practised penance here, along with gods, demons and gandharvas, have attained great prosperity. O great king, a man, following a vow and with

his senses controlled, having bathed there and having fasted for a night would liberate a hundred families. If a man, after having bathed at Janeśvara duly offered a ball of rice (to his dead ancestors), they remain pleased till the universal destruction. All around the mountain is settled Rudrakoṭi. There is no doubt that the entire Rudrakoṭi would be pleased with him who bathes there with sandal, flowers and unctions. At the western end of the mountain the great lord himself (resides). Being chaste and controlling his senses, a man should bathe there, be purified and should perform the rite (in honour) of the dead ancestors as enjoined in the sacred texts.

15-20a. There only he should gratify his divine manes with water with sesamum seeds. O Pāṇḍava, his family upto the seventh descendant stays in heaven. Crowded by the host of celestial nymphs, surrounded by celestial women, smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and adorned with divine ornaments, he is honoured in the heaven for sixty thousand years. Then having fallen from heaven, he is born in a large family. He is born rich, disposed to making presents and righteous. He again remembers that holy place, (and) again goes to (i.e. visits) it. Having liberated a hundred (members of) his family, he goes to Rudra's heaven. The best river is said (to be flowing over) a hundred yojanas in her later (course). O best king, her breadth is two yojanas.

20b-22. Round the mountain Amaraṇṭaka there are sixty crores and sixty thousand holy places. Being chaste and pure, having conquered his anger and senses, and turned away from all (kinds of) harm, and engaged in the well-being of all creatures, thus being full of good conduct, he should go round the deities.

23-25a. O king, listen attentively to the fruit of his religious merit. O Pāṇḍava, he would live for a hundred thousand years in heaven crowded with the hosts of celestial nymphs and waited upon by celestial women. Smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and decorated with divine ornaments, he sports in the world of gods and rejoices with deities.

25b-28a. Then the powerful one, having fallen from heaven, becomes a king. He obtains a house decorated with many gems, with pillars decked with gems, divine diamonds and lapis lazuli.

It has divine paintings, endowed with male and female servants; and its gate is disturbed (i.e. is noisy) with the trumpeting of elephants and neighings of horses, as is the gate of Indra's house.

28b-34a. He, the lord of great kings, glorious and dear to all women, having lived in the house, having sports and enjoyments, would live for a hundred years without (suffering from) any disease. He who dies, or enters fire or water or fasts at Amaraṇṭaka, would have such enjoyments. His course has no return, as is that of a mountain into the sky. When the man has a fall, he becomes the lord of men. In each of his houses thousand of maidens and women wait (upon him), and wait for his directions. Born with divine enjoyments he sports for eternal time. Like the man on the Amaraṇṭaka mountain, none else is born on the earth upto the ocean, O best of men.

34b-44. To the west of the mountain the holy place (that exists) should be known as Koṭitirtha. There is Rudra known as Kāleśvara, well-known in the worlds. By offering balls (of rice) to him and by offering the Sandhyā-prayers, the manes become satisfied for ten years. To the south of Narmadā, there is a great river Kapilā. She is covered with sarala and arjuna trees. She is not far away. She is very holy, auspicious and is known in the three worlds. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there is a full (group of) a hundred crores of holy places. O king, it is so reported in the Purāṇas. All this has a crorefold merit. The trees on her bank that fall due to lapse of time, get the best course due to being connected with her water. The other one, O glorious one, is holy and removes poignant pain. A man, by bathing there on her bank becomes free from poignant pain in a moment. All hosts of gods with kinnaras and great serpents, yakṣas, demons, gandharvas and sages rich in penance have all gathered there on the Amaraṇṭaka mountain. All those and the sages also resorted to Narmadā, (and) the holy (river) named Viśalyā that destroys all sins was produced by them. O king, a man, being chaste, and with his senses controlled, who, after fasting for a night, bathes there, would liberate a hundred (members of) his family.

45-49. O best king, Viśalyā is said to be reddish and is (thus) declared in the Purāṇas by the lord with a desire for the good of the worlds. O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O lord of men, he

who observes a fast at that holy place, goes, with all his sins purified, to Indra's heaven. O lord of kings, I have heard in (i.e. learnt from) the Purāṇa that a man bathing anywhere in Narmadā obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Those who live on the northern bank, stay in Indra's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, as Śaṅkara (himself) told me, the gifts (given at the bank of) and bath taken in Sarasvatī, Gaṅgā and Narmadā are equal in fruit.

50-54. He, who casts his life on the Amaraṇṭaka mountain, is honoured for a full hundred crores of years in Indra's heaven. The water in (i.e. of) Narmadā is holy and is adorned with foam and ripples. It is pure, worth adoration. (A man bathing there) is free from all sins. Narmadā is all-holy; she removes the sin due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa; by fasting (on her bank) for a day and night a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Thus, O son of Pāṇḍu, Narmadā is pleasing and holy. This great river purifies (all) in the three worlds at the very holy Vateśvara and in the penance grove of Gaṅgādvāra. At all these places those that are afflicted and have fulfilled their vows (are liberated). At the confluence of Narmadā the merit is said to be tenfold.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sages Pray to God Śiva for Protection from Demon Bāṇa

Nārada said :

1. The greatest river Narmadā, that is holy and most auspicious, is divided into three (streams) by the glorious sages, longing for piety.

2. O Pāṇḍava, the (three) divisions are just like (the three strands of) a sacred thread. O lord of kings, a man bathing in (any of) them is free from all sins.

3. O son of Pāṇḍu, listen to me who am telling you about the origin of the sacred place Jaleśvara which is well-known in the three worlds.

4-5. Formerly all hosts of sages and all the groups of Maruts with Indra praised that magnanimous Maheśvara, the god of gods. Praising him, they reached (the place) where god Maheśvara stayed. The hosts of Maruts with Indra prayed to him: "O Virūpākṣa, we are distressed with fear. O lord, protect us."

The lord said:

6-7. O best sages, welcome to you. For what purpose have you come here ? What is (the cause of) your grief ? What is (the cause of) your tormentation ? Wherefrom has fear come (to you) ? O glorious ones, tell (it); I desire to know it.

Thus addressed by Rudra, they, of unlimited vows, told him:

The sages said:

8-11. There is a terrible, very powerful demon, proud of his strength, well-known by the name Bāṇa, whose divine city (called) Tripura, remaining in the sky moves by his lustre. O Virūpākṣa, we are afraid of him; we have sought your refuge only. Protect us from this great distress; you are our great shelter. O lord of gods, please do this favour to all (gods) so that gods, being very much pleased, (would) live happily, O Śaṅkara. O lord, do that by which they will be extremely happy.

The god (i.e. Śiva) said:

12. I shall do all this. Do not be dejected. In a very short time I shall do what makes you happy.

13-14. Having comforted all of them, and remaining on the bank of Narmadā, the lord of gods thought over (the way) to kill him, O Pāṇḍava. 'How, in what manner, should I kill Tripura ?' Thinking like this he remembered Nārada at that time. Just due to his remembering (Nārada), Nārada came to him.

Nārada said:

15. O Mahādeva, order me for what purpose I was remembered (by you). O god, tell me what mission I have to carry out.

The lord said:

16-18a. O Nārada, go there where the city Tripura of Bāṇa, the lord of Dānavas, stands. Go quickly and do that. The husbands are like deities and the wives are like celestial nymphs. Due to their lustre, O Brāhmaṇa, Tripura moves in the sky. Going there, O lord of brāhmaṇas, give them a different advice.

18b-19a. Hearing the words of the lord, the sage of quick steps entered the city to alienate the hearts of the women (from their husbands).

19b-22. The celestial city adorned with gems of many kinds, shone. It was a hundred yojanas broad, and was doubly long. There only he saw Bāṇa, who was proud of his strength, who was adorned with garlands, ear-rings, armlets and a crown, who was covered with necklaces and gems, and who was decorated with silver. His wives were rich with gems and men were adorned with (ornaments of) gold. The very mighty lord of the demons got up on seeing Nārada.

Bāṇa said:

23-24. The celestial sage himself has come to my house. O best brāhmaṇa, materials of worship and water for washing feet must properly be given. He has come after a long time. O brāhmaṇa, rest (on) this seat.

He thus honoured Nārada who had come there. His wife, the chief queen named Anaupamyā (spoke):

Anaupamyā said:

25. O revered sir, in the human world, by which vow or religious observance or gift or penance are gods pleased ?

Nārada said:

26-34. He who gives a cow made of sesamum to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas, has (indeed) given the earth of nine islands along with the oceans. For an eternal period he enjoys with aeroplanes resembling crores of suns and satisfying all desires and rules for a very long time. There are various kinds of trees : hog-plum, wood-apple, grove of plantain

trees; so also kadamba, campaka and aśoka. (So also there are the days like) the eighth, fourth, twelfth and both the Śaṃkrānti day and Viṣuva day and the beginning of a day—all these are auspicious. Those women who fast (on these days), having acquired merit, undoubtedly live in heaven. The ascetic women, free from the Kali-age, free from all sins, and engaged in fasting, do not move (in the mundane existence). O you beautiful lady, having heard like this, do as you desire.

Hearing the words of Nārada, the queen said (these) words: “O best brāhmaṇa, show favour to me. Accept the gifts as desired (by you). (I shall give you) gold, gems, jewels, garments and ornaments. O brāhmaṇa, I shall also give you what is difficult (for you) to obtain. (Please) accept it, O best brāhmaṇa; may Viṣṇu and Śiva be pleased.”

Nārada said:

35-37. O lady, give (it) to someone else—to a poor brāhmaṇa. I am endowed with a good character and have devotion.

O best of Bharatas, having thus taken away their hearts, and having advised all of them, he went (back) to his own place. With their hearts drawn away and therefore with their hearts gone elsewhere, a flaw came about in the city of that magnanimous Bāṇa.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Greatness of Amaraṇṭaka

Nārada said:

1-7a. O son of Kuntī, listen to (me telling you) and understand what you ask me about. In the meanwhile Rudra remained on the bank of Narmadā. The place is called Hareśvara, and is well-known in the three worlds. At that place Mahādeva, thinking about Tripura's murder, (stayed,) making Mandara the

bow, making Vāsuki the bow-string, standing with his feet a span apart, making Viṣṇu the best arrow, putting fire in the fore ; Vāyu was put at the mouth ; (making) the four Vedas the horses, (he made) the chariot full of all gods. The two gods, Aśvins, were on the wheels ; the disc-holder himself was the axle ; Indra himself was at the end of the bow ; Vaiśravaṇa remained on the arrow. Yama was on the right hand and the terrible Kāla on the left. Gandharvas, well-known in the worlds, were placed on the radius of the wheels. Of this best chariot Prajāpati Brahmā was the charioteer.

7b-9. The lord of gods, making a chariot like this full of all gods, remaining stable, waited there for a thousand years. When the three cities, moving in the sky, came together, he pierced them with an arrow. Rudra, at that time, discharged an arrow towards Tripura.

10-11a Women lost their lusture, and their strength decayed. Thousands of portents appeared in the city. To destroy Tripura he took up the form of Kāla (i. e. god of death).

11b-14a. Similarly wooden figures laughed loudly. The paintings closed and opened their eyes. (The citizens) saw themselves decorated with (i. e. clad in) red garments in a dream. They also saw unusual things foreboding calamity. People that were at that place (i.e. in the city) saw these portents. Their strength and their intellect were destroyed by Śiva's anger.

14b-24. A great (i.e. strong) wind, greatest among winds, and resembling the one at the end of a yuga and called Saṁvartaka was discharged and it troubled their heads. The trees there burnt, and summits fell down. Everything was disturbed and there were lamentations, and loss of consciousness. All the gardens were shattered and were quickly burning. With blazing flames he (i.e. Fire) burnt it all. Trees, parks, houses of various kinds (were burnt). The blazing fire spread into the ten directions. Then stones were hurled into each of the ten directions. The very fierce flames of the fires were burning in thousands. The entire city that was burning looked like kimśuka (a tree with red blossoms). The (columns of) smoke could not go from one house to another. The Tripura city, burnt by Śiva's anger, crying, very unhappy and blazing was burning in all directions. The tops of the palaces were shattered in thousands. Many palaces vari-

gated with many gems and beautiful houses were burnt in various ways by the blazing fire. (The flames) destroyed the groves of trees and places of worship as well. In all temples they blazed and burnt. (People) touched (i.e. burnt) by fire sank into despondency and lamented in various tones. There the heaps of charcoal appeared like mountain-peaks.

25-26a. They praised the god of gods: 'O lord, protect me.' The demons, who, harassed by fire, had embraced one another were burnt there in hundreds and thousands.

26b-27. The gardens in the city were parched by fire, and the large lakes crowded with swans and ducks, and with lotus plants and lotuses were being burnt. They, extending up to hundreds of *yojanas*, were covered with fresh lotuses.

28. Palaces, decorated with gems and resembling mountain-peaks (in height), fell down, being completely burnt by fire, like waterless clouds.

29-31. The fire impelled by Śiva's anger cruelly burnt young and old along with women, birds and horses. Many men that had slept (alone, or) had slept with their wives, or in a close embrace with their sons, were burnt by the enemy of Tripura. In that city blazing with fire women resembling celestial nymphs, being struck by the flames of fire, fell on the ground.

32-34. A young woman of broad eyes and adorned with a necklace, who was blinded by smoke, and afflicted by flames, awoke; and thinking about her son, she fell on the ground. Some (other woman), having golden complexion, adorned with sapphires, blinded by smoke, fell down on the ground. Another friend (of her) who had held her hand, was burnt with children.

35-38. Due to this another female of a celestial form was seen to be perplexed by insanity. Joining the palms of her hands and putting them on her head, she requested Fire: "If you desire (i.e. harbour) enmity towards men who have harmed you, why do you offend women—the cuckoos in the cage in the form of the house? O sinner, O cruel one, O shameless one, what makes you angry with females? You do not possess chivalry, you do not have a feeling of shame, you are without purity; rich in beauty and complexion of various kinds, they are available. Tell us: Have you not heard in the world that women are not to be killed?"

39-45. But these have become virtues for you—oppressing women, O Fire, and not having compassion, sympathy or courtesy towards them. O Fire, even Mlecchas are kind to women, when they see them. You are worse than Mlecchas, you are irresistible and senseless. O Fire, these are your virtues (leading you) to destroy. O you wicked one, why do you drop (yourself) on these women? O wicked Fire, O cruel and shameless one, O you unfortunate one, O you hopeless one, O you cruel one, you (that are) wicked are burning children.” In this way they lamented and talked in many voices. Others, bewildered due to the grief for their (dead) children, were angry, and cried. The cruel and angry Fire burnt (everything) like an enemy. There were flames in the lakes, water, and in wells also. (The women cried:) “O Mleccha, by burning us, what condition will you reduce us to ?” When they were crying like this, Fire said (these) words:

Vaiśvānara said :

46-62. I am not destroying on my own. I only do what is ordered, and am not the one who can favour. Overcome with anger, I am here moving by chance.

Then that very lustrous Bāṇa seeing Tripura ablaze, and remaining on his seat, said to the god: “I am destroyed by gods. The weak and wicked ones (mis) informed the god. Without investigating properly, I am burnt by magnanimous Śiva. Except Maheśvara no other enemy is (able) to strike me.” Taking the Phallus (called) Tribhuvaneśvara on his head, he got up. Leaving his friends, very beautiful gems, women of various kinds, and taking the Phallus on his head kept in the city, he praised Śiva, the god of gods, the lord of three worlds. “O Hara, if I have been tormented by you, you deserve to be killed. O Mahādeva, let my Phallus (i.e. which I am worshipping) not perish due to your grace. O Mahādeva, I have always worshipped it with great devotion. Even if I am to be killed by you, may my Phallus not perish. O Mahādeva, let me seize your feet. O Mahādeva, existence after existence, I am devoted to your feet.” He (then) worshipped the highest god with the Toṭaka metre : “Om, Śiva, Śaṅkara, my salutation to Sarvakāra (i.e. who brings about everything). My salutation to Śiva, O Bhava, O Bhīma, O

Maheśa. O you destroyer of the body of Madana (i.e. Cupid), O you destroyer of Tripura, O you who crushed Andhaka, O you dear to women, O you who destroyed Kāma (i.e. Cupid), my salutations to you who are saluted by the hosts of gods and siddhas, and by (your) attendants having the faces of horse, monkey, lion, lord of elephants and having very short and very long faces. You were not vexed by the demons difficult to be found out; (on the contrary) you were saluted by many of them. O revered lord, you who like great devotion, O you stable one, O you who hold the digit of the moon (i.e. the crescent moon on your head), O god, I salute you. O Jaya, always give me hosts of sons and wives and wealth. With many, hundreds of bodies, I am tormented. You have today put me on the path of a great (i.e. fearful) hell. My sinful course is not turning away; he abandons me, pure due to pure deeds; (but) he takes pity on me; the direction is revolving; this delusion is rambling; he keeps off bad intentions." To him who, being controlled and of a pure mind, would recite this divine Toṭaka, Rudra would grant boons as he gave to Bāṇa. Hearing this very divine hymn lord Maheśvara was himself pleased with him at that time.

The lord said :

63-64a. O child, you should not be afraid. O demon, with your sons, grandsons, wives, and servants, remain in a golden (mansion). O Bāṇa, from today you will not be killed (i.e. will be immune from death) even by gods.

64b-66. O Pāṇḍava, the god of gods, again granted him a boon. Being fearless, indestructible and immutable he moved in the world. Then Rudra withdrew the seven-crested one, i.e., Fire. Magnanimous Śiva protected his third (city). By virtue of Rudra's lustre it always moves in the sky.

67-71a. Thus, Tripura burnt by the magnanimous Śiva fell on the ground blazing with rows of flames. He knocked down one on Śrīśaila near Tripura. He knocked the other one on Amaraṇṭaka mountain. When Tripura was burnt, O king, Rudrakoti stood firm. The burning one was caused to fall there. Therefore, he is known as Jvāleśvara. His divine flame, going

upwards, went to heaven. There was then great lamentation among gods, demons and kinnaras. Rudra arrested that arrow in the best Maheśvara city.

71b-79a. O son of Pāṇḍu, he who, like this, would go to the mountain Amaraṇṭaka, having well enjoyed the fourteen worlds for a thousand and thirty crore years and then having reached the earth, becomes a righteous king. There is no doubt that he enjoys as a sovereign emperor on the earth. O great king, this Amaraṇṭaka is holy on all sides. The wise say that he who would go to Amaraṇṭaka at the time of a lunar or solar eclipse, has tenfold (the merit) of a horse sacrifice. Seeing Maheśvara there, he obtains heaven. When the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu they will come together. That is the great merit of (performing) the Puṇḍarīka sacrifice. On Amaraṇṭaka lives Jvāleśvara. Bathing there, men go to heaven. Those that die there, are not reborn. O great king, listen to the fruit which one gets by casting one's life at the lunar or solar eclipse at Jvāleśvara.

79b-82. Gods called Amara stay on Amaraṇṭaka. (One who bathes) in the water on the slope of (Amaraṇṭaka-) god Amareśvara, obtains (i.e. lives in) Rudra's heaven till deluge. Crores of gods, of good vows practise penance there. O king, the holy place Amaraṇṭaka extends upto a yojana on all sides. A man, entertaining or not entertaining desire, having bathed in the holy water of Amaraṇṭaka, would be freed from sins, and he goes to Rudra's worlds.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Kāverī Saṁgama Tirtha

The sage said :

1-3. All those magnanimous multitudes of people with Yudhiṣṭhira as the chief, and the sages, the abodes of penance, asked Nārada: "O revered one, tell us for the good of the people and for our prosperity, the great truth about the confluence of Kāverī, that wicked men who are always engaged in sinful acti-

vities, become free from all sins and go to the highest place (on bathing there). We desire to know this. O revered one, please tell it."

Nārada said :

4-7. O you all led by Yudhiṣṭhira, listen together : Having performed a great sacrifice here, Kubera of truthful valour, became more than a sovereign emperor after reaching this place. O great king, he attained perfection. Listen to me who am telling it. Kubera, the lord of yakṣas and of truthful valour, having bathed at the place where Kāverī joins Narmadā well-known in the world, practised penance for a hundred divine years. Mahādeva, pleased with him, granted him an excellent boon : "O yakṣa, O you of a great energy, speak about the boon that you desire. Tell me freely about your wish, or whatever is in your mind."

Kubera said :

8. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, grant me the boon (by which) I would be the first lord of the yakṣas.

9. Hearing the words of Kubera, god Maheśvara was pleased. Saying, 'Let it be so', he disappeared there only.

10. That yakṣa too, who had obtained the boon, quickly went to the abode of yakṣas. He was honoured by all the lordly yakṣas, and was consecrated as the king.

11. Those men, who do not know that the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) destroys all sins, are undoubtedly deceived.

12-17a. Therefore a man should make every effort to bathe there. Kāverī is very holy, and Narmadā is a great river. O best king, one should bathe there and worship Śiva. Having received the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in the world of Rudra. As Śaṅkara has told me, he who enters fire or observes a fast (at the confluence of Kāverī and Narmadā) is not reborn. Being waited upon by excellent women, he enjoys in heaven like Rudra for sixty thousand and sixty crore years. Remaining in Rudra's heaven he enjoys wherever he goes. Fallen due to the

exhaustion of his religious merit, he becomes a righteous, prosperous, religious, great king, born in a (noble) family.

17b-19. Having properly drunk water there, a man would obtain the fruit of the (vow called) Cāndrāyaṇa. Those men who drink the holy water (at the confluence), go to heaven. Men get the same fruit as they obtain (by bathing) in Gaṅgā and Yamunā by bathing at the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā). O lord of kings, the place of the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) is holy, gives great fruit and destroys all sins.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Narmadā and the Holy Places on Her Northern Bank

Nārada said :

1-2. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is an extensive holy place. It is known as Patreśvara, and is great and removes all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man rejoices with deities. Taking any form he likes, he sports for five thousand years.

3. Then a man should go to Garjana where Megha is present. By the power of that holy place, it has attained the name Indrajit.

4. Then he should go to (the holy place) Megharāva where there is the thundering of clouds. There the group Meghanāda has become prosperous due to boons.

5. Then O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place) known as Brahmāvarta. O Yudhiṣṭhira, Brahmā is always present there.

6-7a. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Then, being restrained, and controlled in diet, (he should go to) the holy place Aṅgāreśvara. Being absolved of all sins, he goes to Rudra's world.

7b-8a. Then, O lord, he should go to the excellent Kapilā-tīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of having given away a cow.

8b-9a. Then he should go to Kāñcitīrtha resorted to by the hosts of gods and sages. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e. go to) the heaven of cows.

9b-10a. O lord of kings, then he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kuṇḍaleśvara. Near there, Rudra lives with Umā.

10b. O lord of kings, one who bathes there, cannot be killed even by gods.

11. Then he should go to Pippaleśvara, which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven.

12. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the pure Vimaleśvara. There is the beautiful Devaśikhā, put down by the god.

13-17. Casting my life there I would obtain (i.e. go to) Rudra's heaven. Then a man should go to Puṣkarinī, and should bathe there. By just bathing there he would obtain half of Indra's seat. Narmadā is the greatest among the rivers. She has flowed forth from Rudra's body. She would liberate all immobile and mobile beings. The magnanimous lord, the god superior to all other gods, told (this) to the groups of sages, and especially to us. This excellent river Narmadā was praised by sages with a desire for the well-being of the worlds. She came out of Rudra's body. She always removes all sins. She is saluted by all creatures.

18-20a. She is also extolled by gods, gandharvas and celestial nymphs: "Salutation to you, O (river) of holy water, O you going to the ocean. Salutation to you who was taken out by the sages from Śiva's body. Salutation to you who are chosen by Dharma, O you of an excellent face; salutation to you, O you who are saluted by the host of sages. Salutation to you who purify the pure; salutation to you who are well-worshipped by the entire world."

20b-22. He, who, with a pure mind daily recites this hymn, if a brāhmaṇa, obtains (mastery over) the Vedas; if a kṣatriya, would be victorious; if a vaiśya, would be profited; if a śūdra, would get a good position. One who desires food, would always have it just by remembering her. God Maheśvara himself always resorts to Narmadā. Therefore the river should be looked upon as holy and remover of sins.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

More Tirthas on the Bank of Narmadā

Nārada said :

1-7. Since then Brahmā and others, as well as the sages rich in penance, being free from lust and anger, resort to Narmadā, O king. Seeing the trident of the lord fallen at that place on the earth, the magnanimous Śiva narrated its importance. It came to be known as the great, most meritorious holy place Śūlabheda. He, who, having bathed there, would worship the god (Śiva), would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, he, who would pass three nights there, and would worship Mahādeva, would not be reborn. Then a man should go to Maheśvara, (then) to the excellent Narmadeśvara. (Then he should visit) the very meritorious Ādityeśvara. Then on worshipping Mallikeśvara with ghee and honey, he obtains the fruit of his existence. Then he should see (i.e. visit) Varuṇeśvara, the excellent Nirajeśvara. He gets the fruit of (visiting) all the holy places by seeing (i.e. visiting) these five. O lord of kings, he should go to the place where the battle was fought.

8-11. Koṭitīrtha is well-known where the demons were fought (with), and where these demons, proud of their strength, were destroyed. Seizing their heads he killed them who had gathered there. They installed (the representation of) Maheśvara with the trident in his hand. The point was placed there, therefore (the place) is known as Koṭitīrtha. By seeing that holy place, a man would physically go to heaven. At that time, due to meanness, Indra restrained (a man) by means of the wedge of his bolt. Since then, people's going to heaven has been checked.

12-13. O Pāṇḍava, after having offered a coconut with ghee, at the end (of this rite), by all means he should, holding a lamp on his head, go round the (representation of the) god. He gets all his desires satisfied. When he dies, he obtains Rudrahood, and is not born again in this world. Having gone to heaven, then having ruled as a king, he goes to Indra's paradise.

14-18. Similarly, having waited upon Mahādeva, a man who just bathes there gets the fruit of all sacrifices. Then, O lord of kings, a man should go to the very beautiful holy place—the ex-

cellent Agastyeśvara—that removes the sins of men. O king, a man, having bathed there, is absolved (of the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa. A man with his senses controlled remaining in profound meditation, should bathe the representation of the god with ghee (on) the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika. He, with twentyone members (i.e. descendants) of his family, would never be deprived of lordly position. He should present cows, shoes, an umbrella, and a blanket, and also food to all brāhmaṇas. It would have a crorefold merit.

19-21. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the excellent Ravistava. Having bathed (i.e. if a man bathes) there, he would get a throne (i.e. would be a king). On the right bank of Narmadā, the place holy to Indra (and called Śakratīrtha) is well-known. Having fasted there for a night, he should bathe. Having bathed there he should properly worship Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He goes to Viṣṇu's world.

22-23. Thence he should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, which removes all the sins of men. A man, by just bathing there, is honoured in Śiva's world. There only is the very beautiful holy place of (i.e. named after) Nārada. By just bathing there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

24-25. Then he should go to Devatīrtha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Brahmā's world. Then he should go to Amarakaṇṭaka, formerly established by gods. Having just bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of having given away a thousand cows.

26-27. Then he should go to Vāmaneśvara. Seeing Vāmanaka there, he is absolved of the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa. Thence a man should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, and certainly to Īśāneśa. Then having gone to (i.e. if he visits) Vaṭeśvara, he obtains the fruit of his existence.

28-29. Thence a man should go to Bhīmeśvara, which destroys all diseases. A man, O king, by just bathing there is free from all misery. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Varaṇeśvara. Having bathed there, a man is free from all misery, O king.

30-31. Then he should go to Somatīrtha and should see Candra. O king, then, being full of great devotion, having bath-

ed there, he, obtaining a celestial body just at that moment, enjoys like Śiva for a long time. He is honoured for sixty thousand years in Śiva's heaven.

32-36. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place of) Piṅgaleśvara. By fasting for a day and night (there) he would obtain the fruit of (having fasted for) three nights. O lord of kings, he who gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa) at that holy place, is honoured in Rudra's world for as many thousand years as there are hairs on his body and on the bodies of the members born in his family. O king, he who casts his life there, enjoys eternally as long as the moon and the sun will remain in the sky. Those men who, having resorted to the bank of Narmadā, die (there), go to heaven as the men of good deeds go.

37-41. Then on the day of Gaṅgāvatarāṇa, he should go to Surabhikeśvara and (the holy place called) Nāraka and Koṭikeśvara. He is blessed; no doubt about it. Thence going to Nanditīrtha, he should bathe there. Lord of Nandi (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and the man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then he should go to Dīpeśvara, and the penance-grove (called) Vyāsa-tīrtha. Formerly the great river turned back from there, being afraid of Vyāsa. Then, when he uttered the sound 'hum', she went (i.e. flowed) towards the south. O king, he who circumambulates at the holy place, has Vyāsa pleased with him, and he gets the desired fruit. He who puts a thread round (the representation of) the god along with the altar, sports for eternal time; and he is as Rudra is (i.e. becomes Rudra-like).

42-47. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent sacred place (called) Eraṇḍī. Having bathed (there) at the confluence, he is absolved of all sins. Eraṇḍī is well-known in the three worlds (as) destroyer of sins. Or (on) the eighth of the bright fortnight in the month of Āśvina, a man having bathed, and being pure and intent upon fasting, should feed one brāhmaṇa, (thereby) a crore (of brāhmaṇas) are fed. Having bathed at the confluence at Eraṇḍī, and delighted in devotion, a man, having placed a pearl-oyster on his head, and having plunged into the water mixed with that of Narmadā, gets absolved of all sins. O king, he who would circumambulate at that holy place, goes round the earth consisting of seven islands.

48-51. Then having bathed at Suvarṇatilaka and having given gold (to a brāhmaṇa) he is honoured in Rudra's world with a golden mansion. Then fallen from heaven after (some) time, he becomes a powerful king. Thence, O lord, he should go to the confluence of the river Ikṣu. It is well-known in the three worlds. Śiva is present there. O king, having bathed a man would attain the status of the head of the attendants of Śiva. Thence he should go to Skandatīrtha which destroys all sins. Sin committed from birth goes away merely by bathing there.

52-57a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Āṅgī-rasa, and should bathe there. He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He is honoured in Rudra's heaven. From there he should go to Lāṅgalatīrtha which destroys all sins. Having gone there, O lord of kings, he should bathe there. There is no doubt that (thereby) he becomes free from sins committed during seven existences. Hence he should go to Vateśvara, the best of all holy places. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. From there, he should go to the great (holy place called) Saṅgameśvara which removes all sins. Having bathed there one gets a kingdom. There is no doubt about it. All that (merit) of the man who, after reaching Bhadratīrtha, gives gifts, would become a crorefold in effect by the power of that sacred place.

57b-58a. If a woman bathes there, she would become like Gaurī, and undoubtedly goes to Indra.

58b-62. Then he should go to Aṅgāreśvara, and should bathe there. A man, merely by bathing there, is honoured in Rudra's world. On the Aṅgārakī caturthī (i.e. caturthī falling on a Tuesday) he should bathe there. Being instructed by Viṣṇu, he rejoices eternally. Having bathed at Ayonisaṅgama, he should see the Yonimandira. Having gone to Pāṇḍaveśvara, he should bathe there. He cannot be killed by gods or demons, and rejoices eternally. Then going to Viṣṇu's heaven, he is full of sport and enjoyments. Having enjoyed great pleasures there, he is born as a king in the mortal world.

63. He should go to Kambotikeśvara and should bathe there. When the summer solstice arrives, whatever he would desire would take place.

64. Thence he should go to Candrabhāgā and bathe there. A man by just bathing there is honoured in Soma's world.

65-69a. Then, O king of kings, he should go to the holy place of Śakra (i.e. Indra), which is well-known, and is honoured by the king of gods. He should give gold as a gift. Or he who would give a bull of a dark colour, would live in Hara's city for as many thousand years as there are hairs on the body of the bull, and on the bodies of those that are born in his family. Then having fallen from heaven, he becomes a powerful king; and by the power of that holy place, he becomes, among thousands of mortals, the master of horses of white colour.

69b-74. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Brahmāvarta. Having bathed there, he should offer oblations to his divine manes by giving a piṇḍa according to the proper rites after having fasted for a night. When the Sun has entered Virgo, (this merit) would be stored eternally. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kapilā-tīrtha. O king, he, who, after bathing there, gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa), would get the fruit which would be got by giving the entire earth. Narmadeśvara is a great holy place. There has not been or will not be (other) holy place (like this). O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. (A man who has gone there) is born as a sovereign emperor on the earth; he is perfect with all (good) characteristics and free from all diseases.

75-80. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is a very auspicious holy place (called) Ādityāyana; it is charming and is created by the lord. O lord of kings, the gift given there after having bathed there becomes inexhaustible by the power of that holy place. Those that are poor, or diseased, or those that have done wicked deeds, are absolved of all sins, and go to the Sun's world. On the seventh of the bright fortnight when the month of Māgha has come, he who, without food, and with his senses controlled, would live in the temple, never suffers from diseases, does not become blind or deaf. Being fortunate and endowed with handsomeness, he becomes dear to women. This holy place is said to be very holy by Mārkaṇḍeya. O lord of kings, those who do not go there are undoubtedly deceived.

81-85a. Thence he should go to Māseśvara, and should

bathe there. A man merely by bathing there, would obtain heaven. Remaining in all worlds, he rejoices as long as fourteen Indras rule. Then remaining in the penance-grove called 'Nāgeśvara which is nearby, and having bathed there, O lord of kings, and being pure and concentrated, he sports for eternal time with many Nāga damsels. He should go to Kubera's abode, where Kubera stays. Kāleśvara is a great holy place where Kubera was pleased. Bathing there, O lord of kings, he would obtain all wealth.

85b-88. Then he should go westward to the best abode of the Maruts. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, being pure and concentrated, the intelligent one should then give gold and food according to his capacity. He goes to Vāyu's world by the Puṣpaka aeroplane. O Yudhiṣṭhira, then in the month of Māgha he should go to my Tīrtha. On the fourteenth day of a dark fortnight he should bathe there. Then he should eat at night, and should not go to Yonisamkṣaṭa.

89-97a. Thence he should go to Ahalyātīrtha. After merely having bathed there, he rejoices with celestial nymphs. Ahalyā got liberated after having practised penance at the Parameśvara (tīrtha). When the thirteenth day of the bright half of Caitra has arrived, he should, on that day holy to god Cupid, worship Ahalyā. A man who is born anywhere (i.e. in any family), would be dear there. He would be dear to women, would be prosperous and like another god of love. Having reached Ayodhyā, (he should visit) the well-known Śakratīrtha. Having merely bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows. Thence he should go to Somatīrtha and just bathe there. A man who has just bathed there, is absolved of all sins. On (the day of) the planet Moon, O lord of kings, it would remove all sins. O king, Somatīrtha is well-known in the three worlds, and gives a great fruit. O lord of men, he, who observes there the Cāndrāyaṇa vow, goes, after his soul is purified from all sins, to Soma's heaven. He who dies at Somatīrtha by entering fire or in the water or by living without food, is not born in the mortal world.

97b-100. Thence he should go to Stambhatīrtha, and should bathe there. By merely bathing there, a man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excel-

lent Viṣṇutīrtha. The excellent Viṣṇutīrtha is (also) well-known as Yodhanīpura. Vāsudeva fought with crores of demons there. There a holy place came up; and here (i.e. at this holy place) Viṣṇu would be pleased. By observing a fast day and night, he keeps off (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

101-104a. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Tāpaseśvara. It is known as Amohaka. There he should offer oblations to his manes. On the full moon or the new moon day he should offer a śrāddha according to the proper rite. Having bathed there, O king, he should offer piṇḍa to his manes. In it stand stones of the form of elephants. At that (holy place) he should offer piṇḍa—especially in (the month of) Vaiśākha. His manes remain pleased as long as the earth will remain.

104b-121. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Siddheśvara. Going there he should go near Gaṇapati. From there, he should go to the place where there is Janārdana (as a) liṅga. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. On the right bank of Narmadā there is a very auspicious holy place. This great Kāmadeva (i.e. god of love) practises penance there. For a thousand divine years he worships Śiva. During the time of his abstract meditation he was burnt by the magnanimous Śiva. On the day of the bright parvan (i.e. the full moon day) the fire resembled a white mountain. All those remaining with Cupid were burnt and they lived at Kusu-meśvara. After a thousand divine years the great lord (Śiva) was pleased with them. Rudra, the giver of boons, was, along with Umā, pleased with them. All they remaining on the bank of Narmadā were liberated. By the power of that holy place they again attained godhead. 'O Mahādeva, let the holy place be excellent by your favour.' The holy place has extended up to half a yojana all around. A man, given to fasting, having bathed at that holy place is honoured in the form of Cupid in Rudra's heaven. Yama, Kāmadeva, Vaiśvānara and Vāyu who had formerly come there, practised penance there only. A man who within the limit of half a yojana from there, near Andhona, not far away from the holy place, bathes, gives gifts, (gives) food (to brāhmaṇas), offers piṇḍas, enters fire, or water, or fasts, is never reborn after dying there. The best man should bathe himself with the water

sacred to Tryambaka. The manes of him, who duly offers piṇḍas at the root of Andhona, remain pleased as long as the moon and the sun remain (in the sky). A man or a woman who bathes there when the sun enters the northern solstice, would, (being) pure, live in the abode (of Siddheśvara) (and) the man, would obtain, by worshipping Siddheśvara in the morning, that status of the good which cannot be obtained by (performing) great sacrifices; and during the time of his stay at the holy place, an ugly man becomes handsome. In the mortal world, he becomes the king (of the earth) upto the oceans. (If) he would not see Kṣetrapāla, and the mighty Daṇḍapāla his pilgrimage would be fruitless, (also) by not seeing (i.e. visiting) Karṇakuṇḍala.

122. Having learnt this fruit of (the visit to) sacred places, all the gods that had assembled there, showered flowers and praised Kusumeśvara.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Śuklatīrtha

Nārada said :

1-2a. Thence he should devoutly go to Bhārgaveśa where the demons were destroyed by god Viṣṇu with his huṁkāra sound. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is free from all sins.

2b-6. O son of Pāṇḍu, also listen to the (description of) Śuklatīrtha. Mārkaṇḍa, seeing god (Mahādeva) with Umā, who was seated on the peak of Himālaya which was charming, variegated with various minerals, which resembled the young sun and heated gold, which had the staircase of strong crystals, which had a slab of stone with a variegated strap, which was golden, which was divine and adorned with many lotuses, asked (Mahādeva) who was omniscient, who was the immutable lord, who favoured the worlds, who was surrounded by the hosts of attendants and by Skanda, Nandi, Mahākāla, and attendants like Virabhadra :

7. “O Mahādeva, god of gods, praised by (gods like) Indra and Kāma, I am afraid of the worldly existence. Tell me the means of happiness.

8. O you revered lord, the lord of what has been and what will be, O you great god, describe to me the greatest among the holy places, destroying all sins.”

The lord said:

9-29a. O illustrious brāhmaṇa, well-versed in all branches of knowledge, go, surrounded by the groups of sages, and have a bath etc. The sages Manu, Atri, Yājñavalkya, Kaśyapa, and Aṅgiras, Āpastamba, Saṁvarta, Kātyāyana, Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Gautama, desiring to secure righteousness asked him. At Kanakhala Gaṅgā is holy; and also Prayāga, Puṣkara and Gayā (are holy places). When the Sun is swallowed by Rāhu (i.e. on a solar eclipse day) Kurukṣetra also is holy. By day or at night, Śuklatīrtha gives a great fruit. On seeing it, touching (i.e. having contact with) it, bathing there, meditating, practising penance, (or performing) a sacrifice, (or by) fasting Śuklatīrtha gives great fruit. Śuklatīrtha is very holy and is well situated on the river. A royal sage named Cāṇikya attained perfection there. This holy place that sprang up extends over a yojana. Śuklatīrtha is very holy; it destroys all sins. When seen from the top of a tree it removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O best sage, I stay here with Umā. During the pure month of Vaiśākha, on the fourteenth day of the dark half, I go out from Kailāsa and stay there. Gods, kinnaras, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādharas, my attendants, nāgas, and all gods gather here; and remaining in the sky they have aeroplanes satisfying all desires. O lord of kings, those who desiring piety, come to Śuklatīrtha, (have their sins washed) as a garment is made (i.e. washed) white by a washerman. The sin collected from birth melts away at Śuklatīrtha. Even if he dies within the limit of half a yojana (of this holy place) he is not reborn. O Mārkaṇḍa, best of the sages, giving gifts and bathing (at this holy place) give a great merit. A holy place superior to Śuklatīrtha was never there nor will be there. A man having committed sins during his youth, removes (i.e. is free from) them by observing a fast for a day and night at Śuklatīrtha. That perfection which is had by means of penance,

self-restraint, sacrifices, giving gifts and offering presents to deities, is not had even by (performing) hundreds of sacrifices. On the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika a man should observe a fast and bathe (the image of) the lord with ghee. He, along with (members of his family) till the twentyfirst (descendant) will not fall from the divine position. Śuklatīrtha is a great holy place. It is resorted to by sages and siddhas. O king, having bathed (i.e. if he bathes) there, he is not reborn. Having bathed at Śuklatīrtha, he should worship Śiva. He should keep awake (during the night) by (resorting to) auspicious (things) like dancing, singing etc. In the morning he should bath in the Śuklatīrtha, and worship the deities. Being pure and devoted to Śiva's vow, he should then feed his preceptor according to his capacity; then he should take food; he should not be dishonest about wealth. Then after circumambulating he should gently approach the deity.

29b-36. Listen to the meritorious fruit that he who does like this, gets. Having got into a celestial car, being extolled by beves of celestial nymphs and endowed with strength like that of Śiva, he lives till deluge. Listen to the meritorious fruit that a woman who gives pure gold (to a brāhmaṇa) at Śuklatīrtha and would bathe Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya) with ghee and worship him—who does like this devoutly—obtains. As long as the fourteen Indras live in heaven he rejoices. He having fully restrained himself and composed, having bathed and observed a fast during the period of the sun's passage—north or south of the equator, on the fourteenth day, on a Saṁkrānti day or on (the day of) the equinox, should give gifts according to his capacity. (Thereby) Viṣṇu and Śiva would be pleased. By the efficacy of Śuklatīrtha all (this) becomes inexhaustible. Listen to the meritorious fruit which he who carries a helpless person, an indigent brāhmaṇa, or even one who is dependent, obtains. He is honoured in Śiva's heaven for as many thousand years as the number of hairs (on the bodies of the persons) that are born in his family.

CHAPTER TWENTY

*Naraka, Kapilātīrtha, Ṛṣitīrtha, Gaṇeśvara, Bhṛgutīrtha,
Somatīrtha etc.*

Nārada said:

1-12. Then he should go to (the holy place called) Naraka. He should bathe there. Merely by bathing there a man does not see (i.e. go to) hell. O you son of Pāṇḍu, listen to the greatness of this holy place. O lord of kings, all the bones which he would drop there, are dissolved, and the man becomes handsome. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kapilātīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. The man, who, when the month of Jyeṣṭha has come and especially on the fourteenth day, observes a fast devoutly, gives a tawny cow, and burning a lamp with ghee, bathes Śiva with ghee, and offers a coconut along with ghee, and in the end goes round, and gives a tawny cow with a bell and (other) ornaments (to a brāhmaṇa), becomes like Śiva, and is not born again. When Tuesday has come, especially on the fourth day (falling on Tuesday), a man should devoutly bathe (the image of) Śiva and give food to brāhmaṇas. When the ninth or the new moon day falls on a Tuesday, he should carefully bathe (the image of) Śiva. (Thereby) he would be handsome and fortunate. He should bathe the Phallus with ghee and devoutly honour brāhmaṇas. Surrounded by thousands, he (going in) Puṣpaka aeroplane, obtains the position of Śiva. He would not come here (i.e. to this world) again. He rejoices for an eternal time, and he becomes like Rudra. When the most righteous one comes to the mortal world due to his contact with (the fruits of) his deeds, he becomes a king, and becomes handsome and strong.

13-14a. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Ṛṣitīrtha. There the sage Tṛṇabindu, burnt my curse, resided. By the efficacy of that holy place a brāhmaṇa becomes free from sins.

14b-16a. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent Gaṇeśvara. Merely by bathing there on the fourteenth day when the month of Śrāvaṇa has come (i.e. on the fourteenth

day of Śrāvaṇa) a man is honoured in Rudra's heaven. By offering oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and the manes).

16b-25. Near Gaṇeśvara there is the excellent (holy place called) Gaṅgāvadana. A man who would bathe there with some desire or without any desire would undoubtedly be free from sins committed from birth. He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts. That entire merit is had at Gaṅgārāh-varka confluence, which was seen at Prayāga by the magnanimous Śiva. To a place in its west, near it, not far away there is (the holy place) called Daśāśvamedhika, well-known in the three worlds. A man having fasted for a night on the new moon day in the month of Bhādrapada, and having bathed, would go to the place where Śiva (dwells). He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the west of Daśāśvamedha, Bhṛgu, the best brāhmaṇa, worshipped the lord for a thousand divine years. He remained under an anthill; and to the right was the abode (of the lord). Umā and Śiva were amazed. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) asked the lord : "O great lord, who is dwelling here ? Tell me whether he is a god or a demon."

The lord said :

26. O dear one, the best brāhmaṇa named Bhṛgu, and best among the sages, remains in deep meditation and reflects upon me; he desires a boon.

27. On hearing this the goddess laughed and said to the lord : "The tuft of his hair has become like whirling smoke. Still you are not pleased. Therefore you are difficult to be propitiated. There is no doubt it."

God said :

28. O great goddess, you do not know; he behaves wrathfully. I shall show you the fact, and shall do what is dear to you.

29. Then the lord of gods brought to his mind his bull (i.e.

Nandi). Immediately on being remembered, the god's bull came there.

30. He spoke in a human voice: "O lord, order me." (The lord said:) "The brāhmaṇa is covered with anthill; knock him down on the ground."

31-32. He who was engrossed in abstract meditation, and who was reflecting (upon the lord) was knocked down by him. Then getting hot with anger in a moment, he raised his hand and said to the bull, "O bull, where will you talking like this go (now)? I shall today actually kill you—a wicked one."

33-45. Then the brāhmaṇa challenged the bull gone into the air. He saw him in the sky; O king, this was a very great wonder. Then, when Rudra laughed, the sage stood before him. Seeing his third eye, he fell on the ground through shame. Saluting the highest lord (by prostrating himself before him) like a staff, he extolled him. Having saluted the lord of beings and the origin of the mundane existence (he praised him:) "Afraid of the worldly life, O lord of the world, I beg of you of a divine form, a little welfare. O lord, which man is able to describe the multitudes of your qualities? Perhaps Vāsuki, who has a thousand mouths may be able (to do so). O Śaṅkara, O lord of the earth, O revered one, forgive me; be gracious to me who am devoutly garrulous in your praise, and who have fallen at your feet. You are sattva, rajas and tamas. You (are the cause of) the maintenance, creation and destruction (of the world). O lord of the world, O master of the world, excepting you, there is no (other) deity. All this—self-control, vows, sacrifices, gifts, Vedic studies, efforts like determination—does not deserve (is not equal to) even the sixteen thousandth part of your devotion. The signs like the sword of the excellent elixir of life or going on foot by people, are clearly seen in the case of people who have bowed down to you in this existence. Even if a man salutes you fraudulently, you give Dharma to him, O you god of those who long for you. O lord, devotion has been produced to cut off the worldly existence and for liberation. O great lord, protect me who am taking delight in another's wife or wealth, who am tormented by insult and great grief, and who am scorched by false pride, who sported with the grandeur lasting for a moment, who am prone to cruel ways and who am fallen. Though the

direction is full of the groups of the helpless sense organs, like relatives, yet it is worthless. O Śaṅkara, why do you mock at me—a fool? O Mahādeva, remove my thirst (i.e. desire) quickly, give me wealth that would always remain in my heart; cut off the nooses of pride and delusion; liberate me.”

46. This hymn named ‘Karuṇābhyudaya’ is divine and gives perfection. Śiva is pleased with him, as with Bhṛgu, who recites it devoutly.

The lord said :

47. O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased with you; ask for the boon desired by you.

The god along with Umā would give him a boon.

Bhṛgu said:

48. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, if a boon is to be given to me, then let there be Rudravedi (here). (Please) bring this about for me.

The lord said:

49-52a. O best of brāhmaṇas, there will be Krodhasthāna (i.e. place of anger). There will be no agreement between father and son.

Since then all gods like Brahmā, along with kinnaras, worship Bhṛgutīrtha, where Śiva was pleased. By seeing (i.e. visiting) that holy place a man is instantly free from sin. The creatures, helpless or independent, who die there, would undoubtedly go along the course of the very secret one (i.e. Brahman).

52b-57. This holy place is very extensive, and destroys all sins. Having bathed there men go to heaven; and those who die there, are not reborn. He should give sandals, an umbrella, food and gold and meal according to his capacity. It would be eternal. One should give according to his desire gifts on the day of the solar eclipse, and also bathe at the holy place—all this gives inexhaustible merit. Giving a bull on a lunar eclipse day or solar eclipse day is excellent. O king, foolish men, deluded by Viṣṇu’s illusion do not know the divine Vṛṣatīrtha situated on (the bank

of) Narmadā. A man, who (even) once listens to the greatness of Bhṛgutīrtha, is free from all sins, and he goes to Rudra's world.

58-59a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place) Gautameśvara. Having bathed there, O king, and absorbed in observing a fast, he is honoured in Brahmā's world (after going there) in a golden aeroplane.

59b-62. He would then go to Dhautapāpa, where the bull washed (his sins). O king, it is situated on (the bank of) Narmadā, and destroys all sins. A man, having bathed at that holy place, is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. O great king, he who casts his life at that holy place, gets four hands and three eyes and becomes as powerful as Rudra. Valourous like Rudra, he would stay for a complete myriad of years (in Rudra's heaven). Having come to the earth after a long time, he would be a sovereign emperor.

63-67a. From there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Eraṇḍitīrtha. O king, the man who just bathes there gets the same fruit as Mārkaṇḍeya told about Prayāga. In the month of Bhādrapada, and on the eighth of the bright half, a man should observe a fast for a night and should bathe there. He would not be troubled by the messengers of Yama, and he goes to Indra's heaven. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu dwells. It is known as Hiranyadvīpa and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man becomes rich and handsome.

67b-69. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the great (holy place called) Kanakhala. O king, at that holy place Garuḍa practised penance. It is well known in all the worlds. Yoginī (i.e. Durgā) dwells there. She plays with the meditating saints and dances with Śiva. O king, one who bathes there, is honoured in Rudra's world.

70. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Īsatīrtha. There is no doubt that Īśa became free there and went up.

71-72. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu, the inconceivable lord, having resorted to the form of a boar, dwells. A man having bathed at Varāhatīrtha, especially on the twelfth, obtains Viṣṇu's heaven, and does not go to hell.

73-76. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Somatīrtha. He should bathe there especially on the full moon day. Bali having saluted the lord, is pleased with him. In the atmosphere is seen the celestial city of Hariścandra. When Cakradhvaja (wheel-bannered one) returned, and Garuḍa-bannered one was asleep, the force of Narmadā's water resorted to Rurukaccha. Viṣṇu told Śaṅkara to stay there. Having bathed at Dvīpeśvara, a man would get great happiness.

77-82. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Rudrakanyā on the confluence. Merely by bathing there, a man would obtain the position of the goddess. Then he should go to Devatīrtha saluted by all gods. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he rejoices with deities. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to (the excellent holy place called) Śikhitīrtha. A gift given there becomes a crore times meritorious. On the new moon day in the dark half of the month he should bathe there. He should feed a brāhmaṇa. Thereby a crore (of brāhmaṇas) is fed. O lord of kings, at Bhṛgutīrtha a crore of holy places are settled. A man having no desire, or having a desire, should bathe there. He obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and rejoices with deities. The best sage Bhṛgu obtained perfection there. The magnanimous Śaṅkara descended there.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

*Vihageśvara, Narmadeśvara, Aśvatīrtha, Pitāmaha,
Sāvitṛtīrtha, Mānasa etc.*

Nārada said:

1. O lord of kings, from there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Vihageśvara.

2. O lord of kings, by seeing it, he is free from all sins. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Narmadeśvara. O king, having bathed there he is honoured in heaven.

3. From there a man should go to Aśvatīrtha and should bathe there. He becomes prosperous, handsome and happy.

4-5. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Pitāmaha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. A man having bathed there should devoutly offer oblations to his dead ancestors. He should offer water mixed with sesamum and darbha. By the efficacy of that sacred place, everything becomes inexhaustible.

6-7. He, who, on reaching Sāvitrīrtha, would bathe (there), is, after having shaken off all his sins, honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Just there is a beautiful and extremely auspicious sacred place. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of manes.

8. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Mānasa. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Rudra's world.

9-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Kratutīrtha. It is well-known in all worlds and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain all the desired objects like beasts, sons, wealth which he prays for.

11. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the well-known holy place called Tridaśadyoti.

12-13. There those daughters of sages of good vows practised penance (with the desire): 'May the immutable lord, the master, be our husband.' Mahādeva i.e. Hara, the highest lord, taking up a fierce form, of a deformed face and loathsome, came to that sacred place. There the maidens, O great king, (practised penance) for a boon.

14-15a. He who would go to Kanyāṛddhi, gives a daughter (i.e. gets the merit of giving a daughter in marriage). There O great king, is a well-known sacred place (named) Daśakanyā. Having bathed there he should worship the lord. (Thereby) he is free from all sins.

15b-16a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the sacred place known as Svargabindu. Having bathed there, O king, a man never meets with misfortune.

16b-17a. From there he should go to Apsareśa, and should bathe there. Remaining in the world of Nāgas he sports and rejoices with celestial nymphs.

17b-31. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the ex-

cellent (sacred place called) Narakatīrtha. Having bathed there, he should go to Bhārabhūta. Having reached this holy place, which is a manifestation of Śiva, and having worshipped Virūpākṣa (i.e. Śiva) there, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven. The magnanimous man, bathing at the holy place Bhārabhūta, gets the position of Śiva, wherever he may be dead. The wise say that worshipping Śiva during the month of Kārtika is hundred times more meritorious than a horse sacrifice. He should fashion a hundred lamps, and should give them (to a brāhmaṇa) after filling them with ghee. He goes in aeroplanes resembling the thunderbolt (in strength) to the place where Śaṅkara stays. He, who would present a bull resembling a conch, or a kunda-flower, or the moon, goes to Rudra's world in a car to which bulls are yoked. O king, he who would give a vessel and also sweetened milk mixed with honey, and various eatables, and (he) who would feed (brāhmaṇas) according to his capacity, would, O lord of kings, have all that increased a crore-fold by the efficacy of that sacred place. Having sprinkled the water over (the image of Śiva) and having worshipped Śiva, he would not meet with misfortune by the efficacy of that sacred place. He, who, having reached this holy place, would cast his life, goes, with his soul absolved of all sins, to (the place) where Śiva (dwells). O king, he who enters water (i.e. bathes) at that holy place, goes to Rudra's heaven in a car to which swans are yoked. As long as the moon, the sun, the Himālayas, the great ocean, or the waters of the Ganges (will remain), he is honoured in heaven. O king, he who would observe a fast at that sacred place, is not required to live in the womb (i.e. is not reborn), O lord of kings. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Aṭavītīrtha. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain half of Indra's seat.

32-34. Thence he should go to Śṛṅgatīrtha which destroys all sins. By merely bathing there he gets the position of Śiva. The confluence of Eraṇḍi and Narmadā is well-known. The holy place there is meritorious and destroys all sins. Being engaged in fasting and always intent upon (reaching) Brahman, he, having bathed there, is free from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, O lord of kings.

35-42. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the conflu-

ence of Narmadā and the ocean (i.e. where Narmadā flows into the sea). It is well-known as Jamadagni; and Viṣṇu is settled there. Having performed many sacrifices there, Indra became the lord of gods. Having bathed there at the confluence of Narmadā and the ocean, O king, a man gets threefold fruit of a horse-sacrifice. The intimate union with the western ocean is (just) the opening of the gate to salvation. There gods with gandharvas, and sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, worship Vimalēśvara, the lord of gods, thrice (a day). With his soul free from all sins, he is honoured in Rudra's world. There was never a great sacred place like Vimalēśvara, nor will there be any great holy place like Vimalēśvara. Those who after fasting there, see Vimalēśvara, have their souls freed from all sins, and go to Rudra's heaven.

43-44. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the Keśinīrtha. He, intent on observing a fast, restrained and with his diet controlled, and fasting for a night is absolved (of the sin) of the murder of a brāhmaṇa by the efficacy of that holy place. (For him) who would see Sāgareshvara, the best holy place, or would remain within a distance of a yojana from it, Śiva is settled in the eddy. There is no doubt that when it is seen, all the holy places are seen. He, being free from all sins, goes there where Rudra dwells.

45-52. Ten crores of holy places exist within the distance between the confluence of Narmadā and Amaraṇṭaka. O lord of kings, the walking about from the holy place—the pilgrimage, was resorted to by a crore of sages. The pilgrimages were undertaken by men who maintained the sacred fire, who were the divine portions and who had mastered all knowledge. Therefore, all the holy places give him a holy bath, who would devoutly recite and listen to it daily; and Narmadā would always be pleased with him. Rudra would be pleased with him, and so also the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya. A barren woman gets sons; an unfortunate woman (i.e. one who is disliked by her husband) becomes fortunate. A groom obtains a virgin; whosoever desires what, obtains it. No doubt should be raised about it. A brāhmaṇa gets (the knowledge of) the Vedas; a kṣatriya would be victorious; a vaiśya obtains grains, and a śūdra obtains felicity. A fool would obtain knowledge. A man who would

recite this three times a day would not see (i.e. go to) hell and would not go to (i.e. get) an ignominious birth.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Story of Five Gandharva Maidens

Nārada said:

1-2. O king, I have thus described to you the excellent Narmadātīrtha. Formerly the fire of the drops of the water of Revā destroyed the excessive fear due to the curse of the daughters of gandharvas. A man is liberated by the touch of the drops of the water of Revā.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3-6. O revered one, wherefrom did the many daughters get a curse? Whose children were they? What were their names and their ages? How did they get free from the fruit of the curse by the contact of the water? Where did they bathe? O lord, tell me all this. The greatness of the Narmadātīrtha would be surprising. It is said to destroy sins even by listening to it. He who utters the word 'Narmadā, Narmadā', gets eternal liberation as long as the moon and stars exist.

7-8. Formerly you told me the excellent importance of Revā. Still, O good one, tell me the story; also about the best livelihood that should be resorted to by the wise. Therefore, O best of brāhmaṇas, I am asking about the excellent importance of Revā. O lord, tell me the history, bright due to the deeds of the maidens.

Nārada said:

9. O best king, listen to the great story infused with righteousness. As the araṇi (i.e. the piece of wood used for kindling sacrificial fire) contains fire, similarly Dharma is produced by Brahmā.

10. (There was) a gandharva by name Śukasaṅgīti. His daughter was Pramohinī. Suśīlā was the daughter of Suśīla. Susvarā was the daughter of Svaravedin. Sutārā was Candrakānta's daughter and Candrikā was that of Suprabha.

11-18. O king, these were the excellent names of those celestial nymphs. All the five maidens were beautiful due to their being in the prime of youth. They always talked among themselves like sisters. They as it were came out of the moon like the bright moonlight. Their faces were (beautiful) like the moon; they had lovely hair; and were bright like moonlight. They (the damsels) were among gods as moonlight in white lotuses opening at moonrise. They were born with lumps of (i.e. excessive) beauty; they had celestial forms and were charming. The lotuses of their breasts were shooting forth; they looked like the ketakī plants in the spring. They were charming on account of the youth that had arisen like the foliage of a grove of creepers. They were yellowish like gold; their lustre was like gold; they were decorated with golden ornaments. They had put on the garlands of golden campaka (flowers). Their beautiful garments appeared golden. They were proficient in the musical scale, in various melodies, in beating in (playing on) musical instruments, in diversions, and in playing upon flute and lute, as well as in dance accompanied with singing and instrumental music and in the time in music like the middle one and the fast one; also in diversions like (drawing) pictures and arts.

19. The maidens that were like this were infatuated with excellent sports. Fondled by their parents all of them moved in Kubera's abode.

20-24. Once through curiosity, the five maidens—the celestial damsels—getting together in the spring season, collecting mandara flowers from grove after grove, went to the Acchoda lake to propitiate Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Taking excellent golden lotuses along with beautiful blue lotuses from that (lake), having bathed on the pavement of lapis lazuli and clear crystal, having put on their garments, they silently fashioned a golden image of Umā with golden and pearl ornaments on an altar. The young girls, having worshipped Gaurī, decorated with sandal (-paste), perfumes and saffron, with excellent lotuses etc. and with various presents, danced to the accompaniment of singing and instru-

mental music. Having resorted to singing with high notes, the fawn-eyed ones then sang, with natural voice and melodies, songs containing beautiful letters (i.e. words) and raised to a high pitch and made melodious by (various) modes.

25-36a. At that time, to the excellent holy place of the Acchoda came for a bath the eldest son of the sage, the abode of (the knowledge of) the Vedas, when the girls were delighted with the shower of emotions, and with their minds full of joy. The young man was (having) boundless handsomeness, had a charming face, and his eyes were large like blooming lotuses. His chest was broad, he had good (i.e. strong) arms, he was very handsome; his complexion was dark; he was like another Cupid. That celibate, with a good (i.e. a large) tuft of hair, shone with his staff as Cupid with his bow. The excellent one had covered himself with deer-skin, he had put on marks (on his body) and had a girdle of the muñja grass resembling gold round his waist. Seeing that brāhmaṇa on the bank of the lake, the girls, full of curiosity, were delighted (and said): "This one will be our guest." Ardently longing to see him they gave up singing and dancing, and were pierced by Cupid with his arrows, as female deer are pierced by a hunter. The five (maidens) were stupefied, confused and said (to one another): "See, see." They mistook the excellent youth for the god of love. Having repeatedly worshipped him with their eyes as with lotuses, the celestial nymphs began deliberation among themselves: "If this is god of love, (then) how can he be without (his spouse) Rati? Or is he the (twin) gods Aśvins, moving in pair? Is he a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a siddha taking up any form he likes? Or is he the son of a sage, or is he the best one among men? Or is he someone whom the Creator has created for us? As a treasure is fashioned by (their) former deeds for the fortunate, in the same way, Gaurī, with her heart moistened by the billows of the water of compassion, has brought this excellent groom for us. I have chosen him, you have chosen him, similarly this one also has chosen him."

36b-44. O best king, when the five girls were talking like this, the intelligent one who had finished his mid-day rites there, thought: 'Doing what will be meritorious? Gādhī's son, Parāśara and others, and also Kaṇḍu, Devala and other brāhmaṇas, though strong due to their being meditating saints, were easily

deluded by women. It is (indeed) wonderful. The deer of whose mind does not fall when struck with the sharp arrows of the eyes (i.e. glances) of youthful women, shot from the creeper-like brows, by the archer viz. Cupid? 'As long as a man is not intoxicated by the spirituous liquors of the eyes (i.e. glances) of women, his moral sense dominates. There is in him the fear of the society; he is self-possessed; there is a consideration of the family; there is the strength of penance; men practice tranquility. Women with their charming amorous gestures delude and madden a passionate man. These (maidens are trying to) delude and madden me, who am intent upon guarding my righteousness by means of my own virtues. Passionate men, with their minds deluded, imagining charm (to be present) in the worthless and impure bodies of women, made of flesh, blood, feces and urine, enter (i.e. cohabit with) them. Wise sages of pure hearts have described women to be fearful. As long as these women do not approach me, I shall go home.'

45-47. By the time (i.e. before) the excellent maidens approached him, the brāhmaṇa vanished by the power of Viṣṇu. Seeing the wonderful act of that celibate, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who vanished by the power of magic, the maidens, O king, with their eyes frightened and themselves afraid like young female deer, moving their eyes looked into the ten vacant directions.

The maidens said:

48-58. Clearly he knows magic, or he knows (art of creating) illusion. Though seen (by us) he has (suddenly) vanished.

Thus they talked with one another. Just then only their hearts were pervaded by the fire of separation, as a very beautiful forest would be entirely pervaded by blazing wild fire. "O charming one, give up your magical skill. Present yourself to us quickly. It is not proper for you (to act) in the manner of a fly (falling into the food even) before a morsel (is eaten). Alas! Why were you shown to us? Why were you created by the Creator? We know, you, the cause of great tormentation to us, are self-created. Is it that your heart is cruel? Do you not entertain good intention towards us? O charming one, are you cruel? Are you stealing our minds? Do you not trust us? Are you

testing us? Are you not having affection for us? Are you skilled in deception? Do you possess the skilful knowledge of entering our hearts? But why do you not know the means of getting out? Why are you so much angry with us without our fault? Do you not realise the pain of others or their deception? O lord of our hearts, we are doomed by your disappearance. We shall not live without seeing you, but shall live only with the hope of seeing you. Quickly take us where you have gone. Creator, who has robbed (us) of your sight, has cut off the sprout of our joy. By all means present yourself to us. Take full pity on us. Good people do (wait to) see the end of anything.”

59-61a. Crying like this, and waiting (there) for a long time, the maidens then, through fear of their parents, started to go home. Bound by the chains of his affection, and being very much distressed by separation (from him), they somehow mustered courage and went to their respective houses. Having come (home) all of them fell down near their mothers.

61b-74. The mothers asked them: “What is this? Why are you late?” “As we were playing with kinnarīs, we stayed together (with them) at the Acchoda lake; therefore we did not realise (how far) the day (had advanced). O mother(s), on our way we were exhausted; therefore our bodies have suffered. Due to some great confusion we are unable to speak.” Speaking like this, the beautiful maidens, concealing the expression of their faces, talked with their mothers, and rolled on the jewelled floor. Some did not make their peacock, kept for pleasure, dance in joy. Others did not teach their parrot out of curiosity. Some other did not fondle her mongoose. Someone else, extremely confused, did not at all play with the cranes. They did not resort to (any) diversion, nor did they rejoice in their houses. They did not properly talk with their relatives, nor did they play on the lute. All the flowers of the desire-yielding tree were like fire to them. They did not drink the sweat honey having the fragrance of mandara flowers. The maidens had their eyes (i.e. eye-sight) fixed on the tips of their noses like female ascetics. They were continuously, but aimlessly, thinking. They had fixed their mind on that best man. For a moment they remained in a cave, covered with moonstones, with a stream (flowing) at its opening. For a moment they stayed at a window, and for a moment in the

house with artificial fountains. For a moment they prepared beds with the leaves of lotus-creepers (growing) in the lakes. They were fanned by their friends with the leaves of lotus-creepers. In this way the excellent maidens passed the night resembling a yuga. Somehow they sustained themselves. They were delirious as if they suffered from fever. In the morning, on seeing the gem of the sky (i.e. the sun), they thought that they were alive. Having informed their own mothers, they went to worship Gaurī. Having bathed according to the proper rite, and again having worshipped the goddess with flowers and incense, they remained there singing.

75-81. In the meanwhile, that brāhmaṇa also came from his father's hermitage to that Acchoda lake to bathe (there). Seeing that celibate, the maidens were delighted, with their eyes expanded, as the white-lotus plants are joyful (i.e. bloom) on seeing the sun at the end of the night. Those young girls went near the celibate, and they put round him the nooses formed by joining their right and left hands. (They said to him:) "O dear one, yesterday you went (leaving us). Today you cannot go. You have been chosen by us. There can be no doubt about this." The brāhmaṇa who was (caught) in the noose of their arms and who was thus addressed, laughed and said: "You are saying auspicious, favourable words. But that would destroy the vow of me, who am still in the first stage of life (i.e. celibacy) and given to studies. I have not yet reached the other end (i.e. have not completed my studies) in my preceptor's house. Very wise men practise the way of life which is to be practised in a particular stage of life. Therefore, O maidens, I do not think marriage to be the (proper) way of life (for me)."

82-92. Having heard the words of the brāhmaṇa, the excellent maidens who were eager and who made sweet and indistinct sound like the cuckoos in the spring season, said to the brāhmaṇa: "Material welfare (*artha*) is (better) than piety (*dharma*); satisfaction of desires (*kāma*) is (superior) to material welfare. The rise of the fruit of happiness comes from the satisfaction of desires. In this way the wise who have firm convictions, describe it. That *kāma* (i.e. the satisfaction of desires) is standing before you due to your great righteousness. Resort to it with various enjoyments, since this ground is clean." Hearing these words of them he

spoke to them in serious words : “Your words are (i.e. what you say is) true; but (practising) my vow is essential. I shall go through the right of marriage (only) after I secure my preceptor’s permission, not otherwise.” Thus addressed, they again said to him : “O handsome one, you are evidently a fool. Excellent women, coming from good families, are a medicine made ready by the intelligence of Brahmā; they are a spell, a ready charm. O sage, they, when they have approached, should be properly; enjoyed by a wise man. If, fortunately a business becomes successful, the wise ones do not ignore it. Since indifference is not fruitful, therefore procrastination is not approved. Nectar should be taken even from poison; gold even from a filthy thing. Excellent knowledge should be obtained even from a mean person, and a gem of woman even from a bad family. (Only) fortunate men obtain maidens who are spotless due to being born in good families, whose hearts are wet with (i.e. full of) love, who talk sweetly, who choose their own grooms, who are beautiful and have a charming youth; and no other men (can obtain such maidens). How incongruous are we, the celestial beauties on one side and you, an ascetic boy on the other! I think the Creator alone is wise since he has done this impossible job (of bringing together two incongruous things). Therefore now you should accept us auspiciously by means of the Gāndharva type of marriage.¹ Otherwise we cannot live.”

93-96. Hearing (these) words, the brāhmaṇa, the best among those who know Dharma, then said : “O you fawn-eyed maidens, how should men whose wealth is righteousness, give it up? The group of the four, viz. Dharma (i.e. piety), Artha (i.e. material welfare), Kāma (i.e. satisfaction of desires) and Mokṣa (i.e. liberation) is said to give fruit as (already) told. The opposite of this does not give fruit. Therefore, I who am observing a vow, shall not betake myself to a wife at a wrong time. He who does not know the time of an act (i.e. when the act should be done), does not get the fruit of that act. Since (now) my mind is attached to the consideration of Dharma, therefore, listen, O maidens, I do not desire marriage.”

1. Gāndharva Vivāha : One of the eight forms of marriage. In this form marriage takes place between lovers without seeking prior approval of relatives.

97-103a. Knowing this intention of him, they looked at each other, and let free his hand from their hands. Then Pramohinī seized his feet. Suśilā and Susvarā seized his arms. Sutārā embraced him and Candrikā kissed (him on) his face. Yet he was unperturbed. Resembling the fire of deluge, and very violent due to rage, the young celibate cursed them: “Since like devils you clung to me, therefore you will be (turned into) devils.” “What is this sinful act done to an innocent one through folly? You have done what is disagreeable to one who wants to do good to you. Fie upon you who have put an end to righteousness! We have heard that the happiness of the man who seeks to hurt those who are attached devoted friends, comes to an end in both the worlds. Therefore, you too, due to our curse, quickly be (turned into) a goblin.”

103b-108. Speaking like this, the young girls were sighing, being full of anger. Due to mutual agitation, O king, those maidens and that celibate—all of them turned into goblins in that lake. That male goblin and the female goblins crying fearfully, exhausted the ripening of the deeds they had formerly done. O king, a good or bad deed done formerly gives fruit when its due time (has come) (and) the fruit is unavoidable even for gods like one’s own shadow. At various places the fathers and mothers, and brothers also of those young girls cried. Fate is insurmountable. Hereafter the goblins, being extremely unhappy, wandered here and there for food and lived on the bank of the lake.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Sage Lomaśa Comes to the Help of the Goblins

Nārada said :

1-6. After a long time the magnanimous, best sage Lomaśa who wandered as he liked, came there. Seeing the brāhmaṇa all the goblins living in a group and being overpowered by hunger and desiring to eat him, ran to him. Being burnt by the sharp lustre of Lomaśa, unable to stand before him, they remained

away from him. Then, that brāhmaṇa, who had become a goblin as a result of his former deeds, seeing Lomaśa, saluted him by prostrating himself before him, and putting his folded palms on his head spoke true and pleasant words, O king:

7-12. “O brāhmaṇa, at the time of the rise of great fortune there would be (obtained) the company of the good. Between a man who at all times bathes at the sacred places like the Ganges etc. and the one who keeps company with the good the latter is superior. O brāhmaṇa, company of the great gives seen and unseen fruits, gives (i.e. takes one to) heaven, removes diseases and is said to remove (mental) darkness.” Saying so, he told him his former wonderful account. “These are those gandharva-daughters, and I am that son of a brāhmaṇa, O sage. All of us were foolish cursing one another (and turning) into goblins. O best sage, before you we are standing with melancholy faces. By seeing you, we the fools, shall be liberated. Would the mass of darkness cling to the atmosphere when the sun rises?” Hearing these words, Lomaśa, of a great lustre, with his heart tender with compassion, said to the sage’s son who was afflicted: “Let the memory of all of you rise suddenly by my favour. Let all of you remain in righteousness, so that your mutual curse would come to an end.”

The goblin said:

13. O great sage, tell us (what) righteousness (is), so that we shall be free from sins. This is not the time for delay, since the fire of curse is fierce.

Lomaśa said:

14-27. Let (all the goblins) duly bathe in Revā with me. Revā will free you from the curse. There would be no other expiation. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. It is my firm opinion that the sin of men would certainly perish by bathing in Revā. Bath in Revā would burn, as fire burns a heap of cotton, all the sins committed in the (previous) seven existences and the present one also. O goblin, all that sin for which (the wise) do not see an atonement, perishes merely by bathing in Narmadā. Bath in Narmadā causes knowledge. Therefore she gives salvation. All the holy places of the Himālaya remove sins. This

one giving (i.e. taking one to) Indra's heaven is fashioned by the teachers of the Vedas. Revā is said to give the fruits of (i.e. to satisfy) all desires and is the giver of liberation. She destroys sins, she removes sins, she gives the fruits of (i.e. satisfies) all desires. A bath in Narmadā gives (i.e. takes one to) Viṣṇu's heaven and destroys sins. A bath in Yamunā would be excellent for (going to) the Sun's world. A bath in Sarasvatī destroys sin, and gives (i.e. leads one to) Brahmā's heaven. O goblin, (a bath in) Viśālā is said to give a great fruit, and is the wild fire to the fuel of sins and the remover of the act of being conceived in a womb. A bath in Narmadā is said to lead to Viṣṇu's heaven and to liberation. Out of the rivers Sarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Kauśikī, Tāpī, Godāvarī, Bhīmā, Payoṣṇī, Kṛṣṇa-venī, Tuṅgabhadra and others, Revā is reached (by a man) due to the meritorious deeds done in former existences. O sage's son, a bath there (i.e. in Revā) gives absence of rebirth. Gods, residing in heaven, always sing (i.e. say): "When shall we see Revā, bathing in which (river) men do not experience pangs of (living in) the womb, and remain near Viṣṇu?" Those men who, having many coatings of sins (i.e. who have committed many sins), everyday bathe here in the pure water of Revā, do not sink in hells due to their religious merit, (but) they well (i.e. comfortably) move in heaven like gods.

28. O goblin, formerly the creator weighed Revā against severe vows, acts of charity, penances, and sacrifices, and Revā, that accomplishes salvation quickly, was (i.e. proved) superior to them.

Nārada said:

29. Hearing those words of that Lomaśa, all the goblins quickly went with him to bathe in Revā.

30-34. Then fortunately breezes, giving (i.e. throwing) drops of water on the bodies of them who had come in contact with the stream (of Revā), arose on the bank of Revā. Due to the touch of the drops of the water of Revā, they were freed from their goblinhood. Being instantly endowed with divine bodies, they extolled Narmadā. Then, as told by Lomaśa, the brāhmaṇa happily married those daughters of gandharvas on the bank of Narmadā. Bathing there, drinking (the water of Narmadā)

and plunging into (Narmadā) they stayed there for a long time. Having worshipped Narmadā at this spot, they went to Viṣṇu's heaven. O king, I have thus told you the very auspicious account of Narmadā, which is highly meritorious and which removes sins merely by hearing it.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Piṅgatīrtha, Narmadā, Dvārāvātī, Timi etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

1. Now tell me about other holy places described by Vasiṣṭha, on hearing about which sins perish, O Nārada.

Nārada said :

2-6a. O king, now hear about the holy places described by Vasiṣṭha. A self-restrained man, with his senses controlled, obtains (the fruit of) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on reaching the southern sea and gets into an aeroplane. A restrained man, having controlled his diet, having reached Carmaṇvatī, and being allowed by Rantideva, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Then, O righteous one, he should go to Arbuda (i.e. mountain Abu), the son of Himālaya, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, there was formerly a fissure in the earth. There is the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, well-known in the three worlds. Having lived there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

6b-9. O king, a restrained man, having bathed at Piṅgatīrtha, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a hundred tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa). Thence he should go to (the holy place) called Prabhāsa which is well-known in the world, O pious one; there Fire himself is always present. O hero, Fire, with Wind as his charioteer, is the mouth of the deities. A man, being pure and having controlled his mind, gets on bathing there the fruit of the Agniṣṭoma¹ and the Atirātra (sacrifices).

1. Agniṣṭoma: Name of a protracted sacrificial rite extending over several days in spring and forming an essential part of the Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.

Atirātra : An optional part of Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice. ❧

10-12. Going from there to the confluence of Sarasvati and the ocean, he, having obtained the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows, is honoured in heaven. O best among the Bharatas, always shining like fire by means of his lustre, he, with his mind controlled, should bathe in the holy place of the king of waters; and living there for three nights, he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of the manes. He shines like Soma, and obtains (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice.

13-14a. O best among the Bharatas, O Yudhiṣṭhira, thence he should go to the sacred place called Varadāna where Durvāsas granted a boon to Viṣṇu. A man having bathed at Varadāna, gets the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

14b. Then being restrained and controlled in diet, he should go to Dvārāvati.

15. A man having bathed at Piṇḍāraka would obtain much gold.

16-20. O you who restrain your enemies, at that holy place, O great king, even now coins marked with lotuses are seen. That is a wonder. O you descendant of Kuru, lotuses marked with tridents are seen. O best among the Bharatas, Mahādeva also dwells there. O you descendant of Bharata, having reached the confluence of the ocean and Sindhu, and having, with a controlled mind, bathed there, and offered oblations to manes, gods and sages, he obtains, shining with his own lustre, Varuṇa's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the wise say that having worshipped god Śaṅkukarṇeśvara, he gets ten times the merit obtained by (the performance of) a horse sacrifice.

21-25. Turning to the right, O best among the Bharatas, O best among the Kurus, he should go to the holy place, well known in the three worlds, named Timi which frees (one) from all sins and where gods like Śakra and others worship Maheśvara. A man having bathed there and having worshipped Rudra, surrounded by hosts of gods, is freed from the sins committed from his birth. O best among men, here is Timi, praised by all gods. O best among men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. O very wise one, formerly Viṣṇu conquered there Diti's son and, O king, made it pure by killing the nuisance (i.e. demons) to gods.

26-28. Thence, O you pious one, he should go to Vasudhārā praised (by all); by just going there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed there and with his mind controlled, should, O best among the Kurus, offer oblations to manes and gods. He is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among the Bharatas there is also a great holy place of the Vasus. Having bathed there, and drunk (water from the place) a man is liked by the Vasus.

29. (Then there is) a holy place known as Sindhutama which destroys all sins. O best man, having bathed there (a man) would get much gold.

30-31. Being pure and with his mind controlled, he of good acts and free from passion, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, on reaching Brahmatuṅga. For the maidens the holy place of Śakra is resorted to by siddhas. Having bathed there, O best of men, he would obtain (i.e. go to) Indra's heaven.

32-33. There only is the holy place of (i.e. sacred to) Reṇukā. A brāhmaṇa having bathed there would be pure like the moon. Then, being restrained and having controlled his food he, after going to Pañcanada, obtains (i.e. performs) the five sacrifices which have been described in a sequence.

34-38. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of (i.e. sacred to) Bhīma. Having bathed there a man does not go into a womb (i.e. is not reborn). He would be the son of a goddess. There is Kuṇḍalavigraha. (There) he would get the great fruit of (having donated) a hundred thousand cows. Having reached Girikuñja, well-known in the three worlds, and having saluted the Grandsire (there), he would obtain the fruit (of having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa). O righteous one, from there he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Vimala, where even now golden and silver fish are seen. O best of men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice; and with his soul purified of all sins he would get the highest position.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Vitastā, Malada, Maṇimanta, Brahmavālaka etc.

Nārada said :

1-3. O descendant of Bharata, a man after having reached Vitastā, and after having offered oblations to the manes and deities, gets the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. In Kāśmīra itself is the abode of Nāga and also of Takṣaka known as Vitastā and removing all sins. A man having bathed there would indeed obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Being free from all sins, he would go to the highest position.

4-6. Thence he should go to Malada which is well-known in the three worlds. At the time of the last evening prayer, O king, he should after having duly bathed offer an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together¹ to fire according to his capacity. The wise say that offerings made to the manes is inexhaustible. An offering of the oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together to Fire is superior to (the donation of) a thousand cows, or a hundred Rājasūya sacrifices or a thousand horse sacrifices.

7-8. Returning from there, O lord of kings, he should enter the abode of Rudra. Having gone to Mahādeva, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, a controlled and calm man having reached Maṇimanta and having stayed there for a night, would get the fruit of an Angiṣṭoma sacrifice.

9-11. Thence O best of kings, he should go to Devikā well-known in the world, where the progeny of brāhmaṇas is heard (to exist), O best of the Bharatas, and where Śiva's abode is known in the three worlds. A man having bathed at Devikā and having worshipped Maheśvara and having offered presents (to deities) according to his capacity, gets the fruit of a sacrifice rich in all desired objects.

12-14. There is Rudra's holy place called Kāmākhyā liked by gods and sages. O descendant of Bharata, having bathed there a man quickly gets liberation. Then going to Yājana and also to Brahmavālaka and having bathed at Puṣpanyāsa, he would

1. Caru : An oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to gods or manes.

not be worried about death. The pious Devikā liked by gods and sages is said to be half a yojana wide and five yojanas in length.

15-17a. Then O righteous one, he should, according to the order, go to Dīrghasatra where gods like Brahmā, siddhas, great sages, getting initiated and controlled in vows, resort to a prolonged sacrificial session. O lord of kings, O you who control your enemies, by just going there a man obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifice.

17b-20a. Then restrained and with his diet controlled he should go to Vinaśana, where Sarasvatī concealed under the slope of Meru goes (i.e. flows). She is seen at Camasa, Śivodbheda and at Nāgodbheda. He would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on bathing at Camasodbheda; a man having bathed at Śivodbheda would get the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. A man bathing at Nāgodbheda would obtain (i.e. go to) the world of Nāgas.

20b-24. Then O descendant of Bharata, O lord of kings, he should reach the excellent holy place Śaśayāna where Puṣkara is hidden in the form of a hare. They, O glorious one, O best of Bharatas, every year live there on the full moon day of Kārtika and bathe in Sarasvatī. O best among men, having bathed there he always shines like Śiva. O best among the Bharatas, he would obtain the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. O descendant of Kuru, having reached Kumārakoṭi and being controlled he engaged in worshipping gods, would bathe there. He obtains a myriad of cows and would liberate his own family.

25-31. Then being calm, O pious one, he should go to Rudrakoṭi, where, O great king, a crore sages were brought together. Overcome with rain they, desiring to see the god, (said:) "I shall see Śiva first, I shall see Śiva first." Thus, O king, the sages started, O descendant of Bharata. Then, O king, the lord of the meditating saints, having resorted to deep meditation, created, for pacifying the distress of the pure sages, a crore Rudras who stood before the sages. They separately (i.e. each one of them) thought: 'I have seen Śiva first.' Mahādeva was pleased due to the great devotion of the sages of strong lustre and gave them a boon: "From today righteousness in you will increase." O best among man, a man having bathed there at Rudrakoṭi and (thus

being) pure, obtains (the fruit of) Aśvamedha and would liberate his family.

32-34. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the confluence well-known in the world. He should worship the very meritorious Viṣṇu on (the bank of) Sarasvatī where gods like Brahmā, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas go on the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra. Having bathed there, O best of men, a man would obtain much gold. With his soul purified of all sins he goes to Śiva's heaven. He would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows if he dies there where the sacrificial sessions of the sages were accomplished.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Kurukṣetra, Pāriplava, Śalvikinī, Koṭitīrtha etc.

Nārada said:

1-6. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Kurukṣetra praised (by all). All creatures who have gone there have been freed from their sins. He, who always says "I shall go to Kurukṣetra, I shall stay at Kurukṣetra", is absolved of all sins. O king, a wise man should live there for a month, to which very meritorious (Brahmakṣetra) gods like Brahmā, brāhmaṇic sages, cāraṇas, gandharvas, celestial nymphs, yakṣas and pannagas go, O descendant of Bharata. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sins of him who even mentally longs for Kurukṣetra, perish, and he goes to Brahmā's heaven. O you, who are perpetuating the Kuru family, a man going to Kurukṣetra with faith, obtains the fruit of Vājapeya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

7. Then he (should go) to the very powerful doorkeeper Mattakarna, O king. Having just saluted him, he would get the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

8-9. Thence, O pious one, he should go the excellent place of Viṣṇu, where, O lord of kings, Viṣṇu is always present. Having bathed there and having seen Viṣṇu, the origin of the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

10-13a. Thence a man should go to the holy place (called) Pāriplava which is well-known in the three worlds. (By going there) he obtains (the fruit of) Āgniṣṭoma and Atirātra śācrifices. A man would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows by reaching (this) holy place on the earth. Thence O king, a man visiting holy places, should go to (the holy place) called Śālvikinī. Having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika he obtains the same fruit. Having reached Sarpanīvi, the best holy place of nāgas, he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice, and goes to the world of nāgas.

13b-15. Then O pious one, he should go to the doorkeeper Atarṇaka. Having stayed there for a night, he would obtain the fruit (of donation) of a thousand cows. Then, being controlled and having his diet restrained, he, having gone to Pañcanada and having bathed at Koṭitīrtha, would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Having visited the Aśvinī-tīrtha, he is born handsome.

16-19. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best sacred place Varāha where formerly Viṣṇu dwelt in the form of a boar. O best of men, having stayed there he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the Soma-tīrtha at Ujjayinī. Having bathed (there), a man obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). A man, having bathed at Ekahamṣa, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Having reached Kṛtaśauca, the pilgrim would obtain (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka, and would become one who has purified himself.

20-24a. Then he (should go) to the holy place called Muñjāvaṭa of the wise Mahādeva. Having lived there for a night he would obtain the position of the head of Śiva's attendants. Then, O great king, having bathed and gone to Jayā well-known in the world, he would obtain all desired objects. O best among Bharatas, that is a well-known gate to Kurukṣetra. The pilgrim turning to the right, and having returned, having bathed at Saṁsmṛta of the Puṣkaras, should worship the deities in the form of manes. (Paraśu-) Rāma, the noble son of Jamadagni, invoked them (here) only. O king, the man would have accomplished his object, and would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

24b-38a. O king, thence the pilgrim should go to Rāma-hrada where, O lord of kings, Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), of a

blazing lustre having powerfully and speedily expelled the kṣatriyas, resorted to the five deep lakes after filling them with blood. This is what we have heard, O best among men. He offered oblations to his forefathers, and also his great grandsires. Then, O king, the forefathers, being pleased, said to Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma): “O Rāma, Bhārgava, we are highly pleased with you by your devotion to your forefathers and your valour. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon. O you highly intelligent one, what do you desire?” O lord of kings, that Rāma, best among speakers, who was thus addressed (by his forefathers), said, with the palms of his hands joined, (these) words to the forefathers who remained in the sky: “If you are pleased with me, if you favour me, then I desire the increase in my penance; and by your lustre I may be freed from the sin that I, overcome by anger, (committed by having) destroyed the kṣatriyas, and the lakes which have become sacred to me should be well-known on the earth.” Hearing these good words of Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), his forefathers, extremely pleased and full of great joy said to him: “Due especially to your devotion to your forefathers, may your penance increase again. You are freed from the sin that you, overcome by anger, killed the kṣatriyas. They were killed due to their own (mis-) deeds. The lakes will undoubtedly be the holy places (named) after you. The manes of him who, after bathing in these lakes, will offer oblations to his manes, will be pleased with him, and will grant him his desired object and eternal (residence) in heaven.” O king, the manes of Paraśurāma, being pleased and having granted him such a boon and taking leave of Bhārgava, vanished there only. Thus the lakes are sacred to the noble Bhārgava i.e. Paraśurāma. A man of self-control and good vows, after bathing in the lakes of (i.e. sacred to) Paraśurāma, and worshipping him, would obtain much gold.

38b-40. Then, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a pilgrim, having reached Vamśamūla, would liberate his family by bathing at Vamśamūlaka. O best among Bharatas, having reached Kāyaśodhana, a man who has bathed there, obtains the purity of his body; there is no doubt about it. And with his body purified he goes to pious, excellent worlds.

41-44. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the holy place rare in the three worlds, where formerly the mighty Viṣṇu

liberated people. O king, having reached (that) holy place (called) Lokoddhāra, well-known in the three worlds, and having bathed there, he liberates his own people. Having reached Śritīrtha, he obtains excellent wealth. A man being restrained and calm, having reached Kapilātīrtha, and having bathed there and worshipped deities and manes, obtains the fruit of (having donated) a thousand tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

45-46a. Going to Sūryatīrtha and with his mind controlled he should bathe there, and devoutly observing a fast he should worship (his) manes and deities. (By doing so) he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world.

46b-47a. A pilgrim who, after reaching Gavāmtīrtha according to the (proper) order, bathes there, would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows.

47b-49. O king, a pilgrim (then), after reaching Gaṅgātīrtha and bathing at the Kanyātīrtha, obtains excellent power. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the doorkeeper (called) Lavaṇaka. O king, having bathed there at the holy place (in the stream of) Sarasvatī as in that of the noble Indra, a man would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

50-55a. Then, O pious king, he should go to (the holy place called) Brahmāvarta. He having bathed at Brahmāvarta would obtain (i.e. go to) Brahmā's heaven. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Sūtīrthaka where gods are always present with the manes. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the world of manes. Then, O best of Bharatas, going to another holy place in order and having bathed in the sacred places of Kāśīśvara, he, being free from all diseases, is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, Mātṛtīrtha is just there, having bathed where his progeny increases (in number), and, O king, he would obtain a position in heaven.

55b-61a. Then being controlled and with his diet restrained, he should go to Śītavana. O great king, there is a great holy place which is difficult to be found elsewhere. By merely seeing it and by restraint, O king, he is purified. O descendant of Bharata, having offered his hair at that (holy place), he is purified. Then there is another holy place known as Snātalokārtiḥa. O

you best among men, O you best of the Bharatas, learned brāhmaṇas, highly devoted to it, having bathed there, obtain the best position (i.e. salvation). O best of Bharatas, at the holy place (called) Svarṇalomāpanayana, best brāhmaṇas cast off their hair after controlling their breath. Then, with their souls purified, O lord of kings, they go to the highest position (i.e. get salvation). O king, having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika (situated) at that holy place only, O tiger (i.e. best) among men, men with their souls purified go to the highest position (i.e. obtain salvation).

61b-67a. O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, well known in the world. O king, there a black deer tormented by a hunter with arrows, plunged into that lake and obtained manhood. A man, being restrained and calm, having bathed at the holy place, has his soul purified from all sins, and is honoured in heaven. O king, to the east of (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, at a distance of a krośa (i.e. two miles) there is a well-known river called Āpagā, which is resorted to by siddhas. One who gives there the meal of Śyāmāka rice dedicating it to the deities and manes, obtains a great fruit of his piety. If (only) one brāhmaṇa is fed, a crore brāhmaṇas are fed. Having bathed there and worshipped the deities and also the manes, and having stayed there for a night, one would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

67b-71a. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of Brahmā, known in the world as Brahmānusvara, O descendant of Bharata. O you best among the Bharatas, he who being pure and with his mind controlled, bathes there at the holy pools of the seven sages, and O lord of kings, at Kedāra and at the holy place of the noble Kapila, goes to Brahmā, and with his soul purified of all sins, goes to Brahmā's heaven. Having reached Kapiṣṭhala's (place called) Kedāra, difficult to reach, he, with his sins burnt by penance, acquires (the art of) becoming invisible.

71b-79a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to (the holy place called) Sarvaka, well-known in the world. Having gone to the bull-bannered one (i.e. Śiva) on the fourteenth day of the dark half, he gets all his desired objects and goes to heaven. O descendant of Kuru, there are three crores of holy

places. At the pond there is Rudrakoṭi; in the lakes there is Samantaka. O best of Bharatas, there only is the holy place Ilāspada. Having bathed and worshipped deities and manes there, one does not meet with calamities and obtains the (fruit of) Vājapeya sacrifice. O king, having bathed at Kimdāna and also at Kimjapa, a man obtains immeasurable (fruit of) gifts and sacrifice. One having faith and his senses under control having bathed at Kalaśī, obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. To the east of Saraka there is an auspicious place known as Rāmajanma, O greatest among Kurus, which is sacred to Nārada. O descendant of Bharata, one who having bathed there casts his life, being permitted by Nārada, obtains worlds difficult to obtain. One should enter (i.e. go to) Puṇḍarīka on the tenth of the bright half (of a month). Having bathed there, O king, he would obtain the fruit of Puṇḍarīka.

79b-85. Thence he should go to Triviṣṭapa, well-known in the three worlds. There is the auspicious river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a man) from sins. Having bathed there and worshipped (Śiva) holding the trident in his hand and having the bull as his banner, and (thus) with his soul purified from all sins, he would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Phalakivana. Gods have always resorted to that Phalikivana, and practised penance for many thousand years. One having bathed at Dṛṣatpāna and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices. O lord of kings, having bathed at the place sacred to all gods, one obtains the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows. A man having bathed at (the holy place called) Pāṇikhyāta, and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains (the fruit of) Rājasūya, and also goes to the world of sages.

86-87. Thence, O pious one, one should go to (the holy place called) Miśraka which is well-known in the world. O lord of kings, we have heard that the noble Vyāsa has brought together the holy places at that place for brāhmaṇas. One who bathes at Miśraka has well bathed at all holy places.

88-95. Thence being controlled and having his food controlled he should go to Vyāsavana (the grove sacred to Vyāsa). Having bathed at Manojava one would obtain the fruit of (having

donated) a thousand cows. Having gone to Madhuvani, the place of the goddess, one with purity (of mind) and self-control should worship the deities and the manes. Being allowed by the goddess he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O descendant of Bharata, he who has bathed at the confluence of Kauśikī and Dṛṣadvatī and has his diet restrained, is absolved of all sins. Then there is the holy place called Vyāsa-sthali where Vyāsa tormented by the grief due to (the death of) his son, had decided to end his life, and was again roused to action by gods, O lord of kings. Having gone (i.e. if a man goes) to that place, he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O lord of men, having reached (the holy) lake of Rṇānta and having offered there sesamum of the measure of a prastha (to the manes) he would, after being freed from debts, get a great success. Having bathed at the Veditīrtha, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O king, the two holy places Aha and Sudina are difficult to reach. A man having bathed at them would obtain (i.e., go to) the Sun's heaven.

96-106. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Mṛgadhūma, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there at Rudrapada and having worshipped the noble trident-holder (i.e., Śiva), a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Vāmanaka which is well-known in the three worlds, and there bathing and having properly worshipped Vāmana, one with his soul purified of all sins, would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven. A man having bathed at Kulampuna purifies his own family. Having gone to the pool of Pavana, the excellent holy place of the Maruts and having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of Vāyu, O best of men. A man, having bathed at the pool of the immortal ones (i.e., gods), and having worshipped the lord of gods, is honoured in heaven due to the prowess of the gods. O lord of kings, having duly bathed at Śālisūrya of Śālihotra, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, O best among men. O best among the Bharatas, there is a holy place on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī (called) Śrīkuñja. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then having reached

(i.e., he should go to) Naimiṣakuñja, very difficult to reach. O lord of kings, it is said that sages of the Naimiṣa (forest) with penance as their wealth formerly set upon a pilgrimage and went to Kurukṣetra. Then an harbour was made on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī. It is a great place of the sages, which gives great joy. Having bathed in the harbour, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Kanyātīrtha, Saptasārasvata, Prthūdaka, Sannihiti, etc.

Nārada said :

1-11. O you pious one, then a man should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kanyātīrtha. A man having bathed at Kanyātīrtha would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent place of Brahmā. Having bathed there a man of a low caste obtains brāhmaṇahood; and a brāhmaṇa, with his soul purified, would go to the highest position. Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent Somatīrtha. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e., go to) Soma's world. Thence, O king, he should go to the holy place (called) Saptasārasvata where (lived) Mañkaṇaka, a siddha, a brāhmaṇic sage, famous in the world. O king, it is heard that formerly Mañkaṇaka was injured on his hand by the tip of Kuśa (i.e., darbha). From it vegetable juice flowed. The brāhmaṇic sage of a great penance seeing that vegetable juice and being full of great joy and with his eyes dilated due to amazement, danced. Then, when he danced, all that was immovable and movable, both, being deluded by his lustre, danced. O king, gods like Brahmā, and also sages with penance as their wealth, requested Mahādeva (i.e., Śiva) for the sake of the sage, "O god, please act in such a way that this (sage) would not dance." Then the god seeing the sage dancing with his mind full of joy said, with a desire for the good of the deities, to the sage :

“O pious, great sage, why are you dancing ? O best sage, what is the cause of your joy today ?”

The sage said :

12-24a. O best brāhmaṇa, O brahman, do you not see that from this wound incurred by me, an ascetic following the righteous path, vegetable juice has flowed, seeing which, I, full of great joy, have been dancing ?

Laughing at the sage overwhelmed by emotion the god said: “O brāhmaṇa, I am not amazed. Look at me.” O best among men, having said so, Mahādeva, at that time, struck his thumb with the tip of his finger, O sinless one. From his wound ashes resembling snow came out. O king, seeing it, the sage, being ashamed, fell at (Śiva’s) feet. (The sage said :) “I do not think there is anything superior to god Rudra. O you trident-holder, you are the refuge of the world (consisting) of the gods and the demons. You have created this universe—the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. At the end of the yuga all enter you only. Even gods cannot know you. How (then) can I ? O you sinless one, in you are seen all gods like Indra. You always are the all-in-all and you fashion and get fashioned the worlds. Through your grace the gods, having no fear from anywhere, rejoice here.” Having praised Mahādeva like this, the sage bowed (before him) and said: “O Mahādeva, by your favour my penance does not perish.” Then the god, with his mind pleased, said to the brāhmaṇic sage: “O brāhmaṇa, by my grace may your penance grow thousandfold. O great sage, I shall stay with you in this hermitage. For those who have bathed at (the holy place called) Saptasārasvata, nothing will be difficult to be obtained in this or in the next world. They would go to the world of Sarasvatī. There is no doubt about this.”

24b-31a. Having spoken like this Mahādeva disappeared there only. Thence (a man) should go to (the holy place called) Auśanasa well-known in the three worlds, where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their wealth (dwell), and where the revered Kārtikeya lived for doing good (to his devotees), O Bhārgava. (Then there is) the holy place called Kapāla-mocana which destroys all sins. O best of men, having bathed

there a man is freed from all sins. Thence he should go to Agni-tīrtha. O best of Bharatas, having bathed there he obtains (i.e., goes to) Agni's world, and would liberate his family. O best among Bharatas, the tīrtha of (i.e., sacred to) Viśvāmitra is there only. O great king, having bathed there, he is born in a brāhmaṇa family. With a pure and controlled mind he should go to Brahmayoni. O best of men, having bathed there he goes to Brahmā's heaven and undoubtedly purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant).

31b-40. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds as Pṛthūdaka and said to be of (i.e., sacred to) Kārtikeya. Engaged in the worship of the deities and manes, he should bathe there. O descendant of Bharata, all the bad deeds done by a man or a woman knowingly or unknowingly through (limited) human intelligence, perish by just bathing there. He (or she) obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and heaven also. Kurukṣetra is said to be holy. Sarasvatī is said to be (holier) than Kurukṣetra. The holy places are superior to Sarasvatī. Pṛthūdaka is superior to the holy places. He who intent upon muttering (the names of the lord) casts his body at Pṛthutīrtha, the best of all holy places, would not have birth and rebirth. It is sung (praised) by Sanatkumara and by the noble Vyāsa also, and also, O king, it is ordained by the Veda (that a man) should go to Pṛthūdaka. O best of men, there is no auspicious place better than Pṛthūdaka. It is sacred, pure and purifying. There is no doubt about this. Even sinful persons go to heaven after having bathed there, i.e., at Pṛthūdaka. Thus the wise say, O best of men. Just there is a holy place (called) Madhusrava, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

41-47. Thence, O best among men, he should, according to the order, go to the place of (i.e., sacred to) the goddess, i.e. to the confluence of Sarasvatī and Aruṇā, which is well-known in the world. Having fasted (there) for three nights and having bathed (there), he is absolved of (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Also he sanctifies his family up to the seventh (member). There is no doubt about this. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, there only is a holy place called Avakīrṇa, which was formerly fashioned for the sake of brāhmaṇas by Darbhīn. By (practising)

vows (and undergoing) thread ceremony, fasting, a twice-born undoubtedly becomes a brāhmaṇa endowed with (i.e., knowing) rites and hymns. It is an ancient observation that a brāhmaṇa who is without any rite or (sacred) hymns would become a brāhmaṇa who has observed vows. Darbhī also brought together the four oceans. O best of men, having bathed there, a man would not have (i.e., meet with) misfortune; and he obtains the fruits of (having donated) four thousand cows.

48-49. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place (called) Śatasahasraka. (A holy place called) Sahasraka is there only. (These) two holy places are well-known in the world. A man having bathed at (these) two (holy places) would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. A gift (given here) or a fast (observed at these holy places) would be thousandfold (effective).

50-52a. From there, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (place called) Reṇukātīrtha. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. With manes and deities he should bathe there. With his soul freed from all sins, he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. With his anger subdued (i.e., not being excitable) and his senses controlled, he, having (i.e., he who has) bathed at (the holy place called) Vimo-cana, is completely free from sins born of receiving donations.

52b-58a. Thence, being chaste and with his senses controlled, he should go to Pañcavaṭa. Being endowed with great religious merit, he is honoured in heaven. Here, Sthāṇu (i.e., Śiva) the lord of the meditating saints having the bull for his banner, himself (resides). (Then) there is the holy place which is sacred to Varuṇa called Taijasa shining with its own lustre, where at that (i.e., old) time gods like Brahmā and others and sages with penance as their wealth, consecrated Guha (i.e., Kārtikeya) as the general (of the army of gods). O you perpetuating the Kuru family, to the east of Taijasa is Kurutīrtha. A chaste man who has controlled his senses, has his soul purified of all sins after bathing at Kurutīrtha. Being restrained and with his diet controlled he should thence go to Svargadvāra. He obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and obtains (i.e., goes to) the world of Brahmā.

58b-62a. Thence, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to the holy place (called) Anaraka. O king, having bathed there a man would not obtain (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Brahmā himself is always honoured there with gods. O best among men, with those whose origin is the highest Nārāyaṇa, he remains at the Rudravedī, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family. Having approached that goddess, he would not get (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Having gone to Mahādeva, the master of the world and the lord of Umā (who resides) there only, he is freed from all sins.

62b-68a. O you who subdue your enemies, the man having gone to Padmanābha Nārāyaṇa, shines, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O lord of men, a man who has simply bathed at the places holy to all deities, gets free from all his miseries and always shines like Śiva. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Asthipura. Having reached (that) purifying holy place, he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. O descendant of Bharata, he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. There is the (holy place called) Gaṅgāhrada, the pool, O best among the Bharatas. In that pool there are three crores of holy places. O king, a man bathing there is honoured and goes to Brahmā's world. A man having bathed in the river and having worshipped the great god (i.e., Śiva), gets the highest position and would liberate his family also.

68b-69a. Thence he should go to Sthāṇuvaṭa, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there and having stayed there for a night, he would obtain (i.e., go to) Rudra's world.

69b-73a. Then he should go to the grove of badarī, and then to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, where a man having fasted for three nights, eats badarī (fruits). A man who eats badarī (fruits) for twelve years and he who fasts for three nights are on par, O king. Having reached Indramārga, O king, a pilgrim is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

73b-76a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds, where there is the hermitage of Āditya (i.e., the Sun) who, the magnanimous one, is the mass of lustre. A man having bathed there and worshipped the Sun, goes to the Sun's heaven, and would also liberate his

family. O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a man bathing at the Somatīrtha undoubtedly obtains (i.e., goes to) Soma's world.

76b-80a. O you pious one, O king, a man should thence go to the auspicious, holy place of Dadhici, which is purifying and which is well-known in the world, where Sarasvatī, the treasure of penance, obtained perfection. Having bathed at that holy place, a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice. There is no doubt that he also has a mind (to reach) goddess Sarasvatī. Being controlled and chaste and devoutly observing a fast he should go to Kanyāśrama, and having stayed there for three nights he would obtain a hundred daughters and he goes to Brahmā's world.

80b-85. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the holy place (called) Sannihiti where gods like Brahmā and sages having penance as their treasure, endowed with great merit, gather every month. Having bathed at Sannihiti when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu (i.e., on the day of solar eclipse), he thereby gets (the fruit of) a hundred horse sacrifices and desired objects eternally. O lord of men, whichever holy places there are on the earth or in the sky, and also wells and brāhmaṇas and auspicious abodes, all those, O king, undoubtedly will come (i.e., come) on the new moon day in every month to Sannihiti, O best among men. (The holy place) is well-known on the earth as Sannihiti because of the presence of holy places (there). Having bathed and drunk (water) there, a man is honoured in heaven.

86-89a. (Now) listen to the meritorious fruit of the Śrāddha that a man performs on a new moon day or when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu. A man who has just bathed there and who performs a śrāddha (there) obtains the fruit of a thousand horse sacrifices properly performed. There is no doubt that whatever bad deed of (i.e., is done by) a woman or a man, all that perishes merely by bathing (there). He goes to Brahmā's world in a car having lotus-like colour.

89b-91. Then with (the announcement of) his name he should (salute) Macakruka. O best of Bharatas, the pool of Gaṅgā is there only. O you pious one, a man being restrained and calm should bathe there. (Such) a man obtains the fruit of

Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices). On the earth Naimiṣa is holy and Puṣkara in the sky.

92-96. In the three worlds Kurukṣetra is distinguished. Even the particles of dust greatly shaken by wind take even a sinful person to the best position (i.e., salvation). Those who live in Kurukṣetra on the northern (bank) of Sarasvatī and to the south of (the holy place called) Sarasvatī, live in heaven. Even by just uttering these words : “I shall go to kurukṣetra; I shall stay at Kurukṣetra”, a man is honoured in heaven. O king, auspicious Kurukṣetra resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages, is at Brahmavedī. Those who live there, are not to be grieved over. The five on the boundary of Kurukṣetra—the distance between Taraṇḍa and Kāraṇḍaka, between the pools of (i.e., sacred to) Paraśurāma and Macakruka—are called the Uttaravedi of the Grandsire.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Dharmatīrtha, Śākambhari, Rathāvartta, etc.

Nārada said :

1-3a. O pious one, thence he should go to the ancient (holy place called) Dharmatīrtha where formerly the illustrious Dharma practised excellent penance. He fashioned that holy place known by his name. O king, a religious and tranquil man having bathed there purifies his family up to the seventh (generation). There is no doubt about it.

3b-4. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kalāpavana. Having gone there with a great difficulty and being calm and having bathed there he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

5-10. Thence, O king, a man should go to Saugandhika grove where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their treasure, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, kinnaras with great serpents (dwell). As soon as he enters the grove, he is free from all sins. From there the very auspicious, excellent river, greatest

among the rivers, i.e., Sarasvatī is known as Plakṣādevī, O king. He should bathe there in the water flowing out from a hillock. Having worshipped the manes and deities there, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. There is a holy place called Īsānā-dhyuṣita which is very difficult to reach. It is certain that the water that goes to it from the hillock is six times (more). O best of men, having bathed there, a man gets (the fruit of having donated) a thousand tawny cows and (of) a horse sacrifice. The ancient people have observed this.

11-13a. O best of men, having gone to Sugandhā, Śatakumbha, and Pañcayajña, a man is honoured in heaven, O descendant of Bharata. Then having reached the holy place Trisūlapatra, difficult to reach, he should bathe there and be engaged in worshipping manes and deities. There is no doubt that after casting his body he obtains the headship of the attendants of Śiva.

13b-18. Then he should go to Rājagṛha, the place of the goddess, which is very difficult to reach. She is known as Śākambharī, and is famous in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, for a thousand divine years she subsisted on vegetables. The sages, treasures of penance, and the devotees of that goddess, every month went there, O king. O descendant of Bharata, she welcomed them with (i.e., by offering them) vegetables. Therefore she is famous as Śākambharī. Having reached (the holy place of) Śākambharī, he being chaste and tranquil (should) stay there for three nights and being controlled and pure, should eat vegetables. O descendant of Bharata, by the desire of the goddess, the fruit of that is the same as that of duly eating vegetables for twelve years.

19-22. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Suvarṇākhyā, well-known in the three worlds, where formerly Kṛṣṇa propitiated Rudra for his favour and obtained (from him) many boons difficult to be obtained even by gods; and, O descendant of Bharata, was thus told by Tripura's destroyer pleased with him: "O Kṛṣṇa, in the world you will be a dearer soul (i.e., people will love you more than their own soul) and undoubtedly the entire world will be your mouth." O lord of kings, having gone there and having worshipped the bull-bannered god, he

obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and the headship of Śiva's attendants.

23-26. Having stayed there for three nights, a man should go to Umāvatī from there. There is no doubt that he gets the objects desired by his mind. To the southern half of (the holy place of) the goddess, there is (the holy place called) Rathāvartta, O king. Having reached there, O pious one, a man having faith and with his senses controlled goes to the highest position (i.e., salvation) by the grace of Mahādeva. O best of the Bharatas, he should proceed after turning to the right to (the holy place called) Dharā which destroys all sins, O you highly intelligent one. O king, having bathed there, a man is never unhappy.

27-31a. Then, O best of men, having saluted the great mountain, he should go to Gaṅgādvāra, which is undoubtedly equal to the gate to heaven. Being calm he should bathe there at the Koṭitīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains (i.e. reaches) Puṇḍarīka, and would liberate his own family. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. At Saptagaṅga, Trigāṅga and Śakrāvartta he should duly offer oblations to deities and manes. (By doing this) he is honoured in the world of the meritorious. Then, a man having bathed at Kanakhala and having fasted for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

31b-33. Then a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Kapilāvaṭa, O king. A man by staying there for a night obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O best among the Kurus, (then there is) the holy place of the magnanimous Kapila, the king of Nāgas. O lord of kings, it is well-known in all the worlds. O king, a man should bathe there at the Nāgatīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand tawny cows.

34. Thence a man should go to Lalitaka, the excellent holy place of Śantanu. O king, having bathed there a man would not meet with disaster.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

*Kālindītīrtha : Efficacy of Yamunā**Nārada said :*

1-18. O lord of kings, then a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kālindītīrtha. O king, having bathed there one does not meet with misfortune. O best among men, one obtains that fruit (by bathing) in Yamunā which he gets (by bathing) at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Brahmāvartta, Pṛthūdaka, Avimukta, Suvarṇākhyā. Those in whose heart there is a great attachment for heavenly pleasures or who desire (long) life, good health, wealth, handsomeness, youth and virtues, should not give up the water of Yamunā. (These things can be had) especially by a bath in Yamunā, O best one. Those who are afraid of hell etc. and those who have a dread of poverty, should with all efforts take a bath in Yamunā. O Yudhiṣṭhira, except the water of Yamunā there is nothing else for (i.e., which is capable of) washing the mud of poverty, sins, misfortune. Deeds done without faith give half (i.e., a partial) fruit. But a bath in Yamunā gives the entire fruit. O king, he who with or without a desire bathes in the water of Yamunā, does not see (i.e., experience) miseries here (i.e., in this world) or in the next world. As the moon wanes and waxes in the two fortnights, in the same way by bathing in Yamunā sin perishes and religious merit increases. As in the ocean various gems are easily obtained, so (long) life, wealth, wife, riches are possible for (i.e. are obtained by) him. As the desire-yielding cow gives the desired object, or as the desire-yielding gem gives whatever is thought of, in the same way a bath in Yamunā gives all (the objects of) desire. In Kṛtayuga penance was great knowledge; in Tretāyuga sacrifice (was important); in Dvāparayuga and Kaliyuga giving (gifts) is (fruitful). (But) Yamunā is always auspicious. O king, for all the castes and for all the stages of life a bath in (the water) of Yamunā indeed showers piety in streams. In this country (called) Bhārata, especially (named) as the land of religious rites, the life of men not bathing in Yamunā is said to be fruitless. As on the new moon day there is no affluence in the orb of the moon in the sky, in the same way no act shines (i.e., is effective)

without a bath in Yamunā. Hari or Keśava (i.e., Viṣṇu) is not so much pleased by means of vows, gifts or penance as he is pleased by means of just a bath in Yamunā. There is no lustre like that of the sun. In the same way there is nothing like a bath in Yamunā. Equally potent are the sacrificial rites. For pleasing Vāsudeva, for removing all sins and for obtaining (i.e., going to) heaven men should bathe in Yamunā.

19-25. What is the use of protecting the very well nourished and strong body which is unstable without having a bath in Yamunā ? The body is a column of bones, a union of sinews, filled with flesh and blood, put together with skin and having a foul smell, full of urine and feces, pervaded with old age, grief and misery, a weak abode of diseases, the source of attachment, transitory, and the resort of all blemishes, having the affliction of the sin of other's obligations (*paropakārapāpārtiparadroha?*), deceiving others, and jealous of others; (it is) greedy, wicked, cruel, ungrateful and momentary also. It is pityless, difficult to be arrested, wicked and defiled by the disorder of the three humours of the body.¹ (It is) impure, tormenting, foul-smelling, and deluded by the three kinds of miseries.² It is by nature engaged in impiety; it is full of a hundred thirsts (i.e., desires); it remains at the door of hell in the form of passion, anger and great greed. It is full of worms, ordure, ashes etc., useful in the end (*pariṇāmaguṇāvaham?*). Such a body is useless without a bath in Yamunā.

26-33. Those who are without a bath in Yamunā are born to die only like the bubbles on water or mock eggs among birds. A brāhmaṇa not devoted to Viṣṇu is doomed; a śrāddha without the (offering of) piṇḍas is worthless; a kṣatriya not friendly with a brāhmaṇa is miserable; a family without good practices is condemned. Good conduct is doomed with (i.e., due to) hypocrisy. Penance is worthless due to anger. Unstable knowledge is worthless. Sacred knowledge is doomed due to negligence. A woman is ruined due to her devotion to (someone) else (but her husband). A celibate is ruined by a woman. A sacrifice is worth-

1. Doṣatraya : Disorder of the three humours of the body, viz. wind, bile, and phlegm.

2. Tāpatraya : The three kind of miseries which human beings have to suffer in this world, viz. Ādhyātmika (caused by the mind), Ādhibhautika (caused by animals), and Ādhidaivika (caused by fate).

less when the fire is not blazing. Devotion with deceit is worthless. A maiden having a dependent is doomed. Cooking for oneself (alone) is worthless. Dependence on śūdra's food is useless. The wealth of a miser is doomed. Learning without study is useless. Contradictory advice is lost. A sacred place (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) living is worthless. False words are worthless; so also those that are full of slander. A deliberation going to six ears (i.e., to a third person) is doomed. Muttering (the names of a deity) without concentration is worthless. Giving gifts to a brāhmaṇa who is not learned is worthless. Atheists are doomed. All that is done for (obtaining) the other world without faith is worthless.

34-46. O king, as the life of the poor people is worthless in this world, in the same way their life is useless without a bath in Kālindī. All minor and major sins are reduced to ashes by taking a bath in Yamunā, O king. When a man has gone to Yamunā, all sins tremble. Best men, if they bathe in the water of Yamunā, shine like fires. As the moon is free from clouds, they are free from all sins. As fire burns the sacred fuel, in the same way a bath there would burn soft or harsh, small or big sin committed by speech, mind or physical acts. O best king, the sin committed through negligence or deliberately or unknowingly would perish just on bathing in Yamunā. The sinless ones go to heaven, and the greatest sinners become pure. No doubt should be raised about the bath in the water of Yamunā. O king, all are entitled to bathing here and to devotion to Viṣṇu. Goddess Yamunā always destroys the sins of all. This alone is a great hymn; this is a great penance. The excellent bath in Yamunā is a great expiation. Men have a mind to bathe in Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) due to the practice in other (i.e., previous) existencies as, O king, cleverness in metaphysical knowledge is due to a life-long practice. The bath in Yamunā is efficacious in washing the smearing of the mud of the worldly existence. It is (most) purifying among the purifiers and is excellent. O king, those who have bathed there (i.e., in Yamunā) which gives (i.e., satisfies) all desires, enjoy auspicious pleasures resembling the planets like the sun and the moon. Yamunā, when in contact with (i.e.,

flowing by) Mathurā is said to be giving salvation. Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) increases (a man's) religious merit.

47-51. At other places Yamunā is holy and removes great sins, (but) in contact with Mathurā the deity (i.e., Yamunā) gives (creates in one's mind) devotion for Viṣṇu. If a man full of devotion bathes in Kālindī, he lives near Viṣṇu for a crore of thousand kalpas. (Even) a man devoid of knowledge indeed attains salvation. His manes are pleased; and being pleased they live in heaven for hundreds of kalpas. O king, for men who drink the holy water of Yamunā what is the use of taking a thousand collections of the five products of a cow? What is also the use of resorting to a crore of thousands of sacred places? Giving (gifts) and (performing) a sacrifice there would become a crorefold effective.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Hemakuṇḍala and His Two Sons

Nārada said:

1-13. O king, now I shall tell you an old history (i.e., an account). In Kṛtayuga, in the excellent city of Niṣadha, there lived a merchant resembling Kubera and named Hemakuṇḍala. He was of a high descent, of good deeds, a worshipper of deities, brāhmaṇas and fire. He practised agriculture and trade and purchased and sold various (things). He was eagerly engaged in rearing cows, horses and buffaloes etc. He always sold milk, curds, buttermilk, cowdung, grass, wood, fruits, roots, salt, ginger, long pepper, grains, vegetables, oils, garments of various kinds, metals, sugar and molasses. By these and various other means the merchant always earned eight crores of (coins of) gold. Thus he who had great wealth became grey up to his ears. Then thinking in his mind about the transitoriness of the worldly existence, he did acts of piety with (i.e., by spending) the sixth part of that wealth. He fashioned the temple of Viṣṇu and also the abode of Śiva. He got dug a tank, big and resembling an ocean.

He also constructed many wells and lakes in many ways. According to his capacity he also put up the grove of (the trees like) vaṭa, aśvattha, mango, kaṅkola, jambu, nimba etc., and also a charming garden. He gave food and drink from sunrise to sunset. In all the four directions outside the city he set up stalls where travellers could drink water. That religious-minded one, always engaged in giving gifts, gave all (kinds of) presents that were well-known in the Purāṇas. He also underwent an expiation for the sins committed during his life (time). He was always engrossed in worshipping deities and guests.

14-27a. When he was living like this two sons were born to him, O king. Their names were well-known as Śrīkuṇḍala and Vikuṇḍala. Having put the responsibility of (managing the affairs of) the house on their heads (i.e., on their shoulders) he went to a forest for (practising) penance. Having propitiated there that great god, the lord who grants boons, he with his body afflicted with penance and with his mind always set upon Vāsudeva (i.e., Viṣṇu), reached Viṣṇu's heaven, reaching which a man does not regret. O king, both his sons were full of great pride, young, handsome, proud of their wealth. Their character was bad; they were addicted to bad habits; they did not observe religious rites; they did not obey the words of their mother and (other) elderly persons. They had gone astray; they were wicked; they refused (to recognize) their father's friends. They were engaged in (doing) impious acts; they were wicked; and cohabited with the wives of others. They were engaged in singing and instrumental music, had diversions like playing upon the lute and flute. They were in the company of hundreds of harlots. They sang (songs). (Thus) they then lived. They were surrounded by flatterers. They were skilful (in enjoying) with beautiful women. They put on good dresses; they wore charming garments; they were adorned with pleasing sandal (-paste). They put on fragrant garlands, and the marks of musk. They richly adorned themselves with various ornaments. They put on pearl-necklaces. Here and there they sported with hosts of elephants, horses and chariots. They indulged in drinking wine; they were infatuated by sexual union with the wives of others. They wasted their father's money. They gave (i.e., squandered) a lakh (of coins). Always intent upon enjoyment of pleasures they remained in their own house. In this way they used

that wealth by spending it in improper ways. They gave that wealth to unworthy recipients (like) harlots, rogues, actors, wrestlers, singers and bards, like seed sown in a saline land. They did not give it to worthy recipients, nor did they offer it into the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. They did not worship Viṣṇu, the sustainer of the creatures, destroying all sins.

27b-35. The wealth of both of them was soon exhausted. Then they became very unhappy and were reduced to great poverty. They were lamenting; they were perplexed; they were oppressed with hunger, affliction and grief. When they remained in home, there was nothing that they (could) eat. Due to want of wealth, they, not trusted by their kinsmen, relatives, servants and dependents in that city, were deserted. O king, then they started stealing (things) in that city. Afraid of the king and the people, they then went out of their city. Troubled by all they lived in a forest. The two fools always killed with sharp arrows rubbed with poison many birds, boars, deer and rohita (a species of deer), hares, porcupines, iguanas, and many other beasts of prey. The two very strong ones always enjoyed in the company of bhilas. O you subduer of your enemies, thus they ate fleshy food, forbidden food. Some time one reached a mountain; the other one went to a forest. The elder one was killed by a tiger; the younger one was bitten by a snake. Thus, O king, one day the most sinful ones died.

36-41. Then they were bound by the wicked messengers of Yama and were taken to Yama's abode. Going there, all the messengers spoke (about) both of them to Yama: "O Dharma-rāja, these two men have been brought here by your order. Give orders to (us) your servants. (Please) be favourable (and tell us) what we should do." Having spoken to Citragupta, Yama then spoke to the messengers: "O brave ones, one should be taken to the hell and tortured. The other one should be placed in heaven where there are excellent enjoyments." Having heard that order of Yama, the prompt messengers threw the elder one into the terrible Raurava (hell), O king. A certain excellent messenger among them said (these) sweet words: "O Vikunṭhala, come with me. I shall give you (i.e., lead you to) heaven. Enjoy (there) very divine pleasures which you have earned by means of your deeds."

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

*Vikunḍala's Dialogue with the Devadūta**Nārada said:*

1. Then he (i.e., Vikunḍala) pleased in his mind, entertaining a doubt in his heart, and very much amazed and thinking in his mind (i.e., to himself), asked the messenger on the way (to heaven): “For what reason am I having (this) fruit?”

Vikunḍala said:

2. O best messenger, I am asking you (to clarify) an important doubt. We two were born in the same family. Also we have done similar deeds.

3-4. We equally met with a miserable death, and also saw Yama in the same way. How is it that my elder brother who did the same deeds as I, was thrown in hell? And how did I obtain heaven? (Please) remove (this) doubt of mine. O divine messenger, I see no reason why I should be in heaven.

The divine messenger said:

5-9. Mother, father, son, wife, sister, brother are relative to one's birth and for the enjoyment (of the fruit) of his deeds. They are like a gathering of birds on the same tree. A man always attains the fruit of that act which he wilfully did. I am telling you the truth through affection (for you). Men get the good or bad (fruit of) the acts they have done at different times, O vaiśya. One performs acts and he (alone) obtains its fruit. O vaiśya, someone does not enjoy or suffer for the acts of someone else. Your brother fell into the hell due to his very fierce sins. O pious one, because of your piety you will obtain heaven eternally.

Vikunḍala said:

10-11. O messenger, from my childhood, my mind was interested in sinful deeds and not in pious deeds. I have committed wicked deeds in this existence. O divine messenger, I do not know my (i.e., if I have done) good deed. If you know the pious acts that I have done, then be kind and tell them to me.

The divine messenger said:

12-20a. O vaiśya, listen to the religious merit that you have earned. I know it all. You do not know it quite positively. There was a brāhmaṇa (named) Sumitra who was Harimitra's son and who had mastered the Vedas. His auspicious hermitage was on the right bank of Yamunā. O best of vaiśyas, in the forest you formed friendship with him; and due to his contact, you bathed for two Māgha months in the auspicious water of Yamunā which removes all sins. O lord of vaiśyas, by bathing for one month at that holy place named Pāpaprāṇāśana which is well-known in the world, you were freed from all your sins. Due to the merit (collected by bathing) during the second month of Māgha you obtained heaven, O sinless one. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit always rejoice in the heaven. In the hells your brother (will suffer from) great tortures. He would be cut off with blades of swords; he would be rent with hammers; he would be pounded on slabs, and roasted in burning charcoals.

Hearing the words of the messenger and being afflicted by his brother's distress, he with his whole body covered with bristling hair and being miserable and endowed with modesty said sweet and clever words to the divine messenger:

20b-22. "O good one, friendship with the good even (over the distance) of seven steps gives good fruit. Realising (our) friendship, please oblige me. I, therefore, desire to hear (everything from you). I look upon you as omniscient. Be pleased and tell me by (doing) which deed men do not see Yama's world, and by (doing) which they go to hell."

The divine messenger said:

23-24. O vaiśya, you have asked well. Now your sins have perished. In pure hearts of men a thought for (obtaining) bliss, for final emancipation is produced. Though, due to my being in the service of someone else I have no time (to explain these things), yet through my affection for you I shall explain them according to my intellectual capacity.

25-29. Those (who) never harm others by (physical) deeds, by thought and speech, in whatever condition they may be, do not go to Yama's abode. Men who harm (other) creatures do

not go to heaven even by (i.e., in spite of) their (reciting) Vedas, (giving) gifts, (practising) austerities or (performing) sacrifices. Harmlessness is (a) great (form of) piety. Harmlessness alone is a great penance. Harmlessness is a great gift. This is what the sages always say. Those men who are kind look upon mosquitoes, creeping animals, gad-flies, lice and men as on themselves. These men do not (get roasted) in heated charcoals, are not (fixed) on iron-stakes, are not stupefied, are not (thrown into) the river of corpses, do not meet with misery (imposed) by Yama.

30-34. Those who kill beings moving in water or on the ground here (i.e., on the earth) for their livelihood, get bound by Yama's cord and come to a miserable state. There they eat dog's flesh, drink pus and blood, and bitten by insects with their mouths (turned) down sink in the mud of marrow. Eating one another they live there for many kalpas. Having gone to (i.e., been born in) the species of insects, they for a long time become immobile. Then the cruel ones go to (i.e., are born in) hundreds of species of birds. Then they are born blind, or squint-eyed, deformed or lame. They are born poor, or bereft of a limb and such men kill (other) creatures.

35-41. Therefore, O vaiśya, a pious man longing for happiness in both the worlds—this one and the other one—should not do it (i.e., harm others) by means of physical (deeds) or thoughts or by words. Those who harm creatures do not obtain happiness in both the worlds. Those who do not harm creatures are afraid of nothing. As rivers flowing in a crooked way or straight enter the ocean, similarly all pious acts thoroughly enter harmlessness. O best of vaiśyas, he who has granted fearlessness to beings, has bathed at all holy places and is prepared for a sacrifice. O vaiśya, those who in this world follow the injunctions of the sacred texts, mixing up what is pious and what is impious, do not go to Yama's abode. A celibate, a householder, a hermit and an ascetic engaged in their own duties—all they live in heaven. All men of all castes and stages of life, with their senses controlled and behaving as (already) told, go eternally to heaven.

42-52a. Those who are engaged in performing sacrifices, digging wells and performing other acts of charity, those who are engaged in (performing) the five sacrifices, and those who are always full of compassion, never see Yama's abode. Those

brāhmaṇas who have turned away from objects of sense, who are competent and are teachers of the Vedas, who are always engaged in worshipping fire, go to heaven. The Sun is the path (destination) of those whose faces are not sad, who are brave (though) surrounded by enemies, who die in battles. O vaiśya, those who cast their life while protecting a helpless woman, a brāhmaṇa who has sought their refuge, do not fall from heaven. O vaiśya, those who always protect the lame, the blind, the young, the old, the sick, the helpless and the poor, always rejoice in heaven. Those who, on seeing a cow plunged in mud or a brāhmaṇa sinking in disease, emancipate them, get the world of those who perform the horse sacrifice. Those (men) who give a morsel (of grass) to a cow, who always nurse cows, who do not mount upon a cow's back, live in heaven. Those men who have just made (i.e., dug) a ditch where (from) a cow (having drunk water) is free from thirst, go (straight) to heaven without even seeing Yama's world. Those brāhmaṇas who are always engaged in worshipping fire, deities, preceptors and brāhmaṇas, go to heaven. There is no end to piety (when) wells, tanks, lakes etc. (are constructed and) where animals living on land or in water drink (water) as they like. And even the wise describe him as one who is always intent upon giving gifts.

52b-59a. O best among vaiśyas, as the creatures drink profuse water, he (gets) eternal heaven (i.e., secures an eternal place in heaven) due to his belief in piety. Water is the (very) life of beings, and vitality depends upon water. Even those men who are sinners, are purified by taking a bath everyday. O vaiśya, a bath in the morning would remove external and internal impurity. A man, with his sins removed by bathing in the morning, would not go to hell. That man who eats without bathing is always an eater of filth. The manes and deities turn away from the man who does not bathe. A man without a bath is a sinner; a man without a bath is impure. A man who does not bathe suffers in hell and is born among male insects etc. Those again who bathe in a stream on a parvan day, never go to hell, nor are they born in mean species. Bad dreams and vicious thoughts always become fruitless in the case of men who purify themselves by taking a bath in the morning, O best among the vaiśyas.

59b-62. Men, by offering sesamum seeds or vessels full of sesamum seeds or sesamum seeds (of the measure) of a prastha, never go to the land of the lord of the dead (i.e., Yama). O Vikuṇḍala, having given land, gold, a cow and the sixteen (types of) gifts and having (as a result of these gifts) gone (to heaven), men do not return from heaven. A wise man, having bathed on auspicious days and on Vyatipāta and Saṁkrama (days), and having given something (on these) days never sinks in disaster. Donors never tread on the fearful hellish path. In this world they are not born in a poor family.

63-68. A man who is truthful, who always observes a vow of silence, who speaks agreeably, who is not given to anger, who is of a good conduct, who does not talk much, who is free from jealousy, who is always full of generosity, who is always full of pity for beings, who always preserves (i.e., keeps to himself) the weak points of others, who talks (only) about the virtues of others, who even mentally does not snatch the wealth, even of the measure of a blade of grass, of others—all these, O best of vaiśyas, do not experience the agony of hell. A man who blames others and who is heretical, is worse than even sinners. He is cooked in the hell till the destruction of the beings (i.e., till the deluge). A man who speaks harsh words, should be looked upon as having come from hell. There is no doubt, O best among the vaiśyas, that such a man meets with misery. An ungrateful man does not have expiation by (visiting) holy places or (practising) austerities. The man suffers from a terrible agony in hell for a long time.

69-71. That man who having controlled his senses and diet bathes at the holy places which are there on the earth, does not go to Yama's abode. A man should not commit a sin at a holy place and should not earn his livelihood at a holy place. Acceptance of gifts at a holy place should be renounced (i.e., gifts should not be accepted at a holy place). So also giving up one's religion for the sake of material gain should be avoided at a holy place. A sin committed at a holy place, also gifts received at a holy place do not give enjoyment. All this does not give enjoyment at a holy place. Why should one go to hell (by doing these things at a holy place)?

72-77. A man who has once (only) bathed in Gaṅgā, and is purified by the water of Gaṅgā, does not go to hell, even though he has committed a heap of sins. We have heard that vows, gifts, penance, sacrifices and other pious acts are not equal to the bath with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. O vaiśya, that mean man who says that Gaṅgā is like other holy places, goes to a great, terrible hell. The element of the water (of Gaṅgā) oozes piety; it has dropped from the feet of Viṣṇu. That water of Gaṅgā which is held by Śiva on his head, is Brahman itself which is qualityless and which is beyond Prakṛti. There is no doubt about this. What would equal it within the range of the universe? A man who would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even at a distance of hundreds of yojanas, does not go to hell. What can be equal to her? The act giving (i.e., taking one to) hell cannot be instantly burnt by any other (means than the water of Gaṅgā).

78. O vaiśya, that man who though fit to accept gift does not accept it, shines in the form of a star in the sky.

79 ab. Those who take out a cow from mud, who take care of the sick, and who die in a cattleshed, (become) stars in the sky.

79c-83. Those who are wholly devoted to prāṇāyāma (i.e., restraining their breath) during the mental recitation of the names of a deity, get their sins destroyed, even though they are sinners, by them (i.e., prāṇāyāmas) only, and do not see Yama's world. O vaiśya, the sixteen prāṇāyāmas evidently purify even the killer of a brāhmaṇa when practised day after day. Prāṇāyāma is equal to austerities that are practised or vows and restraints that are observed or to a thousand cows given as a gift. Prāṇāyāma is equal to (the fruit of) a drop of water taken on the tip of a Kuśa, which a man would drink month after month for a full hundred years. A man reduces to ashes within a moment all the sin which is great or small by means of prāṇāyāma.

84-86. O best of men, those excellent men who look upon another's wife as their mother, never go to (i.e., experience) agony of (i.e., given by) Yama. O vaiśya, he who does not enjoy another's wife even mentally, is with the two worlds (i.e., enjoys both of them). He has supported the earth. Therefore,

those who are endowed with piety, should give up enjoying another's wife. (Enjoying) another's wife leads to twentyone hells.¹

87. O best of the vaiśyas, those in whose minds desire for (enjoying) other's wives does not arise go to the world of gods, and not to Yama.

88. He who is not conquered by anger, (even though) causes of anger are present, must be looked upon as one who has conquered heaven and as a wrathless man on the earth.

89-90. A son who adores his mother and father like deities (even) before they have reached old age does not go to Yama. O best of vaiśyas, men who adore their preceptor with greater devotion than their father, become guests (i.e., are honoured as guests) in Brahmā's world.

91-92. And here women are blessed who guard their character. By spoiling their character women go to the very terrible world of Yama. By avoiding the company of the wicked women should always preserve their character; for, O vaiśya, there is no doubt that by means of (the preservation of) their character women get (i.e., reach) the best heaven.

93. Misery is enjoined for him who performs a śūdra's domestic sacrifice and does what is prohibited; and he obtains a position in hell.

94-97. Those, who ponder over sacred texts, who are engrossed in Vedic studies, who narrate and recite Purāṇas, who expound the smṛtis (i.e., codes of law), who propound the laws of good conduct, who are adept in the Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads), have sustained this world. With their sins destroyed by the virtue of that particular study, all of them go to Brahmā's world where there is no delusion. Even Vedas adore him who gives knowledge arising out of the sacred Vedic texts to an ignorant person, and (who therefore) cuts off the bond of mundane existence.

1. Narakān Ekaviṃśati—The twentyone hells according to the *Manusmṛiti* (IV. 88-90) are as follows :

Tāmisra, Andhatāmisra, Mahāraurava, Raurava, Kālasūtra, Mahānaraka, Saṃjivana, Mahāvici, Tapana, Sampratāpana, Saṃhāta, Sakākola, Kuḍmala, Pratimūrtika, Lohaśaṅku, Rjīṣa, Panthāna, Śālmali, Vaitaraṇi, Asipatravana, Lohadāraka.

98-119. O best vaiśya, listen to this wonderful secret which is approved by Dharmarāja and which gives nectar to all the worlds. The devotees of Viṣṇu do not see Yama or Yama's world or beings of a horrible appearance. I have told the truth, (and) the truth (only). The brother of Yamunā (i.e., Yama) has always and repeatedly told us: "You have to spare the devotees of Viṣṇu; they should not come within my power. Those beings who (even) once (or) occasionally remember Viṣṇu with all the heaps of their sins destroyed, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. You should also always spare a man who adores Viṣṇu, even though he is of a bad conduct or a sinner who is devoted to good practices. You should also spare the man at whose house a devotee of Viṣṇu eats or those (men) who are in the company of a devotee of Viṣṇu, (since) their sins are destroyed due to his company." O vaiśya, the god holding the (chastising) rod, always instructs us like this. Therefore, the devotees of Viṣṇu never go to the capital city of Yama. O best among the vaiśyas, for crossing the ocean of hell there is no other means than devotion to Viṣṇu for the most sinful persons. O vaiśya, a man should not investigate an outcast who is a devotee of Viṣṇu. A devotee of Viṣṇu, even if he is an outcast, purifies the three worlds. Thus, for fully removing the dirt of sins men should repeat the virtues, acts and names of the lord, since, even the sinner Ajāmila crying 'O son Nārāyaṇa' while dying, obtained salvation. When men gladly worship Viṣṇu, all those (ancestors of them) who have sunk in hell for a long time and the two families (i.e., of the father and of the mother) go to heaven. O vaiśya, those who are servants of a Viṣṇu's devotee and who eat food from a Viṣṇu's devotee, go without being perplexed to the position of (the followers of Viṣṇu), the enjoyers of sacrifices. A man should with effort desire food from a Viṣṇu's devotee for purification from all sins. In its absence he should drink water. (Even) if a man muttering the hymn ('Govinda...') dies anywhere, he does not see Yama, nor do we see him. He should fully recite the hymn consisting of twelve syllables with the mudrās (i.e., particular positions of the fingers) with meditation, with (the name of) the sage, metre and deity, with (i.e., after) initiation and in the proper manner. On seeing the best men who mutter the best hymn consisting of eight syllables, a

killer of a brāhmaṇa would be purified and himself shines like Viṣṇu. Those men, being the possessors of conches and discs (i.e., resembling Viṣṇu), entering Brahma, live in the form of Viṣṇu in the heaven of Viṣṇu. Men having properly worshipped Viṣṇu (residing) in the heart, in the sun, in water or on the altar of the idol, reach Viṣṇu's position. Or, those who desire salvation, should always worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma (stone), a gem, or a disc made of steel particles; for, O vaiśya, it is the abode of Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which gives all religious merit and which gives salvation to all. He who would worship Viṣṇu on a disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has everyday performed a thousand Rājasūya sacrifices. The Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads) always look upon Viṣṇu, as Brahman, the Supreme Spirit. By worshipping the śālagrāma stone men would obtain his favour.

120-123. As the fire residing in a large wood shines at the place of sacrifice, in the same way the all-pervading Viṣṇu shines in the śālagrāma. O vaiśya, worshippers of śālagrāma, even though they are of a sinful conduct or are not entitled to (religious) rites, do not certainly go to Yama's abode. Viṣṇu does not as much rejoice with Lakṣmī or in his own city, as he always rejoices in the disc on the śālagrāma stone. He, who has worshipped Viṣṇu on the disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has performed agnihotra or given the earth with the ocean (as a gift).

124-146a. I shall tell you of the religious merit of him who has duly worshipped the twelve stones produced from śālagrāma rock. That (merit) which would be (obtained) by worshipping with golden lotuses twelve crores of Phalluses twelve times would be (obtained) in a day only (by worshipping a śālagrāma). He who would devoutly worship a hundred śālagrāma stones, would, after living with Viṣṇu, be born as a sovereign emperor here (i.e., on the earth). A mean man pervaded by passions, anger or greed also goes to Viṣṇu's heaven by worshipping a śālagrāma stone. The man who with joy would worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma stone, does not fall from heaven till deluge. O vaiśya, men obtain salvation (merely) by worshipping a śālagrāma stone without (visiting) holy places, without (giving) gifts, and without (performing) sacrifices or without (having

any) thought (about it). O vaiśya, the worshipper of a śālagrāma stone, even though he is a sinner, does not go to hell, is (not conceived) in a womb, is not born in a species of birds, or insects, and also he who, conversant with the rite of initiation, its procedure and hymn, would offer an oblation to the disc (does not go to hell). All rivers—Gaṅgā, Godāvarī and Revā which give salvation, abide in the water of śālagrāma. A man who being highly devoted worships in Kaliyuga a śālagrāma by means of various offerings of eatables, flowers, incense, lights, smearings, songs, musical instruments, hymns, rejoices in the company of Viṣṇu for a thousand crores of kalpas. That fruit which is seen (to be obtained) by worshipping and extolling crores of phalluses, is had (by the worship) of a śālagrāma (just) for a day. Men devoid of reasoning on worshipping a phallus made of śālagrāma stone (even) once, go to (i.e., obtain) salvation. Gods, deities, yakṣas and the fourteen worlds live there where Viṣṇu in the form of the śālagrāma stone lives. The manes of the man who has faith in the śālagrāma stone remain pleased in heaven for a hundred kalpas. What is the use of drinking thousand (times) the five products of cow for the men who every-day drink the water from a śālagrāma stone? So also what is the use of visiting thousands of crores of holy places, if a man would drink the auspicious water from the śālagrāma stone? Where there is a śālagrāma stone, there (within a distance of) three yojanas all gifts (given) and sacrifices (performed) would be a crorefold effective. A man devoted to Viṣṇu, who would drink water equal to (i.e., of the measure of) a drop from the śālagrāma stone, would never again drink mother's milk (i.e., would not be born). Even an insect which dies within the distance of a krośa in the vicinity of a śālagrāma goes to the excellent world of Viṣṇu. He who gives the excellent gift, viz. a disc of the śālagrāma stone, has given the globe along with mountains, groves and forests. A man who would beget money (by trading in) the śālagrāma stone, a seller (of the stone) and one who approves of (such sale), and he who takes delight in testing (the stone)—all these go to hell (and live there) till deluge. Therefore, O vaiśya, a man should avoid the purchase or sale of the disc.

146b-151a. O vaiśya, what is the use of prolixity? A man who is afraid of sins, should always do the mental recitation of

the name of Vāsudeva, i.e., Viṣṇu, which removes all sins. A man obtains that fruit by saluting Garuḍa-bannered (Viṣṇu), which he, with his senses controlled, obtains by practising severe penance in a forest. A man, even after having committed, (due to) being full of delusion, many sins, goes to Viṣṇu who removes all sins, (and) not to hell. By reciting the names of Viṣṇu a man obtains (the fruit of having visited) all those holy places and sacred abodes. Those devoted ones who resort to god Viṣṇu, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow), do not reside in the same world as Yama, and would not have a hell as their abode.

151b-152a. O vaiśya, one who is a devotee of Viṣṇu and who censures Śiva would not obtain (i.e., go to) Viṣṇu's heaven; he goes to a great hell.

152b-164. It is heard from Lomaśa that if a man by chance observes fast on the eleventh day of a month, he does not undergo agony (caused) by Yama. There is nothing else that is as purifying as this in the three worlds. Both the days (i.e., the two ekādaśī days) of Viṣṇu destroy sins. O best among vaiśyas, as long as a creature does not observe a fast on the day sacred to Viṣṇu, sins live in his body. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya (sacrifices) are not equal (even) to a sixteenth part of (the merit due to) a fast on the eleventh day. All that sin which men have committed with the eleven organs (of cognition and action), O vaiśya, perishes by (observing) the fast on the eleventh day. There is no other (vow bringing) merit like the (fast on) the ekādaśī (day). Even those who have observed (the ekādaśī-fast) under some pretext, do not go under the sway of the son of the Sun (i.e., Yama). It grants heaven and salvation; it gives good health. It gives a good wife; it gives sons that live (i.e., that do not die before the parents). O vaiśya, Gaṅgā, Gayā, Kāśī, Puṣkara or even any place sacred to Viṣṇu cannot be equated to the day of Viṣṇu (i.e., ekādaśī). Yamunā and Candrabhāgā are not equal to Viṣṇu's day (i.e., ekādaśī) by which the position of Viṣṇu is obtained without any effort. O vaiśya, by keeping awake during the night and observing a fast on Viṣṇu's day a man certainly emancipates ten ancestors of the father's family, ten of the mother's family and ten of the wife's (family). Those, who have given up attachment to the pairs (of opposites), who have made him (i.e., Viṣṇu) having the enemy of

serpents (i.e., Garuḍa) as his banner as their abode, who wear garlands, who have put on yellow garments, go to Viṣṇu's abode. A sinner who observes a fast in his childhood, youth or old age on the ekādaśī day, does not meet with a great misery, O best among vaiśyas.

165-167a. Men go to heaven by having observed a fast for three nights or having bathed at holy places or by having donated gold, sesamum seeds and cows. O vaiśya, those who do not bathe at the sacred places or who have not given (a gift of) gold or who have not practised penance are unhappy everywhere. I have told you in brief what piety is. I have defined hell (also).

167b-170. (A man should have) no malice towards any being by words, thoughts or physical acts. (He should) control (his) senses; (he should give) gifts; (he should) worship Viṣṇu; and should always properly follow the duties pertaining to the caste and stage of life. O vaiśya, a man who desires (to go to) heaven should never tell (anyone) about his penance and gifts. He should thus give according to his capacity and with a desire for his own well-being sandals, garments, food, leaves, roots, fruits and water. O vaiśya, even a poor man should make his day productive.

171-174. In this world and in the next one what is not given does not come (to help a man). The donors do not meet with the agonies (inflicted) by Yama. They have a long life and repeatedly become wealthy. What is the use of talking much in this matter? People meet with misery by wicked deeds. Men (engaged) in pious works everywhere and at all times go up to heaven. Therefore, (right) from childhood one should collect religious merit. Thus I have told you everything. What else do you desire to hear?

Vikunṭhala said:

175-179 O gentle sir, having heard your words my mind is pleased. The water of Gaṅgā instantly removes sins. (So also) the words of the good remove sins instantly. To oblige (others), to talk agreeably is the natural virtue of the good. Who makes the moon, the orb of (i.e., containing) nectar, cold? O you divine messenger, then tell me through pity towards me who am asking you, how can my brother have instant acquittal from hell?

Hearing these words of (i.e., uttered by) him, the divine messenger, observing meditation for a moment, and being tied by the bond of friendship (with Vikuṇḍala) said: “O vaiśya, if you desire heaven for your brother, then give him all the religious merit that you have collected in your eighth existence.”

Vikuṇḍala said:

180. What is that religious merit? How was it produced? Which was my former existence? O messenger, tell all that to me so that I shall quickly give (my religious merit to my brother.)

The divine messenger said:

181-189. O vaiśya, listen, I shall explain to you that merit with its cause. Formerly in the holy Madhuvana lived a sage named Śākuni. He was endowed with penance and learning, and was equal to Brahman in lustre. He begot nine sons like planets on (his wife) Revatī: Dhruva, Śīla, Budha, Tārā, and Jyotiṣmat, as the fifth. These maintained sacred fire and took delight in household duties. Nirmoha, Jitakāma, Dhyānakośa and Guṇādhika—these four sons of the brāhmaṇa were detached from the householder's life. Being free from all desires they took to the fourth stage of life. They lived in the same village. They all were detached and had no possessions. They were devoid of hopes, did not exert themselves, and looked equally upon a clod, a stone and gold. They covered themselves with anything; they ate whatever (they got). They received (food etc. only) in the evening; and they were greatly intent on meditating on Viṣṇu. They had overcome sleep; they had controlled their diet; they endured wind and cold. Looking upon the entire mobile and immobile world as Viṣṇu's form, they easily roamed over the earth. They remained quiet with (i.e., did not talk to) one another. The meditating saints did not perform any act for (personal) gain. They had achieved knowledge, had no doubt and were conversant with the modifications of thought (*cīdvikāra*).

190-200a. Thus, these, oppressed by hunger and thirst came in the noon to the house of you, a brāhmaṇa, who were in your eighth existence staying with the members of your family like the son and the wife in Madhyadeśa. You saw them in the courtyard of your house when offerings were being made to all deities

(before meals). With faltering words, with tears in your eyes, with joy and confusion, you greeted them all by prostrating before them respectfully, by saluting their feet by (keeping your) head (on their feet) and joining (the palms of) your hands in obeisance and with sweet and agreeable words: “Today my existence is fruitful, so also my life is fruitful. Today Viṣṇu is pleased with me. Today I have secured a protector, and am purified. Today I am blessed, my house is blessed, members of my family are blessed today, my parents are blessed today, my cows, my learning, my wealth are blessed today, since I have seen your feet removing the three (kinds of) miseries, for seeing you is as fortunate as seeing Viṣṇu himself”. Having thus adored them and having washed their feet (with water) you held that (water) on your head with great devotion, O best among the vaiśyas. O vaiśya, you held the water (used) for (washing their) feet on your head. Having worshipped them with sandal (-paste), flowers, sacred rice-grains, incense and lamps with devotion, you fed them with excellent food. The great ascetics were pleased and rested in your house at night meditating upon the highest Brahman which is regarded as the light of lights.

200b-206. O best vaiśya, I cannot describe (even) with a thousand mouths the religious merit which you secured by (your showing) hospitality to them. Among the beings creatures are superior; among creatures the intellectuals are superior. Among the intellectuals gods are superior. Among men brāhmaṇas are superior. Among brāhmaṇas the learned are superior; among the learned those of firm determination are superior. Among those superior are those who carry out their determinations into action. Among them superior are those who know Brahman. Therefore, they are to be very much adored, and so they are best in the three worlds. O best among the vaiśyas, their company destroys great sins. The knowers of Brahman taking rest in the house of a householder and pleased thereby destroy in a moment the sins collected from one’s birth. A sage staying (in a householder’s home) for a night completely burns the householder’s sins accumulated upto his death. Give that religious merit to your brother, by which he will be liberated.

207-209. Hearing these words of the messenger, he quickly

gave his merit (to his brother). The brother too came out of hell with his mind pleased. Being honoured with a shower of flowers by gods they went to heaven. Well honoured by the two (brothers) the messenger went as he had come. The son of a vaiśya, having heard the messenger's words which enlightened the entire world, which were like the words of the Veda, having emancipated his brother by giving him the merit of his deeds, went with him to the excellent world of the lord of gods.

210. O king, he who would recite or hear this account, would, being free from grief, obtain the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Sugandha, Arundhativaṭa, Sindhuprabhava etc.

Nārada said:

1-2. Thence, O best of kings, a man should go to Sugandha, well-known in the world. With his soul freed from all sins, he is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, from there a pilgrim should go to Rudrāvarta. O king, a man having bathed there, is honoured in heaven.

3-4. O best of men, a man who has bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven. Having bathed at Karṇahrada there and having worshipped Śiva, he does not meet with misery and goes to heaven.

5-7a. Thence the pilgrim should in due succession go to Kubjā. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of having given) a thousand cows and goes to heaven. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Arundhativaṭa. Having bathed at Samudraka and having fasted for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows and goes to heaven.

7b-10a. Being controlled and calm, he should then go to Brahmāvarta. He obtains the (fruit of a) horse sacrifice, and goes to heaven. Having bathed in the water of Yamunā he should go

to (the holy place called) Yamunāprabhava. Having obtained the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in heaven.*Having reached the sacred place called Darvīsamkramaṇa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

10b-13a. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Sindhuprabhava, the source of Sindhu, resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas and having stayed there for five nights, he should give much gold. Then having reached (the holy place of) the goddess very difficult to reach a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go to the position of Śukra. Having reached Ṛṣikulyā and Vasiṣṭha also, O descendent of Bharata, and having crossed Vasiṣṭha all the castes become (like) brāhmaṇas.

13b-14. A man having bathed at Ṛṣikulyā goes to the world of sages, if, O king, he, subsisting on vegetables, lives there for a month. Having reached Bhṛgutūṅga he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice.

15-17a. O hero, having gone to Pramokṣa he is free from all sins. A pious man having reached (this) holy place difficult to reach in (the months of) Kārtika and Mārgaśīrṣa obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra (sacrifices). Thence having reached Sandhyā and the excellent Vidyātīrtha he should bathe (there). He becomes a master of all lores.

17b-18a. Fasting once a day he should stay for a night at Mahāśrama which frees (a man) from all sins. He (thereby) lives in holy worlds.

18b-21. By living for a month at Mahālaya and by taking food once in three days he having himself crossed (the ocean of the mundane existence) emancipates the creatures—ten preceding and ten succeeding (members of his family). Having seen the very auspicious Maheśvara saluted by gods a man having got all his objects, should not at all grieve for death. He with his soul purified from all sins would obtain much gold. Then he should go to Vetasikā resorted to by the Grandsire. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go the highest position.

22-23. Then having reached the holy place (called) Sundarikā resorted to by siddhas, he possesses handsomeness (i.e., becomes handsome). This has been observed by the ancients.

Then, being controlled and calm, he, having gone to Brāhmaṇikā, goes to Brahmā's world in a car having the colour of a lotus.

24-29. Thence he should go to Naimiṣa, the auspicious (place) resorted to by brāhmaṇas. Brahmā always resides there with hosts of gods. Half the sin of him who desires (to go to) Naimiṣa, perishes. A man on just entering it is freed from the entire sin. A wise man intent on (visiting) holy places, should stay there—at Naimiṣa—for a month. O descendant of Bharata, whichever holy places are there on the earth are (present) at Naimiṣa. Being restrained and with his diet controlled a man having bathed (i.e. who bathes) there obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice, (and), O best among the Bharatas, purifies (the members of) his family up to the seventh (descendant). The wise say that he who wholly devoted to fasting would cast his life at Naimiṣa, would stay in heaven and rejoice there. O best of kings, Naimiṣa is always pure and holy.

30. A man, having gone to Gaṅgodbheda and having stayed there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice) and would always be one with Brahman.

31. Having reached Sarasvatī he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of his manes. There is no doubt that he rejoices in the worlds of the Sārasvatas.

32. O king, thence a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Bāhudā. By staying there for a night he is honoured in heaven.

33a. The man obtains the fruit of a Devasatra sacrifice.

33b-34a. Thence he should go to the holy place (called) Rajanī surrounded by meritorious persons. Engaged in worshipping the manes and deities, he would obtain (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

34b-39a. Having reached (the holy place called) Vimalāśoka he shines like the moon. Having stayed there for a night he is honoured in heaven. Thence he should go to Gopratāra, an excellent holy place (on the bank) of Sarayū, where (-from) Rāma with his servants, army and vehicles, after having left his house, went to heaven due to the prowess of that holy place. Due to Rāma's favour and exertion, O king, a man bathing at

that holy place, viz. Gopratāra, has his soul purified of all sins and is honoured in heaven. O you descendant of Kuru, a man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha on (the bank of) Gomatī, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and purifies his own family.

39b-40. Then, O best of Bharatas, there is a sacred place called Śatasāhasraka. Being restrained and with his diet controlled, a man, having bathed there, obtains the meritorious fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows, O best of Bharatas.

41-42a. Then a pious man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Ūrdhvasthāna. Having bathed at Koṭitīrtha and having worshipped Guha, O king, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows, and becomes bright.

42b-44. Then having gone to Vārāṇasī and having worshipped the bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) and having bathed at Kapilāhrada, he would obtain the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). O lord of kings, having reached the Mārkaṇḍeya tīrtha difficult to reach, on the confluence of Gomatī and Gaṅgā, well-known in the world, he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and would emancipate his (own) family.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

The Merits of Vārāṇasī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, you have described in brief the importance of Vārāṇasī. (Please) tell it in detail. Then (only) my mind is (i.e. would be) pleased.

Nārada said:

2. Now I shall tell you the account based on the merits of Vārāṇasī, merely by hearing which a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa.

3. Formerly, goddess (Pārvatī) having gone to the seat of the lord asked Mahādeva, the enemy of Tripura, on the peak of Meru:

The goddess said:

4-7. O Mahādeva, god of gods, remover of the affliction of your devotees, how can a man see you soon (i.e. in a short time)? O Śaṅkara, in the world (the path) of Sāṃkhya or Yoga or (of) meditation or Karmayoga laid down in the Vedas are full of great exertion; so also are other (means). Tell me this most secret knowledge which is practised by Indra and others and which destroys the fire of passion, for the good of all beings, by which you, the revered one, who are (so) subtle, can be seen by human beings, the meditating saints with tranquil minds, and those who practise the path of duty.

The lord said:

8-26. I shall now tell you the knowledge which is properly explained by the great sages, which special knowledge is excluded by the ignorant and which should not be told. The city Vārāṇasī is my most secret holy place. It helps all the beings to cross the ocean of the worldly existence. O great goddess, the magnanimous ones observing great restraint live there devoutly practising my vow (i.e. a vow sacred to me). That holy place Avimukta is best among all holy places, is best among all abodes, is thy best knowledge among all (kinds of) knowledge. There are other holy places and sacred abodes situated in crematory and found in divine land. My abode is not at all connected with the world; it is in the Intermediate Space. Those that are not liberated see there; those that are liberated see mentally. This is a famous crematory well-known as Avimukta. O beautiful lady, being Kāla (the god of death) I destroy this world. O goddess, this place is dearer to me of all secrets. My devotees go there and enter me only. Whatever is given there, muttered there, offered or performed there, whichever penance is practised there, and also meditation, study or knowledge (gained) there becomes inexhaustible. All the sin of a man collected in the former thousands of births perishes when he enters Avimukta. Men—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, mixtures of castes, women, mlecchas, other mixed tribes of low birth, insects, ants, other beasts and birds, when they die at the proper time at Avimukta, O beautiful lady, are born in my auspicious city as having crescent moon on their

heads, three eyes, and having great bulls as their vehicles. No sinner who dies at Avimukta goes to hell. Being favoured by the lord all of them go to the highest position. A man thinking that salvation is difficult to obtain and realising that the mundane existence is extremely terrible, having broken his feet with stone, should live in Vārāṇasī. O goddess, the path liberating from the mundane existence one who dies here or there is difficult to be obtained even by penance. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, by my favour (everything) takes place duly. Those who are immature do not see as they are deluded by my illusory power. They again and again live in feces, urine and semen. A learned man, though smitten by hundreds of dangers, goes to the highest place, going where he is not unhappy. He goes to Śiva's abode free from birth, death and old age.

27-28. The position of those who desire salvation is the same as of those who do not die again, and reaching which, the learned think, one is blessed. The position that is obtained on (reaching salvation) is not obtained by gifts, penance, sacrifices or knowledge.

29-35. The wise know that Avimukta is a great medicine for the people of various castes or having no castes, the caṇḍālas that are condemned, with their bodies filled with blemishes and big sins. Avimukta is great knowledge; Avimukta is a great seat; Avimukta is a great fact; Avimukta is highly auspicious. I give them who, having firm dedication, live at Avimukta, that highest knowledge, that highest position. Prayāga, Naimiṣāraṇya, Śrīśaila, Mahābala, Kedāra, Bhadrakaraṇa, Gayā and Puṣkara, also Kurukṣetra, Bhadrakoṭi, Narmadā, Mrātakesvarī, Śālagrāma, Kubjāmra, the excellent Kokāmukha, Prabhāsa, Vijayeśāna, Gokaraṇa and Bhadrakaraṇa—these holy places are well-known in the three worlds. Men who die (here) do not go to the highest principle as those who die at Vārāṇasī.

36-56. If a man enters (i.e. bathes in) Gaṅgā, flowing in three streams, especially at Vārāṇasī, it would destroy the sin committed in hundreds of his former births. Gaṅgā is easy to reach at other places. Śrāddha, gifts, penance, muttering (of a deity's names), vows—all this is very difficult to be found at Vārāṇasī. A man living at Vārāṇasī would mutter (names of deities), would offer oblations, gives gifts everyday, worships

gods, always eats (i.e. subsists upon) air. Even if a man is a sinner or a rogue, he purifies the entire family on reaching Vārāṇasī. Those, who worship and extol Mahādeva at Vārāṇasī, are free from all sins and should be known as the lord of Śiva's attendants. At other places the highest place is reached only after a hundred births by means of the practice of yoga (i.e. deep meditation), knowledge or other things. But O you wife of the lord of gods, those devotees who stay at Vārāṇasī, obtain the best salvation in one birth only. Where the path of yoga and the path of knowledge (are combined), salvation is obtained in one birth only. A man having reached Avimukta would not desire (to go to) any other penance-grove. Since I have not abandoned it, it is said to be Avimukta. That is the secret of secrets. This is said to be wisdom. O you beautiful one, that position which is got by those that are devoted to knowledge or ignorance, and are desirous of the highest joy, is obtained by him who dies at Avimukta. Vārāṇasī is more holy than all the places that are seen in the body of Avimukta where the lord Mahādeva himself explained for Avimukta the liberating Brahman. A man would obtain in Vārāṇasī, that which is said to be the higher principle Avimukta, in (just) one birth. As between the two eye-brows, as in the navel, in the heart or the head, in the sun, so Avimukta is well-established in Vārāṇasī. Vārāṇasī city is (situated) between Varāṇā and Asī. There only is well settled the principle of Avimukta. There was never, or there never will be a higher place than Vārāṇasī, where (live) god Nārāyaṇa, and Mahādeva, the lord in heaven. There gods with gandharvas, yakṣas, serpents and demons always worship him, (who is) the god of gods, the grandsire. O goddess, the great sinners, those who are greater sinners than they are, go to the highest position after having come to Vārāṇasī. Therefore, he who desires salvation, should, being restrained, stay at Vārāṇasī till death. Getting knowledge from Mahādeva he is liberated. But difficulties may come up in the case of one whose mind is smitten with sin. Therefore one should not commit a sin by body, mind or speech. O you of a good vow, this is the secret of gods and Purāṇas. Nobody truly knows (i.e. has) the knowledge about Avimukta.

Nārada said:

57-65. The god of gods told the entire (account) that destroys all sins to the deities and sages and the spiritual teachers that were listening. As Viṣṇu is the greatest among the gods, as Śiva is the greatest among lords, so is this place the best of all places. Those who have propitiated Rudra in a former birth, obtain (i.e. visit) the great holy place Avimukta, the abode of Śiva. Those whose mind is taken away due to having been born in Kali age, are not able to know that great place of the spiritual teacher. The sin of those who always remember and talk about this city, quickly perishes in this world and the next. God Śiva having time as his body would destroy all those sins which those who have taken an abode here commit. A man should come to (i.e. visit) this place resorted to by those who desire salvation; those who die would not be again born in the ocean of the mundane existence. Therefore by all efforts a man, whether he is a yogi or no yogi, whether a sinner or the most virtuous one, should live in Vārāṇasi. The thought about (visiting) Avimukta should not be changed even by the words of the people, or of the father, or of the preceptor.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara

Nārada said:

1-14a. There is a pure auspicious Phallus called Omkāra, merely by remembering which a man is freed from all sins. This is superior knowledge, the excellent Pañcāyatana, which is always resorted to by sages in Vārāṇasī, and which liberates (men). There actually Mahādeva, Rudra, who gives liberation to creatures rejoices in the form of the five abodes. This knowledge relating to Paśupati (i.e. Śiva) is called Pañcāyatana. This is that pure Phallus, Omkāra, that stands there. The Phallus of the lord is of five forms: Śāntyatītā, Śānti, Aparāvarā Vidyā (i.e.

higher and lower knowledge), Pratiṣṭhā and Nivṛtti. The Phallus that supports the five Liṅgas, Brahmā and others, and that is indicative of Omkāra, is called Pañcāyatana. A wise man should remember the immutable Liṅga, i.e. Pañcāyatana, of the lord. At the end of his body (i.e. when he dies) he enters the highest light, joy. There formerly gods, sages, siddhas, brāhmaṇic sages ultimately obtained the best position after having waited upon the lord. O lord of kings, on the auspicious bank of Matsyodarī there is the most secret place, of the size of gocarma (cow's hide), the excellent Omkāreśvara; there is the Liṅga called Kṛttivāseśvara, the excellent Madhyameśvara, and also Viśveśvara, Omkāra and Kandarpaśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, these are the secret Liṅgas in Vārāṇasī. Nobody here knows (i.e. experiences) destruction due to Śambhu's favour. O king, listen to the greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara. At that time formerly a demon having become an elephant came there near Śiva to kill the brāhmaṇas who were everyday worshipping Śiva. From the Liṅga of them Mahādeva, the three-eyed (god), affectionate towards his devotees, came there for the protection of his devotees.

14b-25. Śiva having with contempt killed the demon in the form of the elephant by means of his trident used his hide as his garment. Therefore, he is known as Kṛttivāseśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sages obtained a great superhuman power and with the same body obtained that highest position. Those who are called Vidyāvidyeśvara, Rudra, Śiva, have always resorted to the Liṅga (called) Kṛttivāseśvara. Men knowing that Kaliyuga is fearful and full of great impiety, do not forsake Kṛttivāsa; by doing so they are undoubtedly blessed. (At other places) liberation may or may not be obtained after a thousand existences; but at this Kṛttivāsa liberation is obtained after (just) one existence. They describe this place to be the abode of all siddhas, protected by Śambhu Mahādeva, the lord of gods. In every yuga brāhmaṇas that are controlled and are masters of deep meditation worship the magnanimous one and mutter the (hymn called) Śatarudriya. They constantly extol god Tryambakā, having the garment of (elephant-)hide. They meditate in their heart upon Śiva, Sthāṇu, who is in the heart of all. Siddhas, the brāhmaṇas who live at Vārāṇasi sing songs. Even by means

of one song salvation would take place in the case of those who resort to Kṛttivāsa. They obtain a birth very difficult to obtain, which is desired, in brāhmaṇa families. Being steady in meditation, the sages meditate upon Rudra, the great lord, in their hearts. The best sages, living in Vārāṇasī, propitiate the supreme lord. They perform sacrifices without any (selfish) aim; they praise Rudra; they salute Śambhu. "I salute Bhava, the abode of pure, deep meditation. I resort to the ancient Girīśa. I remember Rudra, settled in my heart; I know Mahādeva of many forms."

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Greatness of Kapardin

Nārada said:

1-2a. Now there is another excellent Liṅga, (called) Kapardiśvara. O king, having bathed there according to proper rites and offered oblations to manes, one is freed from all sins and obtains salvation and enjoyment.

2b-11. Then there is another holy place called Piśācamocana. There is the wonderful (form of) god that gives salvation and that removes all blemishes. A demon taking up a terrible form of a tiger went to the excellent Kapardiśvara to eat up a female deer. There she with her heart frightened again and again circumambulated (the deity). Running and extremely perplexed she came under the sway of the tiger. That very strong tiger having torn her with sharp nails went to another place after having noticed the best sages. That young female deer almost dead looked in front of Kapardiśa, like a great flame, lustrous like the moon in the sky. (She appeared) to have three eyes, dark blue throat, and with her hair on the head marked with the moon, to have mounted upon a bull, and surrounded by men like her only. The (divine) beings roaming in the sky, showered upon her flowers on all sides. Being turned into one of the female chiefs of Śiva's attendants she vanished

just at that moment only. Seeing that great wonder the gods and others praised it. That is the Liṅga of Śiva called Kapardiśvara, the best one. By merely remembering, it a man gets quickly free from his sins. All blemishes like passion, anger, and difficulties of the residents of Vārāṇasī perish by worshipping Kapardiśvara.

12-14. Therefore one should always see the excellent Kapardiśvara, one should worship (the Phallus) with great care, and should extol (the lord) with Vedic hymns. There is no doubt that the meditating saints of tranquil minds who always meditate (upon the lord), attain perfection within six months. By worshipping this deity sins like killing a brāhmaṇa perish, since one who has bathed in the tank called Piśācamocana obtains peace.

15-24. Formerly, a brāhmaṇa ascetic of a severe vow and known as Śaṅkukarṇa worshipped Śiva at that holy place. He constantly muttered (the names of) Rudra of the form of Brahman. The meditating saint taking the vow devoutly worshipped there the lord by means of flowers, incense etc., hymns, salutation and circumambulations. Once he saw a hungry ghost with its body covered with bones and skin, sighing repeatedly, that had come there. Having seen him the best sage full of great pity said (to him): “Who are you? From what region have you come to this region?” The ghost oppressed by hunger, said (these) words to him: “In my former existence I was a brāhmaṇa having wealth and grains. I had sons and grandsons and was eager to maintain my family. I did not worship great deities, cows and guests. I never did any small or big (act of) religious merit. Once I saw the revered Viśveśvara having the lord of bulls as his vehicle, touched him, and saluted him. Then after a short time I died. (But) O sage, I did not see (i.e. go to) that very terrible house of Yama. Now, being overpowered by thirst I do not know what is beneficial or otherwise. O lord, if you see some means to emancipate me, (please) do it. Salutation to you. I have sought your refuge (now).”

25-28. Śaṅkukarṇa who was thus addressed by the ghost, said to him: “There is no person like you who has done the most meritorious deed, since you have formerly seen Śiva, the lord of the universe. You touched him and again saluted him. Who else in the world is like you? Due to the ripening of the

deed you have come to this region. Being calm, quickly cast off this vile body here only.”

29-34. That ghost, thus addressed by that kind^o sage, remembered after making his mind tranquil, Kapardīśvara, the best, three-eyed god, and bathed there. Then, he having bathed there near the sage and endowed with divine ornaments died and was seen in an aeroplane resembling the sun and had his charming head marked with the moon. With Rudras living in heaven and being looked after by the meditating saints along with the unbounded Vālahkilyas,¹ he shines like the full god, the sun at the time of rising. Siddhas and hosts of gods praise him in the heaven. Charming celestial nymphs danced. Gandharvas, Vidyādhara and kinnaras etc. showered flowers mixed with water. Being praised by the groups of the best sages, having secured knowledge by the favour of the lord, he entered that best orb full of the three (gods) where Rudra shines. Seeing the ghost liberated the sage, being pleased in mind, thought about Rudra, the only wise one, saluted Agni, and praised that Kapardin.

Śaṅkukarṇa said:

35. I approach you, Kapardin, greater than the great, the protector, the only ancient man, the lord of deep meditation, the giver of desired objects, the sun, the fire, and the one mounted upon a tawny bull.

36-44. I seek the refuge of you, the essence of Brahman, placed in my heart, full of gold, possessing miraculous power, the beginning and the end (of the world), Rudra, staying in heaven, a great sage, of the nature of Brahman and pure, endowed with a thousand feet, eyes and heads of a thousand forms, and (remaining) beyond darkness. I salute the eternal Śambhu, the extreme limit of Brahman, the revered one, the lord, the lord of Hiranyagarbha, the three-eyed one, and also seek the refuge of (you), wherefrom the world has originated, and unto whom it will perish (i.e. merge), and by whom, i.e. Śiva,

1. Vālahkilyas—This is the name of a class of sages of the size of a thumb. Sixty thousand were produced from Brahmā's body and surround the chariot of the sun.

this entire (world) is pervaded. I salute you, who are without any characteristic mark, whose form cannot be seen, who are your own lord and of that of the soul, who are of a uniform nature, who are beyond Brahman, and who are the highest lord, other than whom nothing exists; whom the meditating saints who have become one with the highest soul. giving up meditation along with mystical letter forming the essential part of the hymn, after securing concentration see. I always bow to him who is beyond Brahman and of the highest form. I always salute him who is beyond Brahman, who has no qualification like a name, whose form cannot be seen. I seek your shelter, of the self-born one. I always salute your form which is beyond Brahman, which is not one, which, those engaged in Vedic recitals see to be without a body, to be without distinctions, to be one along with the knowledge of Brahman, from which Pradhāna (or Prakṛti) and the ancient Puruṣa obtain lustre, (which) the gods salute. I salute him, remaining in the lustre, the huge time, which is your form. I always seek the refuge of Guheśa; I approach the ancient Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva), living on the mountain. I approach Śiva, Hari, (Śiva) having the moon on his head, the trident-holder. I seek your refuge.

45-47. Thus having praised the revered Kapardin, Śaṅkukarṇa also prostrated himself on the ground and uttered the highest (syllable) Om. At that moment only the great Phallus of Śiva appeared there. It was knowledge, joy, and very much like the fire having a crore of flames. Śaṅkukarṇa's soul was liberated. His pure soul moved everywhere. It merged into that pure Phallus. (Thus) a great wonder took place.

48-50. I have thus told you the secret and the greatness of Kapardin. Nobody knows it. Even a learned man is deluded through ignorance. He who would daily listen to this account that destroys sins, would with his soul being purified due to having abandoned sins, secure proximity with Rudra. He who being pure would always recite this hymn (called) Brahmapāra in the morning, noon and evening would secure the highest contemplation.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

The Greatness of Madhyameśa

Nārada said:

1-2a. O great king, at Vārāṇasī, there is the best (place called) Madhyameśa. At that place that great lord Mahādeva always rejoices with the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) and is surrounded by the Rudras. Formerly the universal god Hṛṣīkeśa, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, lived there for a year (and was) always surrounded by devotees of Śiva.

2b-5a. With his entire body smeared with dust, and intent upon studying Rudra(-hymn), and observing the vow of the devotee of Śiva, Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) worshipped Śiva. All those many disciples of him, intent upon celibacy, got knowledge from his mouth and saw Maheśvara.

5b-9a. That great revered lord Nīllohita (i.e. Śiva), the giver of boons, directly gave an excellent boon to Kṛṣṇa. “Those devotees of mine who worship Govinda with proper rites, will have the knowledge belonging to Śiva, which is full of the world. Those who are devoted to me, should salute him, should worship him and should meditate upon him. There is no doubt that by my favour they will have no birth. The sin like killing a brāhmaṇa etc. of those who here see after bathing the lord of gods, the trident-holder, quickly perishes.

9b-10a. Those mortals who, though engaged in sinful acts, die here, also go to that highest place. No doubt should be raised in this matter.

10b-12. Those wise men who after bathing in Gaṅgā, after having worshipped the lord Mahādeva, Madhyameśvara, (obtain) knowledge, (practise) penance, and offer śrāddha and piṇḍa at this place are blessed. Each one of these rites that are performed, purifies (the members of his) family up to the seventh descendant. The fruit that a man gets here is tenfold of the fruit that he gets by bathing at Sannihati, when the Sun is eclipsed by Rāhu.

13. O great king, I have thus told you about the greatness of Madhyameśvara. He who listens to it with great devotion, goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Other Holy Places of Vārāṇasī

Nārada said:

1. O Yudhiṣṭhira, O great king, there are also other holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Listen to (the description of) them.

2-9. The holy place superior to Prayāga (the place of the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā) is the auspicious Prayāga (a holy place at Vārāṇasī). Similarly there is a holy place called Viśvatīrtha, and also the excellent holy place Tālatīrtha. There is the holy place called Ākāśa, so also the excellent one called Ārṣabha (i.e. sacred to Rṣabha). There is the great holy place called Sunīla, and the excellent holy place called Gaurītīrtha. So also there is the holy place called Prājāpatya and there is the (holy place called) Svargadvāra. There is also the (holy place called) Jambukeśvara and the excellent Dharma. The Gayātīrtha is a great holy place, so also Mahānadī is a holy place. Nārāyaṇa is a great holy place and Vāyutīrtha is excellent. Jñānatīrtha is a great secret place, and Vārāhatīrtha is excellent. Yamatīrtha is auspicious; so also Sammūrtika is holy. O great king, there is the Agnitīrtha, and there is also the excellent holy place Kalaśeśvara. So also there are (the holy places called) Nāgatīrtha, Somatīrtha and Sūryatīrtha. Then there is the very secret (holy place) called Parvata; so also there is the excellent Maṇikarṇya. Ghaṭotkaca is the best holy place, so also there is the Śrītīrtha (sacred to) the Grandsire. Gaṅgātīrtha is (sacred) to the lord of gods. So also Yayātītīrtha is excellent. There is the sacred place holy to Kapila; so also there is (the holy place called) Someśa; so also there is (the holy place called) Brahmatīrtha.

10-12. When Brahmā had formerly come there to instal the ancient Liṅga, Viṣṇu installed that Liṅga of the lord at that time. Having bathed there and having come (to Viṣṇu), Brahmā said to Viṣṇu: "I had brought this Liṅga. Why did you instal it?" Viṣṇu said to him: "My devotion to Rudra is stronger than yours. Therefore I have installed the Liṅga. It will be named after you."

13. Similarly there is the holy place called Bhūteśvara, so

also there is Dharmasamudbhava. Then there is the auspicious Gandharvatīrtha, and there is the holy place called Vāhneya (i.e. sacred to Agni).

14-19. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there are holy places called Daurvāsika, Vyomatīrtha, Candratīrtha, Cintāṅgadeśvaratīrtha, and the auspicious Vidyādhareśvara. There are (also the holy places called) Kedāratīrtha, Ugra, and the excellent Kālañjara; so also Sārasvata, Prabhāsa, and the auspicious Rudrakarmahrada. There is the great holy place (called) Kokila, and there is the holy place called Mahālaya. So also there is the excellent holy place Hiranyagarbha. There is also the excellent holy place (called) Goprekṣa. Then there are the holy places (like) Upaśānta, Śiva, the excellent Vyāghreśvara, the great holy place Trilocana, so also Lokārka and Uttara. There is the holy place (called) Kapālamocana, destroying (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. (Then) there is the very holy place (called) Śukreśvara, so also there is the excellent Ānandapura. These are the holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Even during crores of kalpas, it would not be possible to describe them in detail.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Gayā and Other Holy Places

Nārada said:

1. O lord, I have described to you in brief the greatness of Vārāṇasī, and the holy places (situated) in it. (Now) listen to (the description of) other holy places.

2-4. O descendant of Bharata, a man being restrained and calm, having gone to Gayā, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice merely by going there. There is (a place) named Akṣayavaṭa known in the three worlds. O lord, oblations offered to the manes at that place become inexhaustible. Having bathed in the Mahānadi he should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he would obtain (i.e. go to) the imperishable worlds and would liberate his family.

5-6. Then he should go to Brahmasaras served by (i.e. in) Brahmāraṇya. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) as the night obtains the dawn. Brahmā has raised (i.e. put up) the best sacrificial post in the lake. By circumambulating the sacrificial post he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice.

7-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Dhenuka, well-known in the world. Living there even for a night and offering a sesamum-cow he with his soul purified of all sins, would certainly go to Soma's world. There is, O great king, even now the mark: A tawny cow along with her calf still roams over the mountain. The foot-prints of the cow with her calf are seen even now. Having bathed in (the water collected at) those foot-prints, O lord of kings, O best king, little sin that is (left) perishes, O descendant of Bharata.

11-12. Thence he should go to Gṛdhraṇḍa, the place of the god, viz. the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva). He should bathe there and (apply) ashes after meeting (i.e. visiting) the bull-bannered god. A brāhmaṇa, thereby, would have observed a vow for twelve years. All the sin of other castes perishes.

13-18. Thence he should go to the high mountain resounding with music. O best among the Bharatas, the place sacred to Sāvitrī is seen there. A brāhmaṇa with a severe vow should offer the sandhyā(-prayer) there. By (doing) that he would have offered the sandhyā(-prayer) for twelve years. O best of Bharatas, Yonidvāra is there only. Having gone there a man is freed from the danger of (being conceived in) a womb. O king, a man who would live in Gayā for both the bright and dark fortnights (of a month), purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). There is no doubt about this. Many sons would be desired by him (i.e. he would have many sons) even if he would go to Gayā all alone. He might perform a horse sacrifice or give a dark blue bull. Then O king, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to Phalgu. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would reach (i.e. get) the highest well-being.

19-20a. Thence, being tranquil he should, O lord of kings, go to Dharmaprṣṭha where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma (i.e. Righteousness) always lives. Having seen Dharma, he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

20b-23. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place of Brahmā. Having gone there and having been settled in a vow he should worship Brahmā. O descendant of Bharata, (thereby) he obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifices. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Rājagṛha. Having bathed there he rejoices like Kakṣīvat.¹ The food is (there) regularly offered to Yakṣiṇī. The sacred Fire-Man formerly lived there. By the favour of Yakṣiṇī he is freed from (the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa.

24-25. Thence he should go to Maṇināga. He would (thereby) obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, the poison of the bite of a serpent does not affect him who enjoys the food regularly offered to Maṇināga. Having stayed there for a night he is freed from all sins.

26-29a. O king, thence he should go to the grove of Gautama, the brāhmaṇic sage. Having bathed in the pool of Ahalyā he would reach the highest position. Reaching Śrī, he gets excellent wealth. O pious one, there is a tank well-known in the three worlds. He should bathe there. (Thereby) he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice. The tank of the royal sage Janaka is honoured by gods. Having bathed there he would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven.

29b-30a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Vināśana which frees (a man) from all sins. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Soma's world.

30b-36a. (Then) he should go to Gaṇḍakī produced from the water of all sacred places. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world. Thence, O pious one, having entered the penance-grove of Dhruva he undoubtedly rejoices among guhyakas, O noble one. Having reached the river Karmadā resorted to by siddhas he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) and goes to Soma's world. Thence having reached the river Viśālā, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to heaven. Then O king, having reached Dhārā of (i.e. sacred to) Maheśvara he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and

1. **Kakṣivān**—He was a famous sage and was credited with the authorship of a few Vedic hymns. He was the son of Uśij and Dīrghatamas.

would liberate his family. A pure man having reached the lake of the residents of heaven does not meet with a disaster and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

36b-39. Then being restrained and calm he should go to (the sacred place called) Māheśapada. Having bathed at Māheśapada he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. O best among the Bharatas, there is a well-known, excellent sacred place taken away by the mighty Viṣṇu when, O lord of kings, it was being seized by a wicked demon Kūrmārūpa. O king, a man should bathe at that excellent holy place Tīrthakoṭi; (thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Puṇḍarīka sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

40-46. Thence, O best of men, he should go to the best place of Nārāyaṇa, where, O descendant of Bharata, Viṣṇu always lives in the vicinity and where gods like Brahmā and others, sages with penance as their wealth, and also Ādityas, Vasus and Rudras wait upon Viṣṇu. The place of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu of wonderful deeds is known as Śālagrāma. Having gone to the imperishable Viṣṇu, the lord of the three worlds and the giver of boons, a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O pious one, there is a pool freeing (a man) from all sins. In that pool all the four oceans are always present. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, a man would not meet with misery. Having gone to the everlasting, great god Viṣṇu, the giver of boons, he being free from debts, shines like Soma (i.e. the moon). Having approached Jātismara, he, pure and with his mind controlled, obtains the faculty of recollecting his former births after bathing there. There is no doubt about this.

47-48. Having gone to Vāteśvarapura and having worshipped Keśava (there) a man obtains (i.e. goes to) desired worlds by fasting there. There is no doubt about this. Thence, having gone to (the sacred place called) Vāmana, which destroys all sins and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not meet with a disaster.

49-50a. Having gone to Bharata's hermitage freeing (a man) from all sins he should there resort to Kauṣikī destroying great sins. A man (thereby) obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice.

50b-59. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent Campakāraṇya. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of giving away a thousand cows. Then having reached the sacred place (called) Govinda liked by the best ones and having fasted there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). O best among the Bharatas, having seen there the very lustrous lord of the world along with the goddess he would obtain (i.e. go to) the worlds of Mitra and Varuṇa. Having fasted there for three nights he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Then, being controlled and with his diet controlled he having reached Kanyāvasatha obtains (i.e. goes to) the worlds of Manu Prajāpati, O best of the Bharatas. Sages of severe vows say that even the smallest gift which men give at Kanyāvasatha becomes inexhaustible. Having reached Niṣṭhāvāsa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among men, those men who give gifts at the confluence of Niṣṭhā, go to the good world of Brahmā. There is Vasiṣṭha's hermitage well-known in the three worlds. A man who bathes there obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice). Having reached Devakūṭa resorted to by hosts of divine sages he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would liberate his family.

60-73. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the lake of the sage Kauṣika, where Viśvāmitra, the son of Kauṣika, obtained the highest welfare. O best among the Bharatas, the wise one should live for a month there, i.e. at Kauṣikī. After a month he obtains the religious merit which is due to a horse sacrifice. He who would stay at Mahāhrada, the best among all holy places, does not meet with a disaster and would obtain much gold. Having (then) gone to Kumāra staying in Virāśrama he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Indra's world. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, having gone to the lake at Nandinī resorted to by gods he obtains that fruit which is due to a human sacrifice. Having bathed at Kālikāsaṅgama, the confluence of Kauṣikī and Āruṇī, and having fasted there for three nights a wise man is freed from all sins. A wise man having reached Urvaśī-tīrtha and having bathed in Kumbhakarnaśrama, is honoured in the world. Similarly, being restrained and calm he having bathed at Kokāmukha gets

the faculty of recollecting his former existence. This has been observed by the ancients. Reaching Sakṛt river a brāhmaṇa becomes blessed. With his soul freed from all sins he goes to heaven. Having reached Ṛṣabhadvīpa he should resort to Krauñcaniṣūdana. Having bathed at Sarasvatī he seated in an aeroplane shines. O great king, Audyānaka is a great holy place resorted to by sages. He should bathe there. (By doing so) he is freed from all sins. There is no doubt that a man reaching the holy Brahmatīrtha resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Then having reached Campā and having bathed in Bhāgīrathī and having reached Daṇḍārpaṇa he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Thence a man should go to the auspicious Lāviḍhikā resorted to by the holy ones. (By that) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and seated in an aeroplane he is honoured.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Savidyā Sandhyā, Lauhitya, Karatoyā, etc.

Nārada said:

1-2. Then having reached Savidyā Sandhyā, the excellent holy place and having bathed there a man becomes learned. There is no doubt about this. Having reached the holy place Lauhitya, made the chief holy place by Rāma in olden days, he would obtain much gold.

3. Having reached Karatoyā a man who fasts (there) for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice, and goes to Indra's world.

4. O lord of kings, the wise say that a man obtains ten times (the fruit of an Aśvamedha by fasting) at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean.

5. O descendant of Bharata, he who, after having reached the yonder island in Gaṅgā, bathes there and fasts for three nights would obtain all desired objects.

6-7. Then having gone to the river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a person) from sins and reaching Virāja tīrtha, he shines like the moon. (By bathing) at Prabhava he purifies his family and destroys all sin. Obtaining the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows he purifies his family.

8-9. A pure man living at the confluence of Śoṇa and Jyotirathī after offering oblations to manes and deities, would get the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Having bathed at Vamśagulma at the source of Śoṇa and Narmadā he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice, O best among the Kurus.

10-11. A man having reached Rṣabhatīrtha in Kośala and having fasted there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. Reaching Kālatīrtha in Kośala a man should bathe (there). There is no doubt that he obtains the fruit eleven times greater than that of (giving away) a bull.

12-15. Having bathed at Puṣpavatī, a man who has fasted for three nights, would obtain the fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows and would liberate his family. Then, having with a restrained mind bathed at the Badarikātīrtha a man obtains long life and goes to heaven. Then reaching Mahendra resorted to by (Paraśurāma) the son of Jamadagni a man who bathes at Rāmatīrtha, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. The field (i.e. place) of Mātāṅga is just there, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

16-18. Having reached Śrīparvata he should bathe at the bank of the river. Thereby he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the great welfare. On Śrīparvata Mahādeva of great lustre and highly delighted lived. So also Brahmā surrounded by gods (lived there). A pure man with his mind controlled obtains after bathing at the Devahrada (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and obtains great welfare.

19-20. Having gone to the Rṣabha mountain in the Bhāṇḍa (region) which is adored by gods he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya and rejoices in heaven. Thence a man should go to Kāverī thronged by hosts of celestial nymphs. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

21-30a. He should, at that holy place of the ocean, bathe at

Kanyātīrtha. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is freed from all sins. Then, O lord of kings, having reached Gokarṇa in the sea, revered by people, where gods like Brahmā and others, all sages with penance as their wealth, goblins, yakṣas, ghosts, kinnaras with great serpents, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, human beings, snakes, rivers, oceans and mountains wait upon the lord of Umā, a man having fasted for three nights and having worshipped the lord (Śiva) obtains (the fruit of) ten horse sacrifices and the status of the chief of Śiva's attendants. Having fasted for twelve nights, a man is blessed. There only is the place of Gāyatrī well-known in three worlds. Having stayed there for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. This is confirmed by direct evidence of brāhmaṇas, O king. A twice-born, born of the mixture of castes by unlawful inter-marriage, who recites the Gāyatrī (-hymn) there, is furnished with a religious verse or a song(?), O king. Sāvitrī, however, goes away from a non-brāhmaṇa reciting (Gāyatrī-hymn). O brāhmaṇa-sage, having reached the tank at Saṁvarta, difficult to be reached, a man partakes of handsomeness (i.e. becomes handsome) and becomes fortunate.

30b-31a. Thence having reached Veṇā he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. A man (thereby) obtains an aeroplane to which peacocks and swans are yoked.

31b-33a. Thence having reached Godāvarī always resorted to by siddhas, he obtains (the fruit of) a Gavāmaya and goes to the world of Vāyu. Having bathed at the confluence of Veṇā he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya. Having bathed at Varadāsaṅgama, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows.

33b-39. A man having reached Brahmasthūṇā, and having fasted (there) for three nights, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, and he goes to heaven. Being restrained and calm, he, having reached Kubjavana, and having fasted for three nights and bathed there, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. Then having bathed (i.e. he should bathe) in Devahrada formed in the water of Kṛṣṇaveṇā, and also in Jyotirmātra tank, and in Kanyāśrama, where, having performed a hundred sacrifices, (Indra) the lord

of gods, went to heaven. By merely going there, a man would obtain (the fruit of) a hundred Agniṣṭoma sacrifices. Having bathed in the Sarvadevahrada, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. A man having bathed in the Jātimātrahrada has (the faculty of) recollecting his former births. Then he should go to the tank (in) the very auspicious Payoṣṇī, the best of rivers. A man engaged in worshipping his manes and deities (there), would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O great king, having reached Daṇḍaka-forest he should bathe there.

40-42. (He should also bathe) after going to the hermitage of Śarabhaṅga, and also of the magnanimous Śuka. He does not meet with a disaster, and purifies his own family. Thence he should go to Sūryāraka, resorted to by Jamadagni. A man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha would obtain much gold. Being controlled and having restrained his diet, he, after having bathed at Saptagodāvarī, obtains great religious merit, and goes to heaven.

43-52. Thence, being restrained and having controlled his diet, a man should go to (the holy place called) Devapatha. He obtains that merit which is obtained by performing (the sacrifice named) Devasatra. Being a religious student and with his senses controlled, he should reach Tuṅgakāraṇya where formerly the eloquent one taught the sages the Vedas that were lost. The son of the sage Aṅgiras formerly sat on the upper garments of the great sages, O descendant of Bharata. Due to Oṃkāra that was properly and correctly pronounced, that which was repeated (-ly thought) by a sage stood before him. There, the sages, the gods, Varuṇa, Agni, Prajāpati, god Hari Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), Śiva, also the revered and very lustrous Brahmā, along with the gods appointed the very lustrous Bhṛgu to officiate as a priest at the sacrifice. Then the revered one settled all the sages according to the rite as observed by the gods and in the proper manner (in their proper positions). Gods and sages properly pleased by (their) portion of ghee went happily to the three worlds. O best king, the sin of a person—a woman or a man—who enters that forest, suddenly perishes. A wise man being controlled and with his diet restrained, should stay there for a month.

(Thereby) he would go to Brahmā's world and again purifies his family (also).

53-57a. Having reached Medhāvana, a man should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he gets (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice), and also memory and intelligence. Having gone to Kālāñjara there, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O king, he should practice self-control on the Kālāñjara mountain. The man is honoured in heaven. There is no doubt about it. Thence, O lord of people, having reached the river Mandākinī, that frees (people) from sins, on Citrakūṭa, the best of the mountains (he should bathe there). A man who bathes here and is engaged in worshipping manes and deities obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice, and goes to the best position (i.e. salvation).

57b-62a. O lord of kings, thence he should go to the excellent Guhasthāna, where god Mahāsena (i.e. Kārtikeya) is always present, O king. O best of men, a man attains perfection merely by going there. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha obtains the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows. Turning right, a man should go to Yaśaḥsthāna. Having gone to Mahādeva, he shines like the moon. O best of the Bharatas, there is a well-known tank where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, the four oceans dwell. O lord of kings, a man having bathed and circumambulated there, and being restrained and purified would go to the best state (i.e. salvation).

62b-64a. O best of Kurus, thence he should go to the great Śṛṅgaverapura where formerly the very wise Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, crossed (the river). A man observing chastity and with his senses controlled, has his sins shaken off and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya after bathing in Gaṅgā.

64b-100. Thence he should go to the place of the intelligent god. Having approached Mahādeva, and having worshipped him, and having circumambulated, O king, a man would become the chief of the attendants of Śiva. O lord of kings, a man should thence go to Prayāga which is extolled by the sages, where gods like Brahmā and others, the quarters with the lords of quarters, the regents of the quarters, siddhas, the devoted manes, sages led by Sanatkumāra, also nāgas, suparṇas, siddhas, celibates, rivers, oceans, gandharvas, celestial nymphs (stay),

and also the revered Viṣṇu led by Brahmā stays. There are three tanks. Among them (flows) Gaṅgā, honoured by the Holy Places and going beyond Prayāga. At that place, Yamunā, Sun's daughter, purifying the world, and well-known in the three worlds, has joined Gaṅgā. The buttocks of earth are said to be between Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The sages know Prayāga to be the end of the buttocks, i.e. the lap. Prayāga has Pratiṣṭhāna (so also) both Kambala and Aśvatara. Similarly the holy place Bhogavatī is the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there Vedas and sacrifices, being embodied, wait upon Prajāpati ; and the highly innocent sages and sovereigns offer sacrifices to gods, O king. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing holier than that in the three worlds. O lord, Prayāga is superior to all holy places due to its glory. By hearing about that holy place, by mentioning its name, or by bowing (his) head (before it), a man is freed from all sins. He, of a severe vow, who bathes there at the confluence, obtains great religious merit of the Rājasūya and horse sacrifice. This is the place of sacrifices of the gods. The story about it (is) : O descendant of Bharata, whatever little is given there, becomes great. Even by the words of gods or of people, you should not disregard your thought of dying at Prayāga. There are ten thousand holy places, and others sixty crores in number, the presence of (all of) which is said to be here only, O descendant of Kuru. A man, who bathes at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gets the same religious merit as accrues to one who has studied the four Vedas, or to those who speak the truth. Then there is the excellent holy place Bhogavatī of (i.e. sacred to) Vāsuki. He, who bathes there, would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. There is the holy place (called) Hamsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. There is also (the holy place called) Daśāśva-medhika on (the bank of) Gaṅgā, O descendant of Kuru. Here Gaṅgā has come down as at Kurukṣetra. A speciality is—at Kanakhala Prayāga becomes (a) great (holy place). If after doing a hundred bad deeds a man resorts to Gaṅgā, the water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all those (sins) as fire burns fuel. The water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all that as fire burns a heap of cotton. Every (holy place) is auspicious in Kṛtayuga ; Puṣkara is said to be so in Tretāyuga. Kurukṣetra is said

to be so in Dvāparayuga, and Gaṅgā in Kaliyuga. One should practice penance at Puṣkara and he should give a gift at Mahālaya. One should get onto (i.e. enter) fire at Malaya and anāśana(?) at Bhṛgutuṅga, and the water of Gaṅgā at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra and the places in between (madhyageṣu ?). A creature (thus) instantly liberates seven preceding and seven succeeding (members of his family). Gaṅgā, by her (mere) mention purifies sins; by being seen gives merit; by bathing (in the stream) and drinking her water she purifies the family up to the seventh member. O king, as long as the bone of a man touches the water of Gaṅgā, the man is honoured in heaven. As (already) mentioned, having resorted to the auspicious places and holy places, a man, obtaining religious merit, becomes a resident of the other world. "There is no holy place like Gaṅgā, there is no god greater than Viṣṇu, there is none superior to brāhmaṇas." Thus spoke the Grandsire. That region, up to the limit of a yojana, where (i.e. through which) Gaṅgā flows, should be known as the region of siddhas (as) it has resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā. This is the truth in the minds of the twice-born and the good. A man should mutter (about) liberation into the ear of a virtuous man or a follower. This is meritorious, this is pure, this leads to heaven, this gives happiness. This is the most holy, purifying, excellent way of life. This is the secret of the sages, which frees (a person) from all sins. Having studied in the midst of brāhmaṇas, he should secure purity. It is glorious, it leads to heaven, it is very meritorious, it puts an end to (one's) enemies, it is auspicious. The description of the multitude of holy places is the best producer of intelligence. A man having no son gets a son. A poor man would obtain wealth. A king conquers the earth. A vaiśya would obtain wealth. A śūdra obtains his desired objects, and a brāhmaṇa who recites (the Vedas) masters them. He who would daily listen to this meritorious (account of) the holy places, which is always pure, obtains the (faculty of) recollecting his former births and rejoices in heaven.

101-106. I have described the holy places that are accessible and that are inaccessible. With a desire to visit all the holy places a man should even go to them mentally. (Visits to) these were undertaken by Vasus, Sādhyas, Ādityas, Maruts, Āśvins,

sages like gods, desiring merit. O you descendant of Kuru, O you of a good vow, you too visit the holy places in this manner. Merit enhances by merit. The holy places are reached through piety and through the knowledge of the scriptures by the good people, whose senses are purified, and who follow the wise. A man who is not one who has not done (good) deeds, who is not foolish, who is not impure, who is not a thief, whose mind is not crooked (alone) bathes at the holy places, O descendant of Kuru. O dear one, you of a proper conduct, and always observing piety, have always gratified your manes and all paternal great-grandfathers, and all gods led by Brahmā and along with groups of sages.

Vasiṣṭha said:

107. You, O pious one, have always pleased (these) by means of your righteousness. On the earth you will obtain great, eternal fame like Dilīpa.

Nārada said:

108. Speaking thus and advising (Yudhiṣṭhira), the revered sage Vasiṣṭha, being pleased, disappeared there only with a pleased mind.

109-123. O best of the Kurus, by perceiving the truth of the sacred treatises and by the words of Vasiṣṭha, Dilīpa crossed the earth. O glorious one, the very meritorious pilgrimage, freeing one from all sins, is effective in (i.e. by visiting) Pratiṣṭhāna. He who wanders over the earth in this manner, enjoys after death the entire fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O king, you will obtain eight times the excellent merit which formerly king Dilīpa had secured, O son of Kuntī. Since you will lead the sages, you will have eightfold fruit. O descendant of Bharata, these sacred places are crowded with the hosts of demons. O descendant of Kuru, nobody except you can have an access (to these places). He who, getting up at daybreak, would recite this account of the divine sages, depending on all the holy places, is freed from all sins. The principal sages like Vālmīki and Kaśyapa, Ātreya and Kauṇḍinya, Viśvāmitra and Gautama, Asita and Devala, Mārkaṇḍeya and Gālava, also

Bharadvāja's disciple, sage Uddālaka, Śaunaka with his son, Vyāsa the best among the ascetics, the best sage Durvāsa, Jābāli of great penance—all these best sages, with penance as their wealth, deserve to be respected by you. O glorious one, with them go to these sacred places. You will obtain great fame like king Mahābhiṣa. O best among the Kurus, with your righteousness you shine like the pious Yayāti or like king Purūravas, like king Bhagīratha or like Rāma, who was well-known. As formerly (Indra), the killer of Vṛtra, and the king of gods, burnt (i.e. destroyed) all his enemies, and being free from distress, protected the three worlds, so you will protect your subjects after destroying your enemies. O lotus-eyed one, having obtained the earth secured by your good works, you will obtain fame like Kārtavīrya Arjuna.

Sūta said:

124-127. Having spoken like this, and having advised holy great king, the revered sage Nārada disappeared there only. The lord of the earth, Yudhiṣṭhira, of a good vow, respectfully visited along with the sages all the sacred places. O all sages, he who would recite or listen to the account about the pilgrimage told by me, becomes free from all sins. I have told you the entire fact. What more do you want to hear? There is nothing that cannot be told by me about the sages of pious fame.

CHAPTER FORTY

Mārkaṇḍeya Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-5. O you of good vows, I have thus described the holy places, the bodies of Viṣṇu. A man becomes liberated by contact with any one of these. To hear about the holy places is blessed; to resort to the holy places is blessed. In Kaliyuga, there is no other means for destroying the heap of sins. He who

everyday says, 'I will stay at a holy place; I will bathe at a holy place', goes to the highest principle. By his merely talking about the holy places his sins perish. O you of best vows, the holy places resorted to by the blessed ones are indeed blessed. By resorting to the holy place only, Nārāyaṇa, the author of the world is worshipped. There is no higher place than the holy places.

6-11. Men should always without fail worship a brāhmaṇa, tulasī (-plant), āśvattha, collection of holy places, and the greatest lord Viṣṇu. O best sages, the seniors look upon worshipping the brāhmaṇas especially as superior to bathing at all the sacred places. Therefore, a wise man should everyday resort to the auspicious feet of a brāhmaṇa, which are full of all sacred places. They are superior to holy places. One should circumambulate āśvattha (tree), tulasī (plant) and cows. Obtaining the fruit of (visiting) all holy places he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. Therefore, a man should destroy (the fruits of) his evil deeds by resorting to a holy place. Otherwise he goes to hell and becomes calm only after exhausting (the fruits of) his acts. Sinners live in hell. A meritorious person obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven. Therefore, a wise man should resort to an auspicious, holy place.

The sages said:

12-13. O you of a good vow, we have heard about the holy places along with their greatness. Now we desire to hear the distinguishing features of Prayāga. O Sūta, since you formerly described Prayāga in brief, (now) we desire to hear about it in detail. O Sūta, please describe it to us.

Sūta said:

14-30. O illustrious ones of good vows, you have well asked about Prayāga. I shall gladly give you a description of Prayāga, which was formerly narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya to the son of Pāṇḍu. When the Bhārata (war) was over, and Pṛthā's son (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) had obtained the kingdom, for some time, king Yudhiṣṭhira, Kuntī's son, was tormented by the grief (i.e. the bereavement) of his (cousin-) brothers, and thought again and

again: ‘King Duryodhana was the lord of eleven divisions of the army. All those (Kauravas), having frequently tormented us, are dead. (We) the five Pāṇḍavas, having resorted to Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), have survived. (How did we kill) Droṇa, Bhiṣma, very mighty Karṇa, and king Duryodhana with his brothers and sons? All the kings, thinking themselves to be brave, have been killed. What is the use of the pleasures or of life without the kingdom? Alas, (what a misery) !’ Thinking like this the king was distressed. Motionless and devoid of energy he remained with his face a little bent down. When the king regained consciousness, he repeatedly thought: ‘Which course or vow should I practice? or which sacred place—bathing where a man goes to the world of Viṣṇu (should I resort to) by which I shall be free from the blemish due to the great sin (of killing my kinsmen)? How shall I ask Kṛṣṇa who got the great thing done? How shall I ask Dhṛtarāṣṭra whose hundred sons are killed? How shall I ask Vyāsa whose family has met with destruction?’ In this way Dharma’s son Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed. All the (other) Pāṇḍavas wept due to being distressed by the grief of their brother. The noble ones who had resorted to the Pāṇḍavas and who had gathered there also (wept). Kuntī, Draupadī and others that had gathered there, fell on the ground on all sides and wept. Mārkaṇḍa was at Vārāṇasī. He came to know that Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed, weeping and very unhappy. In a very short time Mārkaṇḍa of great penance reached Hastināpura, and stood at the gate of the royal palace. The doorkeeper too, having seen him, quickly reported (his arrival) to the king. “The sage Mārkaṇḍa, desiring to see you, stands at the gate.” The son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) quickly came to the door, and eagerly said:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

31-33a. Welcome to you, O you highly intelligent one. Welcome to you, O great sage. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is purified. O great sage, when you are seen today, my dead ancestors are gratified.

Having seated him on the throne, the noble Yudhiṣṭhira honoured that sage with (giving water for) washing his feet, for purifying himself, and by offering worship to him.

33b-34. Then Mārkaṇḍa said to him: “O lord, I am honoured by you. O king, tell me quickly why you hastened. Tell me why you are distressed.”

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

35. O great sage, knowing what occurred to us for (securing) the kingdom the holy one has come here.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

36-38. O king, of mighty arms, hear. Where Dharma (i.e. righteousness) is well-settled there no sin is seen in the case of a wise man resorting to fighting on the battlefield, especially in the case of a kṣatriya (fighting) in accordance with his duty? Bearing this in mind, you should not think (that you have committed) a sin.

Then king Yudhiṣṭhira, saluting the sage by (bowing down) his head (said): “O sage, I am asking you who always (directly) see the three times. Tell me in brief (that) by which I shall be free from the blemish.”

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

39-40. O illustrious king listen, since you ask me. Thus Sāṃkhya, Yoga, and the sacred places have been narrated; O lord, again the holy brāhmaṇas have formerly declared that going to Prayāga is best for men doing righteous deeds.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Greatness of Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O revered sir, I desire to hear how in the former kalpa men went there to Prayāga. What is the course of (i.e. for) the dead there? What is the fruit which those who bathe there get?

Tell me also the fruit which those who stay in Prayāga get. Tell me all this. I have great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-22. O lord, O dear, I shall tell you what is desirable, and what is (its) fruit, which I heard while being told to brāhmaṇas and sages in olden days. From Prayāga, Pratiṣṭhāna, up to Dharmakī Vāsukī pool, there are the two nāgas. This is the region of (i.e. sacred to) Prajāpati, which is known in the three worlds. Having bathed here men go to heaven. Those that die here are not reborn. There gods like Brahmā, having come together protect (everything). There are many other holy places which destroy all sins. O king, it is not possible to describe them even by (spending) many hundred years. I shall give you the description of Prayāga in brief. Sixty thousand bows protect the Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā). The Sun with the seven horses always protects Yamunā. Indra himself particularly protects Prayāga. Viṣṇu, along with the gods, protects the highly esteemed region. Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), with the trident in his hand, always protects that (famous) Vāṭa. The god protects the auspicious place which removes all sins. Men given to impiety do not go to that place. O king, all that sin—small or smaller—of a man who remembers Prayāga vanishes. A man, merely by seeing that holy place, or even by uttering its name, or even by taking clay from there, is free from sin. O lord of kings, there are five pools in (i.e. through) which Gaṅgā (flows). The sin of a man goes away the moment he enters Prayāga. A man who remembers Gaṅgā within a distance of thousands of yojanas, gets the highest position (i.e. salvation), even if he is a man of wicked deeds. By reciting (the name of Gaṅgā) a man is free from sins. By seeing (her) he sees (i.e. gets) happiness. By bathing in and drinking (the water of Gaṅgā) he purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). A man who is truthful, who has conquered his anger, who has greatly resorted to harmlessness, who follows the proper course of conduct, who knows the truth, who is engaged in the well-being of cows and brāhmaṇas, is freed from sin after bathing in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. He properly obtains many objects that he has thought of in his mind. Thence having gone to Prayāga, he

should live there with restraint for a month and should offer oblations to gods. (Thereby) he gets his desired objects and is everywhere born in a high family. God Maheśvara is always actually present where the illustrious goddess Yamunā, the daughter of the Sun, well-known in the three worlds, goes. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the auspicious Prayāga is difficult to be reached by human beings. O lord of kings, having bathed there, gods, demons, gandharvas, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, are honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Importance of Giving a Cow at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-24. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, going where, a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. Except Prayāga, there is absolutely no eternal place for the afflicted and the poor who are of a firm resolve. A man who having reached the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, would cast his life, goes in an aeroplane having the colour of heated gold and resembling the sun, (and) rejoices in heaven in the company of gandharvas and celestial nymphs. The best sages say that (such) a man obtains desired objects. He rejoices with all auspicious things, divine and full of gems, is accompanied by various flags and surrounded by excellent damsels. He when asleep is awakened by the sound of songs and musical instruments. As long as he does not call to mind (his earthly) existence (or life), he is honoured in heaven. Then deprived of heaven, having fallen from there due to the (fruit of) his deeds being exhausted, he is born in a rich family full of (i.e. accomplished with) gold and gems. He recollects that holy place, and merely by remembering it he goes there. The best sages say that a man, being in a region or in a forest or in a foreign country, or in his own house, who would cast his life (there) by just remembering

Prayāga, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, where the golden land is full of all desired objects, and to which world the seers and sages go. Due to the deeds done by him in this world a man rejoices along with the sages on the charming, auspicious bank of Mandākinī crowded with thousands of women. In heaven he is honoured by siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas and deities. Then fallen from heaven, he would be a lord in Jambudvīpa. Then repeatedly thinking about auspicious deeds, he undoubtedly becomes virtuous and endowed with wealth in this world. He who is well-settled in truthfulness by deeds, speech and mind, and gives gifts in between (the region of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā (gets liberation). He, who accepts gold, jewels, pearls or grains at his own rite or in honour of the manes, or in the worship of deities, has his visit to the holy places rendered fruitless as long as he gets the fruit of that (i.e. accepting gifts). Thus a man should not accept (gifts) at a holy place and a sanctuary. A twice-born should be careful about all omens. He who gives a tawny, red-coloured, golden-horned, silver-hoofed milch-cow with a piece of cloth round her neck (to a brāhmaṇa) at Prayāga (gets liberation). Having properly secured at Prayāga a learned, good, tranquil, pious brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas, and wearing white garments, that cow should be given to him at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. Costly garments, various jewels (should also be given). The man (who gives such a gift) is honoured in heaven for as many thousand years as there is hair on the limbs of the cow, O best one. The cow is born there where he is born. Due to that act he does not see (i.e. go to) horrible hell. Having reached Uttara Kuru, he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. (Instead of giving) hundreds and thousands of bulls he should give one milch-cow. One cow would liberate sons, wife and servants. Therefore, of all gifts, the gift of a cow is the best. In a terrible, insurmountable difficulty due to a horrible sin, a cow alone protects (a man). Therefore (a cow) should be given to a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

The Fruit of Visiting Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, as you have narrated the greatness of Prayāga, I am undoubtedly being freed from sins.

2. O revered one, in what manner should people of religious resolve go (there)? O great sage, tell me about the rite which is declared (to be performed) at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-27. O dear, I shall tell you the entire sequence of the religious rites to be performed during the pilgrimage. O best of Kurus, I will tell you the fruit accruing to him who mounted upon a bull goes to Prayāga united with gods. Due to the anger of bull he lives in a terrible hell. From such a man his dead ancestors do not accept water (offered by him); but he who would bathe his sons and all children and would make them drink (water at the holy place) like himself and would cause gifts to be given to brāhmaṇas (is liberated). A man who, due to his desire for (showing off) his affluence or to delusion, would go (to a holy place) in a vehicle, his (visit to the) holy place is fruitless. Therefore, a man should avoid (going in) a vehicle. He who (in the region) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gives his daughter (in marriage) according to the Ārṣa form of marriage and according to his wealth, does not see (i.e. go to) a terrible hell due to that deed. Having gone to Uttara Kuru he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. He obtains sons and wife that are pious and endowed with righteousness. There he should give gifts in accordance with his wealth. There is no doubt that due to the fruit of (the visit to) the holy place only, he prospers. O lord of kings, he stays in heaven till deluge. He who having resorted to the root of the Vāṭa (tree), would cast his life, goes to Rudra's world after having crossed all (other) worlds. There the twelve suns resorting to Rudra shine. They completely burn the entire world. (Only) the root of the Vāṭa (tree), where, when the world is (but) one ocean, when the moon, the sun, and the wind have perished, Viṣṇu born again and again, sleeps, is not burnt. Gods, demons,

gandharvas, sages, siddhas, cāraṇas always resort to that holy place on the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. O lord of kings, they go there. It is united with Prayāga. There gods like Brahmā, quarters and lords of quarters, regents of quarters, sādhyas, the manes liked by people, and also great sages led by Sanatkumāra, and other brāhmaṇic sages like Aṅgiras, also nāgas, siddhas, suparṇas, those moving in the sky, rivers, oceans, mountains, nāgas and also vidyādhara (stay). The revered Viṣṇu led by Prajāpati (i.e. Brahmā) also stays there. O best of kings, Prayāga well-known in the three worlds and (lying) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā is said to be the hip and the loin of the earth. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing more sacred than it in the three worlds. By hearing (the description) of that holy place, even by mentioning its name, or securing the clay from that place, a man is freed from sins. He who, of a severe vow, bathes there at the confluence, obtains the same fruit as Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices) (give) O dear one, even you should not change your mind to go to Prayāga even by (i.e. depending upon) the words of the Vedas, or of the people. O descendant of Kuru, the presence of ten thousand holy places and sixty crore others is here only. He who casts his life at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā follows the same course, as a wise man endowed with abstract meditation and born of good parents follows. O Yudhiṣṭhira, those who have not visited Prayāga, well-known in the three worlds, do not (really) live in the world. Thus seeing that holy place—the highest place—Prayāga, a man is free from all sins as the Moon is from Rāhu.

28-46a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there are the two Nāgas, Kambala and Aśvatara. By bathing there and drinking (water) there, a man is freed from all sins. Having gone to that (holy) place of the wise Mahādeva, a man liberates ten preceding and ten succeeding (generations). Having bathed there, the man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven till deluge. O descendant of Bharata, in the eastern side of Gaṅgā, in the ocean there is a pool (known as) Pratiṣṭhāna, well-known in the three worlds. If a chaste man, with his anger controlled, lives there for three nights, he is freed from all sins, and would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the north of Pratiṣṭhāna, and to the east of Bhāgīrathī, there is

the holy place (called) Hamsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, a man, merely by bathing there, gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He is honoured in heaven as long as the moon and the sun (last). A man free from jealousy, who would offer oblations of water to his dead ancestors at the large sandy bank called Urvaśīpulina, white like swans, enjoys heaven with manes, O king, for sixty hundred years. There he is always worshipped by sages, gandharvas and kinnaras. Then having been deprived of heaven and having fallen from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he obtains a hundred maidens like Urvaśī. O king, he becomes an enjoyer (i.e. a master) of a hundred thousand cows. He is awakened by the sound of a girdle and anklets. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he gets (i.e. goes) to that holy place again. He who has the seat of the Kuśa grass, who is always restrained and has his senses controlled, would become master of pleasures by eating once a day for a month (at the holy place). He obtains a hundred women adorned with (ornaments of) gold. He would also be the great master of pleasures on the earth up to the ocean. He, the king, becomes the enjoyer of ten thousand villages. Possessing wealth and grains he is always a donor. Having enjoyed many pleasures he again remembers that holy place. A chaste man with his senses conquered and endowed with abstract meditation, having fasted at that charming Vata, would obtain the knowledge of Brahman. He who having secured a holy bath, would cast his life, is honoured in heaven for a crore years. Then deprived of heaven, and dropped from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he is born as a handsome (child) in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls.

46b-57. Thence he should go to Bhogavatī, to the north of Vāsukī. There is another great holy place called Daśāśvamedhaka. Having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He becomes rich with wealth, handsome and diligent. By merely going there he would obtain that religious merit which is there in (i.e. which is obtained by the recital of) the four Vedas, which is the fruit in (i.e. obtained by) those who speak the truth, and the piety that exists in harmlessness. Gaṅgā is like Kurukṣetra wherever a bath is taken in her (stream). She has tenfold virtue of Kurukṣetra (at a place) where she is joined

by Sindhu. That place where the glorious Gaṅgā, having many sacred places and the wealth of penance (flows) should be known as a perfect (holy place). No doubt should be raised about it. She liberates the mortals on the earth, nāgas below, and she liberates gods in heaven. Therefore she is said to be Tripathagā (i.e. flowing in three streams). As long as the bones of a man remain in Gaṅgā, till that time—for thousands of years—he is honoured in heaven. She is the greatest holy place among places, and the best river among rivers. She gives salvation to all creatures, even to great sinners. Gaṅgā is easily accessible everywhere. She is inaccessible at three places: at Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga and at the confluence of Gaghā and the ocean. Those, who, having bathed there, go to heaven, are not reborn. There is no other recourse like Gaṅgā for all beings whose minds are smitten with sins and who desire a refuge. She who is the (most) pure of the pure (objects), the most auspicious of the auspicious (objects), has fallen from the head of Śiva, removes all sins, and is holy.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Fruit of Bathing in the Confluence at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-20a. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, having heard which a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. That (famous) Mānasa lake is on the left bank of Gaṅgā. Having fasted (there) for three nights a man would obtain all his desired objects. A man obtains that fruit when he remembers the holy place, which he would obtain by giving a cow, land, or gold. A man who, with or without a desire, dies in Gaṅgā, lives in heaven after death, and does not see (i.e. go to) hell. He is awakened by the music of that host of celestial nymphs from his sleep. He goes in an aeroplane to which swans and cranes are yoked. O lord of kings, he enjoys for many years—six thousand years. Then being deprived of

heaven and having fallen from there due to (the fruit of) his acts being exhausted, he is born in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls. There are sixty thousand sixty hundred holy places. They go to the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the month of Māgha. That fruit which one gets by properly giving away a thousand cows is had by bathing for three days at Prayāga in the month of Māgha. He who would practise the vow of the five fires between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā, is defectless in limbs, is free from diseases and has the five senses (intact). For as many thousand years as the number of pores of hair are there on his body, he is honoured in heaven. Then having fallen from heaven he would be the lord of Jambudvīpa. The man enjoying many pleasures resorts to that holy place. He who would enter water at the confluence well-known in the world, is freed from all sins as the Moon eclipsed by Rāhu (becomes free). He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of Soma and rejoices with Soma. Being served by sages and gandharvas he obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven for sixty thousand sixty hundred years. Fallen (from there) he is born in an affluent family. The man who with his head down and feet up would drink (i.e. take in) the flame, is honoured for a hundred thousand years in heaven. Having fallen from there, O lord of kings, he becomes a performer of agnihotra. Having enjoyed many pleasures, the man resorts to that holy place. He who cuts off his body and offers (the pieces of) it to the birds (is honoured in heaven). Hear the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets), who (i.e. whose body) is enjoyed by birds. For a hundred thousand years he is honoured in the world of Soma. Then having fallen from heaven he becomes (i.e. is born as) a pious, virtuous, handsome, learned king, having a very lovable body. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he again resorts to that holy place.

20b-22. On the left bank of Yamunā, and to the south of Prayāga, there is said to be a very holy place (called) Ṛṇapramocana. Staying there for a night, he is free from all debts. He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Sun, and would always be free from debt.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Agnitr̥tha, Virañjana, Svargatr̥tha etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Having heard this description of Prayāga which you have given, my heart has become very pure. O revered Sir, tell me what kind of fruit (a man gets) by fasting.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-4. O king, O lord, listen to the fruit of fasting which a wise man who has faith, obtains. He becomes one who has no defect in any limb, is free from diseases, and endowed with (i.e. has his) five senses (intact). When he walks, at every step he gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, he liberates his ten predecessors and ten successors in the family. He is freed from all sins and would go to the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

5-6. O pious one, you are illustrious. O lord, (please) tell me (about) gifts. By small, but the best (gift) a man would obtain many virtues (i.e. much religious merit). In this world a man gets (an opportunity to perform) the horse sacrifice due to great religious merit. Please remove this doubt of mine. I have a great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

7-10. O king, O great hero, listen to what formerly Brahmā told in the presence of (i.e. to) the sages, which I heard when it was being told. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. He who enters that region, has (performed) the horse sacrifice at every step. A man who would cast his life (there), liberates all the seven predecessors and fourteen successors of his. Knowing like this, O lord of kings, a man should be full of faith. Men who have no faith and whose hearts are smitten with sins, do not obtain (i.e. reach) the (holy) place Prayāga, fashioned by gods.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

11-12. How would they who through affection, or through greed for wealth have gone under the sway of lust, obtain the fruit of (visiting) a holy place, and how would they obtain religious merit ? O great sage, tell (me) what position will he who not knowing what ought and what ought not to be done, sells all (kinds of) wares, have at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

13-19. O king, listen to the great secret which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, it is told by the self-born god (i.e. Brahṁā) that a man who with his senses controlled lives in Prayāga for a month, is freed from all sins. He, being pure and controlled, being harmless and endowed with faith, is freed from all sins, and would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Listen to the fruit that those who murder those who confide in them, get at Prayāga. He should bathe three times a day; he should eat what is obtained by begging. There is no doubt that after three months he is liberated from Prayāga. He who would go on a pilgrimage knowingly, being endowed with all desired objects, is honoured in heaven. He secures a place which is full of wealth and grains. Thus perfect with knowledge he enjoys pleasures. He has liberated (i.e. he liberates) his manes and great-grandfathers from hell. O you who know the essential principle, I have told you, who are again and again asking me piously, the ancient secret for your good.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

20. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is successful. Today, just by seeing you, I am pleased, I am favoured. O religious-minded one, merely by seeing you, I am freed from all sins.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

21. Fortunately your existence is fruitful. Fortunately you have liberated your family. By narrating (the description of a holy place etc.) religious merit enhances. Hearing it destroys sins.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

22. O great sage, tell me about the religious merit (obtained by bathing) in Yamunā. Tell me all this as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

23-26. (The place) where Yamunā, the illustrious goddess, the daughter of the Sun, and well-known in the three worlds, has come (is holy). Yamunā goes (i.e. flows) along the same course as Gaṅgā has flowed out. Merely by mentioning her (name) within (a distance of) thousands of yojanas she destroys sins. Having bathed in that Yamunā and having drunk (her water), (and) by mentioning (her name) a man obtains religious merit, and by seeing her he sees (i.e. gets) good fortune. When (a man) bathes (in her stream) and drinks (her water), she purifies the family up to the seventh (descendant). He who casts his life there, goes to the highest position (i.e. salvation).

27-32a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there is (a holy place) called Agnitīrtha. To the west is the holy place of Dharmarāja known as Haravara. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there are not reborn. Thus there are thousands of holy places on the right bank of Yamunā. I shall tell you (about those that are situated) on the left (bank). Of the magnanimous Āditya the holy place is Virañjana, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods along with Indra, always offer the daily prayer. Gods and other wise men resort to that holy place. Having great faith take a bath at the holy place. There are many other holy places. All remove sins and are auspicious. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there, are not reborn.

32b-36. The fruits of both Gaṅgā and Yamunā are equal. Gaṅgā is worshipped everywhere merely by her being senior. Thus, O son of Kuntī, have a bath at Svargatīrtha. Just at that moment (when a man bathes there), the sin committed by him during his life, perishes. He who getting up at daybreak recites or listens to (the description of the holy place), is freed from all sins, and goes to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

*More about Merits Derived from Pilgrimage**Yudhiṣṭhira said:*

1-5. I have heard what Brahmā told and what gives religious merit, in the Purāṇa. There are thousands and hundreds and millions of holy places. All these are auspicious and pure and (are) said (to lead to) the highest position. Naimiṣa is meritorious on the earth and Puṣkara in the Intermediate Space; so also is Prayāga for the people, and Kurukṣetra also excels. How do you praise one (only) leaving all (others)? This is said to be unauthoritative, unbelievable and not good. How do you speak approvingly of divine and highest position, and pleasures as desired, and great merit through little yoga? Tell me about (i.e. remove) this doubt of mine according as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

6-14a. What is unbelievable should not be told. It may be actually seen by a man having faith (but) with his mind smitten with sin. One who has no faith, one who is impure, one who has given up auspicious practices—all these are sinners. Therefore I spoke (like) this. Listen to (the description of) the greatness of Prayāga, as seen and heard about (by me). There will be (i.e. it will contain) what is seen and not seen and any other possible facts, O king, which I formerly saw or heard about. One's application (or path) is honoured (only) after regarding the sacred texts as authoritative. There (i.e. while doing so) (if) someone else is afflicted, one should not have (recourse to) such a path. Men obtain (the right) path after thousands of births, since by a thousand applications men obtain the (right) path. He who gives all jewels to brāhmaṇas (obtains yoga), (for) by that gift given (to brāhmaṇas), men obtain application. All this happens in the case of him who dies at Prayāga, and not otherwise. I shall tell principally to them who have faith, O descendant of Bharata. Since it is seen in all beings, everywhere, Brahman is not something which can be described.

14b-18a. As Brahman is worshipped among all beings everywhere, in the same way Prayāga is worshipped by the wise in all the worlds. (It) is worshipped (like this). O Yudhiṣṭhira, this is the truth about the lord of holy places. Even Brahmā always remembers Prayāga, the best holy place. Having reached (this) lord of the holy places he does not desire anything else. Who, having obtained godhead, desires manhood? From this inference only, O Yudhiṣṭhira, you will know whether I have told you what is meritorious or non-meritorious.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

18b-19a. I have heard what you told. I am repeatedly amazed. How can it be attained by yoga and heaven by (one's) acts? He gets pleasures and (comes to) the earth as the fruit of (certain) acts. I am asking about those acts due to which he again gets (i.e. comes to) the earth.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

19b-26. O king, hear by which acts (he comes to) the earth. O king, such men as censure a cow, fire, brāhmaṇa, sacred texts, gold, water, women, mother, father, do not have an upward going. Thus spoke Prajāpati. Thus yoga is had. The (highest) place is very difficult to obtain. The men who commit sins go to terrible hell. Those who first take away an elephant, a horse, a cow, a bull, jewels, pearls, gold in the absence (of the owner), and later give gifts, do not go to heaven, where the donors enjoying pleasures (live). The mean ones united with (i.e. doing) such acts are roasted in hell. Thus O Yudhiṣṭhira, (I have told about) yoga, pious acts and a donor. Whether it is true or not, or whether its fruit is there or not, I shall offer the explanation, so that he can on his own obtain (them).

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Prayāga Again

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-5. O king, hear again (about) the greatness of Prayāga. There are many holy places and other auspicious mountains like Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Gotīrtha, Sindhusāgara, Kurukṣetra, Gayā, and Gaṅgāsāgara. The wise say that ten thousand holy places and thirty crore others are always situated at Prayāga. There are three fire-vessels, from which Gaṅgā, led by all (other) holy places has set out from Prayāga. The goddess (Yamunā), the daughter of the Sun is well-known in the three worlds. Gaṅgā causing people to enjoy, stays (here) with Yamunā.

6-11. Prayāga, said to be the hip of the earth, is in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The thirty and a half crores which Vāyu has proclaimed, do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) even its sixteenth part. Whatever is in heaven, on the earth (or) in the atmosphere—all that is said to be Gaṅgā (only). Prayāga, Samādhisthāna, the two (nāgas) Kambala and Aśvatara, and the (holy place) which is (called) Bhogavatī, are the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods and sacrifices are there in an embodied form. The sages having penance as their wealth, worship Prayāga. Gods and kings having much wealth, perform sacrifices (there). None is more auspicious than that in the three worlds, O descendant of Bharata. Due to its prowess, it is more powerful than all (other) holy places, O lord. There are ten thousand holy places and thirty crore other holy places.

12-20. The truth is, that place where the illustrious Gaṅgā is (flowing) is a penance-grove. That (region) which resorts to the bank of Gaṅgā, should be known as the land of siddhas. A man should whisper this into the ears of the twice-born, the good, his own son, friends, or the disciple who follows him. This is blessed, this leads to heaven, this should be practised, this is auspicious, this is meritorious, this is charming, this is holy, this is the best course of conduct. This is the secret of the sages, which destroys all sins. A brāhmaṇa, meditating on it and having remembered it would obtain purity. He who, always being pure

hears about this holy place everyday, obtains (the faculty) of remembering his former births and rejoices in heaven. These holy places are reached by the good who follow the desires of the wise. O descendant of Kuru, bathe at the holy places. Do not have a crooked mind. Being asked by you, I have properly told it to you. All the manes and the great-grandsires that are liberated do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) (even) the sixteenth part of Prayāga. Thus the (path of) knowledge and (that of) yoga and a holy place, O Yudhiṣṭhira, are secured after great trouble. Then they go to the highest position. People by remembering Prayāga go to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva Dwell in Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O great sage, you have told me all this account of Prayāga. Similarly tell me everything so that it would liberate me.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-7. O king, listen, I shall explain: This whole world is said to be Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśāna, the immutable lord of the deities. Brahmā creates the creatures and whatever is immobile and mobile. The highest Viṣṇu protects them, the created beings, in the world. At the end of a kalpa Rudra destroys the entire world. He neither gives, nor does he accept, and never perishes. He who sees him (to be) the lord of all beings, (indeed) perceives. Now Brahmā is at the north of Pratiṣṭhāna. The highest lord being Maheśvara, remains at Vāṭa. The gods with gandharvas, siddhas and great sages always take care of the highest one. Those who are bent on doing sinful deeds and others (like them) who are (there), do not obtain the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

8. You have told me properly as to what is heard about them. For what reason, do these, dear to the world, remain (here)?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

9-15. These viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva) live at Prayāga. I shall tell you the reason. Listen to the fact, O Yudhiṣṭhira. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. They, who remove sinful deeds, live (there) for protecting (the region). Even the slightest sin (committed) in that the (region) will cause (a man) to fall into hell. Thus, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, along with Śiva (live) at Prayāga. The seven islands, oceans, mountains, supported (by them) remain on the earth, till deluge, O Yudhiṣṭhira, all the other many (objects) that are (there) (in fact everything) beginning with the earth is fashioned by these three deities. This is a holy place of Prajāpati; and is well-known as Prayāga. O Yudhiṣṭhira, this Prayāga is meritorious and auspicious. Rule your kingdom, O lord of kings. Be with your brothers.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Kṛṣṇa Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-3. All the Pāṇḍavas bent upon meritorious acts, along with their brothers, saluted the brāhmaṇas and offered oblations to their (dead) elders and deities. Kṛṣṇa also at that time came there in a moment. All the Pāṇḍavas together honoured that Mādhava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). All the noble ones, along with Kṛṣṇa, consecrated Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, on the kingdom (i.e. the throne).

4. In the meanwhile (i.e. at this time) only, the great-souled Mārkaṇḍeya, then saying: 'May it be well with you', came in a moment to the hermitage.

5. The pious Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, too, along with his brothers, gave him a great gift.

6. He who, getting up at daybreak, recites or listens to this, is freed from all sins and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

Vāsudeva said:

7-17. Do my words (i.e. as I tell you). I am speaking out of affection for you. Being free from affliction at Prayāga, be always engaged in (performing) sacrifices. O lord of kings, O Yudhiṣṭhira, ever remembering Prayāga along with us, you yourself will obtain the eternal heaven. The man who goes to Prayāga, (and) who lives (there), with his soul being purified of all sins, goes to heaven. He who has turned away from accepting gifts, who is pleased, controlled and pure, who is free from self-conceit, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. O lord of kings, so also he who does not get angry, who speaks the truth, and who has a firm resolve, who looks upon (other) beings as himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. The sages, so also the gods have recommended sacrifices according to (proper) order. O king, a poor man cannot (afford) to have (i.e. to perform) a sacrifice. A sacrifice requires many implements, and many activities for its preparation are necessary. It is sometimes obtained (i.e. performed) by various rich or wealthy men. O king, it can be performed by rich, wise men. Then they are united with (i.e. attain) meritorious fruits of the sacrifice. O king, O best of the Bharatas, understand this great secret of the sages. Visiting holy places is meritorious. It is even superior to (the performance of) sacrifices. O best of men, ten crores of holy places, so also thirty crores of other (holy places) will go to (i.e. exist) in Gaṅgā in the month of Māgha. Enjoying the kingdom free from vexation, be comfortable, O great king. O lord of kings, you will, especially as a sacrificer, again see (me).

CHAPTER FIFTY

Viṣṇu's Name the Greatest Holy Place

The sages said:

1-3a. You have told (i.e. explained) all that was asked. Now also we (want to) ask one (thing only). O you very intelligent one, (please) tell it. O you who know everything, tell us what fruit a man would obtain by resorting to these holy places. So also tell us by doing which one act (the fruit of visiting) all (these holy places) is had; tell us if there is such an act.

Sūta said:

3b-4a. O illustrious ones, formerly, beginning with the brāhmaṇa (caste), the worldly and religious rites of various kinds for the castes were prescribed. Only one is superior.

4b-17a. There is no doubt that one who has devotion to Viṣṇu, has undoubtedly conquered (everything). Hari, the lord of the lord of all gods, should alone be propitiated. The goblin of sin would perish by means of the great sacred hymns in the form of the (various) names of Viṣṇu. There is no doubt that those with pure hearts, going round Viṣṇu even once, get (the fruit of) having bathed at all holy places. A man would obtain the fruit of (having visited) all holy places by seeing Viṣṇu's image. Muttering the excellent name of Viṣṇu a man would obtain (the fruit) of having muttered all sacred hymns. A man, having smelt tulasī, the grace of Viṣṇu, does not see, O best brāhmaṇas, the huge and terrible face of Yama. A man, having (but) once saluted Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) does not drink the mother's milk (i.e. is not reborn). I always repeatedly salute them whose mind is (fixed) in the feet of Viṣṇu. Even pulkasas, cāṇḍālas or other mlecha tribes, who serve the feet of Viṣṇu alone are fit to be saluted. Then what about meritorious and devoted brāhmaṇas and royal sages? Having put devotion unto (i.e. being devoted to) Viṣṇu, a man does not see (i.e. experience) confinement in the womb (i.e. is not reborn). O brāhmaṇas, a man who with high sounds (i.e. loudly) utters the name of Viṣṇu, purifies the world as does the water of Gaṅgā etc. There is no doubt that a

man is freed from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa by seeing (the image of), touching (the feet of), reciting (the name of) and devotion (to Viṣṇu). Circumambulating (the idol of) Hari, and loudly uttering his names in a sweet and melodious voice accompanied with clapping of the hands, a man has struck the sin of murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (off) his hands. A man becomes pure by just seeing him who having narrated his story, would listen to a narrative about him. Then, O best sages, how can there be the slightest doubt about his sins?

17b-39. O great sages, Viṣṇu's name is the best holy place of all the holy places. Those who have uttered the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) make the (entire) world a holy place. Therefore, O best sages, they consider nothing more meritorious than this. A man using (i.e. who uses) and holding (i.e. who holds) on his head the remains of an offering of flowers to Viṣṇu, would just become Viṣṇu, the destroyer of grief due to Yama. Undoubtedly Viṣṇu (alone) is to be worshipped and saluted. Those who look upon the great Viṣṇu and the unmanifest Maheśvara as identical, have no rebirth. Therefore, see and worship Viṣṇu only who has no beginning or end, who is the soul (of everything), and who is unmanifest. Those who look upon Viṣṇu and another deity as equal, go to terrible hells. Viṣṇu would not care for them. Viṣṇu, the lord, himself liberates a fool or a cāṇḍāla to whom Viṣṇu is dear. There is none greater than Viṣṇu, the wild fire for (i.e. burning) heaps of sins. A man even after having committed a terrible sin, is freed by the name of Viṣṇu. O you of good vows, god Viṣṇu, the father of the worlds, has put greater strength than himself into his name. Those who, on seeing lesser exertion with greater fruit in this dispute it (its efficacy), go to many hells. Therefore a man looking highly upon Viṣṇu's name, should be devoted to Hari. The lord would protect a worshipper from behind (i.e. secretly), and him who recites his name in the chest (i.e. from the front, i.e. openly). The name of Viṣṇu is a great destructive weapon like the thunderbolt in rending the mountain of sins. His feet are fruitful and move for that (only). The hands that worship him are alone said to be blessed. That head which bends before Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the best part of the body. That is (really) the tongue that extols Viṣṇu. That (alone) is the mind, which

follows his feet. That alone is the hair which bristles at the utterance of his name. Those (alone) are tears that are shed due to Viṣṇu's devotion. Oh, the people are very much duped by their blemishes, (since) they do not resort to (him) by merely uttering his names. Those men also who are sinful due to contact with women, and whose hair does not stand on end at the utterance (of the name) of Kṛṣṇa, are duped. Those are fools who are not pure in mind, and who are afflicted by the grief due to (the death of) their sons etc., weep with various wailings and not at the utterance of the words about Kṛṣṇa. Those who though having got a tongue do not mutter the name of Viṣṇu, easily fall even after having secured the staircase to salvation. Therefore, a man should carefully (please) Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Viṣṇu propitiated with worldly and religious rites, is pleased, not otherwise. The worship of Viṣṇu is said to be a holier place than a holy place. A man obtains that fruit by serving Viṣṇu which he obtains by bathing at and drinking (the water from) all the holy places. Only blessed men worship Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Therefore, O sages, worship Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), who is extremely auspicious.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Karmayoga or Rules of Conduct

The sages said:

1-3. How is that path of action (consisting of worldly and religious rites), propitiated by which Viṣṇu becomes pleased, O Sūta? O illustrious one, O best among speakers, tell that to us. (Tell us about that Karmayoga) by which those desirous of salvation can propitiate the revered lord. Tell us also about that path of action, that protects all the worlds and is the totality of dharma, and of an embodied form, O Sūta. With a desire to hear this the sages have settled in front of you.

Sūta said:

4. Vyāsa, Satyavati's son was formerly asked in this way only by sages, resembling fire. Hear what Vyāsa said to them:

Vyāsa said:

5-17. Listen, all sages, the ancient path of action which will be told and which gives endless fruits to brāhmaṇas, which is wholly established by the sacred tradition, and which is demonstrated for the brāhmaṇas, which is meritorious, and which is practised by groups of sages. Being attentive, hear when I explain it. An excellent brāhmaṇa, after having the investiture with the sacred thread, should study the Vedas. In the eighth year from conception, or in the eighth year (from birth), (he should have the investiture with the sacred thread) according to the rules in his manual of teaching in ritual. He should have a staff, wear a girdle, have the sacred thread and the skin of the black antelope, should be holy, should eat begged food, should be well-disposed to his preceptor, should always look up at his preceptor's face (to receive orders from him). Formerly Brahmā fashioned the three-stranded sacred thread of cotton and a silken garment for the brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa should always wear the sacred thread, and should always keep the lock of hair on the crown of the head tied. (By doing so) an act done otherwise (i.e. in a perverse way) becomes done properly. He should put on a reddish cotton garment which is not deformed, or an excellent white one made of wool. The upper garment is enjoined to be an auspicious hide of a black antelope. In its absence, the one made of (the skin of) an ox or of that (of the skin) of a ruru (deer) is laid down. Raising the right hand it is placed on the left (shoulder). He should always wear the sacred thread. When the sacred thread is put on (i.e. worn round) the neck it is (called) 'nivāta'. O brāhmaṇas, when the sacred thread is put on the right (shoulder) after raising the left hand, it is (called) 'prācīnavāta'. It is to be employed in (i.e. while performing) the rites (in honour) of the manes. He should always wear the sacred thread in a firechamber, in a cow-pen, in (i.e. while performing) a sacrifice, in (i.e. while practising) penance, while doing self-study, taking food and in the vicinity of brāhmaṇas, while

serving his preceptors (and elders), at the time of the daily prayers, and in the company of the good. This is an ancient rule.

18-24. The girdle of a brāhmaṇa should be made triple, of the muñja-grass and soft. In the absence of the muñja-grass, it is said (to be made of) kuśa-grass with one knot or three knots. A brāhmaṇa should hold a staff of bamboo or palāśa and it should be (high) upto his hair. Or the staff should be made of a tree fit for (being used in) a sacrifice, and should be soft and without a bruise. Being tranquil, a brāhmaṇa should offer the morning and evening prayers. By avoiding it, due to passion, greed, fear or infatuation, he would be (a) fallen (brāhmaṇa). Then, with a pleased mind he should perform the fire-rites in the morning and in the evening. After having bathed, he should offer oblations to gods, sages and the hosts of manes. He should worship the deities with flowers, leaves, barley and water. He should, being free from sluggishness, always be inclined to salute the elders religiously bowing down before them, (and saying,) 'I am so and so', for securing a (long) life and good health. The words 'Enjoy a long life', should be uttered by a brāhmaṇa, when he is saluted ; and at the end of his name the sound 'ā' should be pronounced, by protracting the penultimate letter.

25-29. A learned man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who does not answer (i.e. greet back). He is just like a śūdra. The feet of the preceptor should be touched by a person with (the arrangement of) the hands reversed: he should touch the (preceptor's) left foot with his left hand, and right (foot) with his right (hand). Being controlled, and having got worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge, he should first salute him. He should not have borrowed water, flowers and samidhs (the sacred sticks of wood). Such and other things are not (to be used) for (i.e. at the time of) rites in honour of deities. A man should ask a brāhmaṇa about his welfare, a kṣatriya about his good health, a vaiśya about his happiness and a śūdra about his health. (While greeting a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra, the words 'Kuśala, Anāmaya, Kṣema and Ārogya' should be respectively used).

30-35a. The preceptor, the father, the eldest brother, so also one who has protected him from a fear, the maternal uncle, the father-in-law, the maternal grandfather, the paternal

grandfather, one superior by caste, the paternal uncle are said to be respectable persons. The mother, the maternal grandmother, the (brothers and) sisters of the father and the mother, the mother-in-law, the paternal grandmother, the seniormost foster-mother are venerable ladies. O brāhmaṇas, these should be regarded as a group of the venerable ones from (the side of) the mother or the father. Through acts of the mind, speech and body he should obey them. Having seen his elders, he should stand up, saluting them with the palms of his hands joined. For his own sake he should not sit or discuss with them. For life's sake he should never talk hatefully with the elders. Even though excellent in other virtues, a man who hates his elders, falls down.

35b-40a. Out of these, five are to be specially respected: Out of these the first three are the greatest, and out of these (three) the mother is the most venerable. He who desires his welfare, should specially respect, with all efforts, even by casting his life, these five. As long as the father and the mother remain unchanged (in mind or attitude), a son should, giving up everything (else), be attached to them. If, by the good qualities of their son, the father and the mother are well pleased, then, the son would obtain all religious merits.

40b-45a. There is no (other) deity like the mother, and no (other) venerable person like the father. There can never be in their case doing good to them in return. He should always do what pleases them by means of deeds, thought and words. Without being permitted by them, he should not follow any other course of conduct except (in the case of rites having) liberation as their fruit or the obligatory and occasional (rites). The essence of piety is said to be giving an eternal fruit after death. Having properly propitiated the teacher, and allowed by him to go, a disciple enjoys the fruit of his learning after death, and enters heaven. He who slights his eldest brother who is like his father, goes, due to that blemish, to a terrible hell after death.

45b. A husband is (also) always to be respected as he is created as a man.

46-49a. In this world, a man attains greatness by serving his mother. He should stand up and salute the maternal and paternal uncles, fathers-in-law, priests and preceptors, and should

say (i.e. by declaring) 'I am so and so.' A man who is initiated should not be addressed by his name, even though he is younger. A man who is conversant with the rules of conduct should address him beginning with the words 'bho' and 'bhavat' (i.e. you). He should always be saluted, and honoured, by bowing their heads in respect, by brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and by those who desire prosperity.

49b-52a. A brāhmaṇa should never salute kṣatriyas etc. even though they are endowed with virtues like knowledge, (good) deeds, or even though they are highly learned. The scriptures say that a brāhmaṇa (alone) should invoke blessings for all (other) castes. A man of the same caste should salute other men of that caste. Fire is the most venerable to brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa is the most venerable to (all) castes. To a woman the husband is the most venerable. A guest is everywhere the most honourable.

52b-55a. Learning, acts, age, relation and wealth as the fifth—these five are said to be respectable. The preceding one is superior to the succeeding. He who, out of the three castes, possesses (any) of them abundantly and strongly, deserves respect in this world. So also a śūdra who has reached the tenth (decade, i.e. who has crossed ninety). Way (i.e. side) should be given to a brāhmaṇa, a woman, a king and a blind man, an old man, one who is broken down with load, a sick man, and a weak man.

55b-66a. Being controlled and having everyday begged alms from the houses of eminent men, he should, with his speech controlled, eat it after informing the preceptor about it and after being allowed by him. An excellent brāhmaṇa, wearing a sacred thread, should beg food after addressing (the housewife) with the words 'bhavat' 'your ladyship' uttered first. A kṣatriya should beg alms with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the middle of the (sentence), and a vaiśya with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the end. He should first beg alms from his mother, or sister, or his mother's or his own sister, or from one who would not insult him. Begging alms in (i.e. from) the houses of people of his own caste or those of all castes except from the houses of those that are outcaste is prescribed. A celibate who is controlled, should receive alms from the houses of those that are

not bereft of Vedas and sacrifices and are praised in (i.e. for doing) their own acts. He should beg in (i.e. from) his preceptor's house but not from those of his own caste and relatives. If he does not get alms from other houses, he should avoid each former. If alms from these, already described, is not available, he should move in the entire village. Having been restrained, and with his speech controlled, and not looking into directions, he should, having collected the alms as desired, without any fraud, being restrained, with his speech controlled, eat it with a concentrated mind. He who follows a vow, should always live on alms, and should not (take food from) one (place only). The livelihood of him who lives on alms is like a fast. He should always respect his food and not revile it through pride. Seeing it he should be fully delighted, pleased and satisfied. Eating too much causes ill health, lack of (long) life and does not lead to heaven. It is not meritorious; it is hated by people. Therefore, he should avoid it.

66b-68. Facing the east or the sun, he should eat his food. It is an ancient rule that he should not eat food by facing the north. He who is (about) to eat should wash his hands and feet twice. Having sat in a pure place and having eaten the food there, he should twice wash (his hands etc.).

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Rules for Sipping Water

Vyāsa said:

1-19. An excellent brāhmaṇa should again sip water having eaten, or drunk or slept, after walking in a street or having touched his lips after licking them, after putting on a garment, after having ejected semen, or urinated or cleared the bowels, after having told a lie, after spitting, at the beginning of study, after having (an attack of) asthma, so also after having crossed a place where many roads meet or a crematory, at the time of

both the prayers, even though he has already sipped water. Similarly he should sip water after talking with a cāṇḍāla or a mleccha, or with a woman, or a śūdra, or a person who has not washed his hands etc. after eating food, so also on seeing a man who has not washed his hands etc. and on seeing leavings of food, or on seeing tears being shed or bleeding, at the time of taking food, at the time of both the prayers after bathing, having drunk (water etc.), and having come after urination or clearing his bowels or should sip water once after having slept (and then got up), so also for other (similar reasons). On touching fire or cows, or a holy person, so also on being touched by women, he should sip water, so also after having touched a diseased person, grass or ground; so also (he should sip water) on touching his own hair, or on touching a garment that has fallen down. Always desiring purity, he should, with his head or neck covered, or with his hair and the lock of hair on the crown of his head loose, and being seated with his face towards the east or north, sip properly, water that is not hot, does not have hair in it and which is pure. Without washing his feet he would not be pure from (the impurity of having walked over) a path. A wise man should not sip water with shoes on, or while in a carriage or with his turban on; so also with the streams of rain-showers, while standing, or with water drawn out (of a well etc.), or with water made over with one hand and without wearing the sacred thread. So also (he should not sip water) while sitting on a seat; or with his knees outstretched, so also while talking, laughing, seeing (something) or lying on a bed. (He should not sip water) impaired with foam etc. or (water) that is dropped from the hands of a śūdra or an impure person or saline water. (While sipping water) he should not produce sound with his fingers, should not be distracted; (he should not sip water) which is polluted with colours and liquids; so also (the water) from crevices; so also that which is agitated with the hands, or with his shoulders stretched out. A brāhmaṇa is purified when the water reaches his heart, a kṣatriya becomes pure when it reaches his throat; a vaiśya, a woman and a śūdra are purified when it touches (their bodies) from within after it is drunk. The part of the hand situated on the line at the root of the thumb is called Brāhma. The part between the thumb and the fore-

finger is said to be the holy place of the manes. The part below the little is called Prājāpatya. The tip of a finger is said to be divine. The same is called Ārṣa ('of the sages'). The root is daiva or ārṣa, and the middle part is said to be Āgneya (of Agni). The same is sacred to Soma. Knowing this he is not confounded. A brāhmaṇa should always sip with the Brāhma holy place.

20-34a. Brāhmaṇas should offer sacrifices with the daiva and (offer oblations) to the manes with the paitrya (i.e. the portion between the thumb and the fore-finger). Then, being restrained, he should thrice offer water with the Brāhma (portion). Having washed with the root of the thumb he should touch the mouth. With the thumb and the ring-finger he should then touch both his eyes. He should (then) touch the two nostrils with the fore-finger and the thumb. He should touch the ears with the little finger and the thumb. With all of them he should touch the chest, the head and both the shoulders with his thumb. He should drink (i.e. sip) water thrice. By that the deities, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are pleased. This is what we have heard. By wiping Gaṅgā and Yamunā are pleased. When the eyes are touched, the Moon and the Sun are pleased. When he would touch the two nostrils, Nāsatya and Dasra (i.e. the two Aśvins) are pleased. Similarly when the ears are touched, wind and fire are pleased. When the chest is touched all the deities are pleased. By touching the head, that Puruṣa (the highest lord) is pleased. He does not become impure with the water-drops clinging to his mouth; similarly in the case of water-drops clinging to the teeth, he would become pure by the touch of the tongue. There would be no impurity due to the drops which would touch his feet when he makes others sip water. They should be regarded like dust particles. Manu declared that in the case of Madhuparka, Soma, eating tāmbūla, or fruits, roots, sugarcane, there is no blemish. A man might have a thing in his hand, while moving for food or drink; having put that thing on the ground, and having sipped water he should sprinkle water over it. If after taking a golden object a brāhmaṇa would become impure, he should keep it on the ground; and after sipping water, should sprinkle (water over it). By not putting the object on the ground, by taking which he becomes impure, he would

(continue to) be impure (if he does not, after keeping it down, sip water). There would be an option in the case of garments etc. Having touched it he may sip water.

34b-47. If he urinates or clears his bowels, with an object in his hand, in a solitary forest, at night, or on a path full of thieves and tigers, he is not defiled. Putting his sacred thread on his right ear he should urinate or clear his bowels while facing the north during the day, and facing the south during the night. Having covered the ground with pieces of wood, leaves, clods or grass, and having covered his head, he should urinate or clear his bowels. He should not urinate or excrete in shade, a hollow, a river, a cow-pen, a sanctuary, water, on a road or ashes, so also fire and crematory. He should not urinate or excrete on cowdung, a piece of wood, a great tree, meadow, while standing without clothes, the region of a mountain, in an old temple, an anthill; so also into ditches with beings in them, or while going; so also on fire of chaff or pieces of broken jars, and on a highway. So also (he should not urinate or excrete) in a field, a hole, a sacred place or a place where many roads meet, in a garden, near water, on a barren spot with saline soil, and in caves; (he should not urinate or excrete) with shoes or wooden sandals on, or with an umbrella or in the air; (he should not urinate or excrete) facing women, his preceptor, brāhmaṇas or cows, deities and temples or water, while looking at stars or with his back to them; so also by facing the sun, fire or the moon. Taking clay from a mound that would remove the smell, he should carefully purify himself with water that is drawn up. A brāhmaṇa should not take (i.e. use) the clay that is defiled or muddy or from the road or from a barren spot with saline soil, or that has remained after being used by someone else, or from a temple, or a well, a house or water. Then, he should always sip water as told before.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rules of Conduct for a Celibate Student

Vyāsa said :

1-22. Thus endowed with a staff etc. and with purity and (proper) conduct, when called he should study looking at the face of the preceptor. He should always have his hands raised (i.e. should be ready), and should be well-controlled having good conduct. When told by the teacher 'sit down', he should sit facing him. He should not lie, so also should be seated or be eating food, while listening to or talking (with his preceptor). So also he should not remain with his face turned away (from his preceptor). His bed or seat should always be near his teacher (but) downwards (i.e. at a low level). When within the range of the preceptor's sight, he should not sit on a seat as he likes. Even in the absence of his preceptor he should not utter his name. He should not imitate his gait, speech or movement. He should cover his ears, or go to another place from the place where the preceptor is being censured or blamed. Remaining away (i.e. from a distance) he should not honour him, so also when angry he should not honour him, nor when he is near a woman. Being seated he should not give a reply to him; nor should he sit near him. He should always bring for him a jar with water (in it), kuśas, flowers and sacrificial sticks. He should cleanse his body and apply unguents to it. He should never cross over the remains of (flowers etc. used by) him, his bed, wooden sandals or shoes, so also his seat or shadow. He should secure pieces of wood used as a toothbrush etc. and report to him whatever is obtained by him. Without asking him (i.e. his permission) he should not go anywhere, and should be devoted to his well-being and what is liked by him. In the presence of the preceptor he should always avoid yawning, laughing, covering his neck or cracking (the limbs of) his body. He should study at the proper time, when the preceptor is not depressed. He should sit on a seat lower than that of the preceptor or by his side, and with concentration (offer him) service. He should never remain (i.e. sit) on his seat or bed. He should run after the preceptor when he is running; should go (i.e. walk) after

when he is going. On kuśa seats or on a bull, a horse or a camel, so also on a slab or a plank or (while travelling) in boats, he should sit with (i.e. by) the preceptor. He should always control his senses, should control his mind, should be free from anger and pure. He should always use sweet and wholesome words. He should carefully avoid perfumes, flowers, drinks, (other) preparations, pearls, or harm to creatures, so also rubbing his body with unctuous substances, applying pigment to his body, or rubbing it, so also holding (i.e. using) an umbrella. (He should avoid) lust, greed, fear, sleep, singing or playing upon musical instruments, dancing, threatening, abuse, looking at or securing a woman, assaulting another person or wickedness. He should fetch a jar full of water, flowers, cowdung, clay, kuśas (for his preceptor). Everyday he should bring food and alms. Ghee, salt and all that is stale should be avoided. He should never witness dances, and should not long for (listening to) songs. He should not look at the sun, nor should he clean his teeth. Remaining in a lonely place with women is impure, so also talking with śūdras etc. He should not voluntarily take medicine or food left by his preceptor, so also should not excrete or bathe at his will.

23-34. He should never think of leaving his preceptor. If he leaves him through infatuation or greed, he would fall. He should never have malice against him from whom he would get worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge. Manu has said that a preceptor, even though he is arrogant, he does not know what ought and what ought not to be done, he has gone astray, should not be abandoned. A man should behave towards his preceptor's preceptor as he behaves with his own preceptor. Having saluted and being allowed by the preceptor, he should salute his preceptors. Thus he should behave with his preceptor who gives him knowledge; so also with meditating saints, who prohibit him from unrighteous acts and who advise what is beneficial to him. It is excellent for him always to behave in the same way as he behaves with his preceptor, with the preceptor's sons, wife and kinsmen. A wise man should honour respectable persons (even though they are) young. The son of a teacher who teaches deserves respect like the teacher. He should not clean the limbs of the teacher's

son, should not bathe him, should not eat what is left by him, so also should not wash his feet. The preceptor's wife belonging to the same caste, should be honoured like the preceptor. The one not belonging to the same caste should be honoured by getting up (when she comes) and saluting her. He should not apply unguents to the body of the preceptor's wife, or give her bath, or clean the limbs of her body; so also he should not dress her hair. The young wife of the preceptor is not to be saluted by touching her feet. He should salute her (by putting his hands) on the ground, saying, 'I am so and so'.

35-39. Remembering the course of conduct of the good, he should honour his mother's sister, his maternal uncle's wife, his mother-in-law, his father's sister as (he would honour) his preceptor's wife. They are like his preceptor's wife to him. Everyday he should also kindly receive his brother's wife of the same caste. Women related to him through caste should be honoured by staying away from them. He should behave as he behaves with his mother, towards his father's sister, mother's sister, and his elder sister. (Yet) the mother is superior to them. A preceptor should teach the Vedas to a disciple who is thus endowed with good conduct, who is prudent and not deceitful; so also he should everyday teach him religious texts, Purāṇas and Vedāṅgas. A preceptor who does not teach the disciple who has stayed with him for a year, takes the sin of the disciple living with him.

40-44. These ten should be taught (by the preceptor) according to the rule : the son of his preceptor, one who serves him, one who gives him (some other) knowledge, one who is righteous, one who is pure, one who is capable, one who gives him food, one who gives him water and one who is good. These six of the brāhmaṇa-caste, viz. one who has learnt (the Vedas) by heart, one who is not deceitful, one who is very intelligent, one who takes to his teacher, one who is trustworthy, and dear should be taught according to the rule. To these and other brāhmaṇas gifts should be given duly. Having sipped water and being restrained, he should, facing the north, study. Having seized the feet of (i.e. having saluted) the preceptor and looking at his face, he should say : 'O (sir, please) teach me.' He should stop when (the teacher says :) 'Let there be a stop

(now).’ Purifying himself and having the points (of the kuśas) turned towards the east, he should, with blades of kuśa grass, wait upon (a deity etc.). Purified by the three (kinds of) prāṇāyāma, he deserves (to pronounce) Omkāra.

45-49. O brāhmaṇas, at the beginning and the end (of a rite) a brāhmaṇa should duly honour Omkāra. Having first offered respectful offering with the palms of his hands joined, he should undertake instruction daily. The ancient Veda is the eye of all creatures. He should study it daily. Otherwise he loses his status as a brāhmaṇa. He should study the hymns from the R̥gvda. He (thereby) offers an oblation of milk. When he offers oblations of desired objects to the deities, he pleases them along with gods. (If) he always studies the yajus-formulae, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) curd. (If) he studies sāmans everyday, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) ghee. If he studies (hymns from) the Atharvāṅgīrasa (Veda) daily, he pleases the deities with honey. (If he studies) the Purāṇas, religious texts, he pleases the gods with the flesh (-like parts of fruits).

50-58. Resorting to the daily rites in the morning and the evening, after being controlled, he should, being calm, go to a forest and properly study (the) Gāyatrī (hymn). He should daily mutter the Gāyatrī (hymn). (Repeating it) a thousand (times) is best, a hundred (times) (is) middle (i.e. next to it), and ten (times) (is) the lowest. It is called the sacrifice of muttering prayers. The lord (once) weighed Gāyatrī and the Vedas with a scale. The four Vedas were on one side, and Gāyatrī on the other (i.e. both weighed equally). Having first uttered Omkāra, then the vyāhṛtis,¹ he should, with concentration and faith, study (i.e. recite) the Gāyatrī (hymn). In the former kalpa, the three ancient, great vyāhṛtis, viz. Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svah, destroying all inauspicious (things), sprang up. Pradhāna (or Prakṛti), Puruṣa, Kāla, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, the three (constituents of

1. Vyāhṛti—A mystic word uttered by every Brāhmaṇa in performing his daily sandhyā-adoration. These syllables are three : Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svar, usually repeated after ‘Om’ (See Manu. 2.76). According to some, they are seven.

the Prakṛti viz.) Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, are said to be the vyāhṛtis in succession. Omkāra is that highest Brahman, and Sāvitrī would be next to it. The hymn has a great propriety, and is said to be the essence of essences. He, who, being restrained, everyday studies this Gāyatrī, the mother of the Vedas, along with its meaning, goes to (i.e. gets) the highest position. Gāyatrī is the mother of the Vedas ; Gāyatrī purifies the worlds. There is nothing greater to be muttered than Gāyatrī. Knowing this one is liberated.

59-62. Commencement of reading the Veda is said (to take place) on the full moon day of Śrāvaṇa, or the full moon day of Āṣāḍha or of Bhādrapada, O best brāhmaṇas. A man, being controlled and calm, should study (the Vedas) at a pure spot for five months and a half, when the sun proceeds to the south. A brāhmaṇa should suspend the Vedic studies in Pauṣa. A brāhmaṇa should study the Vedas in the morning of the first day of the bright fortnight of the month. A man should study the Vedāṅgas and the Purāṇas in the dark fortnight of the month.

63-70a. One who studies (i.e. the student) and so also one who teaches, studying (the sacred texts) carefully, should always avoid these intermissions of study : When the wind blows audibly at night, when a mass of dust (moves) by day, when there is lightning, or when it rains with thundering, or when there is a surge of great meteors. Prajāpati has prescribed untimely intermission on these occasions. When fires break out, one should know that they have come up. (So also) one should know that there is suspension of study when clouds are seen out of season, when there is a hurricane, when the earth quakes, and when the luminaries are eclipsed. These should be looked upon as (times of) the suspension of study, even when it is the season of study. (So also) when fires break out, when there is lightning or thundering. If there is thundering, there would be suspension of study during the remaining night or day. There should certainly be suspension of study in the villages or cities. For those who desire skill in religion, there should always be suspension of study when there is stinking smell, when there is a corpse in the village, and in the presence of a cāṇḍāla, when someone is weeping; so also when it is the time of the cloud.

70b-72a. A learned brāhmaṇa should not even mentally

think of urinating or excreting in water or at midnight; or when he has not washed his hands etc. after taking food, or after eating at a śrāddha, or after having received the fees at a śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual¹. He should not study the Vedas for three days during the mourning period of the king or impurity (due to eclipse caused) by Rāhu.

72b-85a. As long as he has partaken of food at one place and there is the presence of oiliness on the body of the learned brāhmaṇa, he should not study the Vedas. He should not study while lying or with his legs stretched or with a cloth girt round his legs and knees²; so also after having eaten flesh or the food at the śrāddha of a śūdra. Impurity for three nights is declared at the time of (fall of) mist, sound of an arrow, and at the time of both the twilights; so also on the new moon day and the fourteenth day; so also on the full moon day and the eighth day, for commencement or suspension of Vedic studies; so also the collection of three nights at the end of the season, beginning from the seventh day after the full moon. The wise have declared the collection of three days (7th, 8th and 9th) in the months of Pauṣa and Māgha and in the dark fortnights. A man should never study in the shadow of the ślaṣmātaka tree, so also of śālmali or madhūka; so also in the shadow of kovidāra and kapittha. When one who is his student-friend or co-student has expired, or his preceptor is dead, impurity is said to be there for three nights. These flaws are said to be (the occasions for) suspension of study for the brāhmaṇas. During them the demons harm (men). Therefore (a brāhmaṇa) should avoid them. There is no suspension of the obligatory rites or offering the sandhyā-prayers. During the collection of the three days (7th, 8th, 9th) etc., or when the wind is blowing, he should not study a ṛc, or a yājus or sāmans at the beginning of Vedic studies, or at the end of a sacrifice or in the middle of it. There is no suspension of studies of the Vedāṅgas, Itihāsa, Purāṇas, and other religious texts. One should avoid these. This in brief is

1. Ekoddiṣṭa—A Śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual deceased, not including other ancestors.

2. Avasakthikā—A cloth girt round the legs and knees (by a person), when sitting on his hams.

declared to be the course of conduct for a celibate (i.e. a religious student); it was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages who had purified their souls. A twice-born who, not studying the scriptures, strives for something else, is a fool. He is out of the Vedic fold and should not be talked to by twice-borns.

85b-90. A twice-born should not be satisfied merely by the recital of the Vedas. Merely ending his study with the recital of the Vedas, he sinks as a cow sinks in mud. He who duly studies (i.e. recites) the Veda, but does not reflect on its meaning, is a fool, almost a śūdra, and is not a worthy person. If he desires to stay permanently with the teacher, he should, being diligent, serve him till death. Going to the forest he should duly offer oblations into fire. In the same way, being devoted to Brahman and being calm, he should study everyday. Always being devoted, and engaged in eating begged food, he should always study the Gāyatrī, Śatarudriya and especially the Upaniṣads. About the Vedic knowledge this is an ancient statement which I have told you now and which the lord Svāyambhuva Manu, when asked by the best sages, told (them).

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Rules for the Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8a. O brāhmaṇas, having studied one Veda, two Vedas or (the four) Vedas, along with the Vedāṅgas, and having understood their meaning, the best twice-born should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his spiritual teacher. Having given money to his teacher, he should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher with the teacher's permission. Or if he has completed a vow, or has set his mind on the Supreme Soul or is capable, he deserves to perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher (i.e.

should stop his studies). He should hold a staff of bamboo, wear an inner garment, so also an upper one, a sacred thread of two strands, and carry a pot with water, an umbrella, a clean turban, wooden sandals and shoes. He should also put on golden ear-rings and should not wear a red chaplet except of gold. He should always wear a white garment, should always use perfumes, and should be of a pleasing appearance. When he is affluent, he should not wear old garments. He should not wear a red or a thick garment, so also a garment and ear-rings worn by others. So also he should not use shoes, chaplets or (wooden) sandals (used by others); so also the sacred thread, ornament, darbhas, the skin of a black antelope (worn by others). He should not wear the sacred thread allowing it to hang down from the right shoulder, nor he should wear a garment untidily.

8b-12. He should duly secure a wife befitting him and auspicious, so also endowed with beauty and auspicious marks and free from family-blemishes; a brāhmaṇa should have a wife not born in his father's family, (but) born in the family of some other man, and endowed with good character and purity. Till a son is born, he should have intercourse with her during the period favourable for conception. He should carefully avoid (intercourse on) prohibited days: the sixth, eighth, fifteenth, twelfth, and fourteenth. He should always be controlled; similarly he should establish the marriage-fire and should offer (oblations into) fire.

13-21. One who has returned from the house of his teacher should always devise these purifying (practices). Everyday he should carefully perform his rites enjoined by the Vedas. He who does not perform them falls into very fearful hells. Being controlled, he should study the Veda and should not neglect the great sacrifices. He should perform the domestic rites, and also the sandhyā (-prayer). He should form friendship with his equals and superiors; he should always go to a powerful person. He should go to the deities, and should maintain his wife. A wise man should not extol (his) righteous deeds, and should also not conceal a sin. Always being compassionate to all beings he should always bring about his welfare. He should always move, acting like a nobly born person in respect of place, speech and intellect, age, acts, wealth and learning. He should properly

resort to those practices that are enjoined by the Śrutis and Smṛtis and that are followed by the good. He should not desire anything else. He should go along that path of the good, along which his forefathers and paternal grandfather have gone. By going along that he does not get defiled. He should always be devoted to the study of the Vedas. He should always wear the sacred thread. He should speak the truth, control his anger, and should be free from greed and infatuation. The householder engaged in muttering the Gāyatrī (-hymn) and performing śrāddha is liberated.

22-24. He who is engaged in the well-being of his mother and father, who is engrossed in the good of brāhmaṇas, who is a donor, a sacrificer, a devotee of gods, is honoured in Brahmā's world. He should always pursue the three objects of worldly existence, should everyday worship the deities, and being controlled he should salute the gods. He should always give gifts, should be endowed with forgiveness and should be kind. Such a man is called a householder. A man is not a householder because of (his staying) in a house.

25-33a. The characteristics of a brāhmaṇa are: forgiveness, kindness, vijñāna (worldly knowledge), truthfulness, control, tranquility, knowledge about the eternity of the Supreme Spirit. An excellent brāhmaṇa should not especially err in these. Practising the code of conduct according to his capacity, he should avoid what is condemned. Shaking off the snare of delusion, securing excellent yoga, a householder is freed from bondage. No doubt should be raised here. Forgiveness is tolerating the faults of others due to anger and of the nature of ill conduct, violation (of rules), wrath, harm, bondage, killing. Not showing kindness (i.e. sympathy) in one's griefs, (but) showing kindness of heart in the griefs of others—this the sages call kindness. It is the means of religious merit. Having the knowledge of the fourteen branches of learning for (the good of) others should be known as worldly knowledge by which righteousness develops. By studying the branches of learning methodically wealth also is obtained. He should do righteous acts. This is called worldly knowledge. He conquers the world with truth; truth is that highest position, since the wise say that not erring towards the creatures is truth. Abstaining from (the enjoyments

of) the body is control. Tranquility is wisdom due to propiti-ousness.

33b-36. Metaphysical knowledge is (that of) the immutable one going where he does not grieve. That is declared to be knowledge by which that revered lord, god Viṣṇu is actually perceived. A learned brāhmaṇa who is devoted to Him, who looks upon Him as the highest, who is always free from anger and is pure, who is engaged in (performing the five) great sacrifices obtains that Excellent One. He should carefully protect his body which is the abode of (securing) piety. Men cannot know that highest Viṣṇu without the body.

37-40. A brāhmaṇa, being restrained, should engage (himself) in acts of piety, worldly gains, and love of sensual enjoyments. He should not mentally remember (i.e. think of) worldly gains or sensual enjoyments without (thinking of) piety. Even though he is sinking due to (acts of) righteousness, he should not practise unrighteous acts. Piety is the revered lord, and the (only) resort for all creatures. He should do what is good to (other) beings. He should never think of doing an act of deceiving others. He should not censure Veda and deities, and should not stay with them (who censure Veda and deities). That controlled and pure man who would recite this chapter on piety, or would teach or read out (to others), is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Dont's for a Twice-born Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8. (A man) should not harm any creature. He should never tell a lie. He should not speak what is not beneficial or what is not agreeable. He should never be a thief (i.e. should never steal). A creature that takes away (even a blade of) grass, or vegetable, or clay or even water, goes to hell. (Even) if he is poor, he should not accept (anything) from a king or a śūdra or

from one who is fallen or from anyone else. A wise man should (always) avoid censured persons. He should not always be a suppliant; he should not implore the same person again. Doing this the suppliant takes away the life of the wicked one. He, especially an excellent twice-born, should not take away the wealth of deities; even in difficulties he should never snatch away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa. Poison is not called poison. The wealth of a brāhmaṇa is called poison. He should also carefully avoid (taking away) the wealth of deities. Prajāpati Manu has said that (taking) flowers, vegetables, water, wood, roots, fruits, grass which are not offered, is not stealing. A twice-born should take flowers in the act of worshipping deities. He should not always take them from one person only, and without his permission.

9-12. A wise man should openly take away grass, wood, fruits and flowers. This they say is (done for having) religious merit. Otherwise he would be fallen. O brāhmaṇas, a handful of sesamum-seeds, kidney-beans, barley etc. should be taken by those who are hungry while on journey, not otherwise for righteousness etc. This is the correctness of conduct. One should not practise a vow under the pretext of righteousness, after having committed a sin. A twice-born, covering his sins by means of a vow, and deceiving women and śūdras, is condemned after death and here (i.e. in this world) also by the teachers of the Veda. That vow which is fraudulently practised, goes to the demons.

13-21a. He who is not a brāhmaṇa ascetic, but goes about in the guise of a brāhmaṇa ascetic, would snatch the sin of that ascetic, and is born in an animal species. He who begs, has (illegitimate) intercourse with or company of or talks with (women), always falls. Therefore, he should carefully avoid this. He should not plot against deities and preceptors. Plotting against a preceptor is crores of crore times worse than plotting against gods. Scandal and atheism are a crore times worse than that. By means of cows, deities, brāhmaṇas, agriculture, service of a king, those families which are bereft of righteousness lose their status of (good) families. Families also lose their status of (good) families due to bad thoughts, omission of essential ceremonies, and by not studying the Veda, so also by offending

a brāhmaṇa. A family quickly perishes due to falsehood, adultery, eating what is prohibited, and practising what is not enjoined for the family. The family also quickly perishes due to giving (presents) to brāhmaṇas who are not learned, to śūdras and to those who are bereft of the course of conduct that is enjoined. A man should not stay in a village chosen by irreligious people or full of diseases. He should not live in the kingdom of śūdras, or in one that is crowded by heretics.

21b-25a. A twice-born should not live in any other country than the auspicious one between Himālaya and Vindhya and the eastern and the western seas. Or a twice-born should live where a black deer always moves naturally, or where auspicious and well-known rivers (flow), avoiding (the distance of) half a krośa from the bank of the river. Except at an auspicious place he should not stay, nor also near the village of śūdras. He should not stay with the fallen, cāṇḍālas, pulkasas, fools, the arrogant, and others taking abodes with (i.e. depending upon) their wives.

25b-27. These eleven are said to be the faults present in the mixture (of castes): (using) one (and the same) bed or seat, (sitting for taking food in the same) line, (eating from the same) pot, mixing (one another's) food, performing sacrifice for or teaching (low caste people), intercourse or taking food along with (the low caste people), studying together as the tenth, and conducting a sacrifice along with them. Sin would pass on to men even by remaining in their proximity.

28-30a. Therefore with all efforts he should avoid (such) mixture. (The sin of) mixture does not take place in the case of those who, (though) sitting in the same line, do not touch one another and have made a demarcation (between themselves) with ashes. A line is separated by (these) six: fire, ashes, water, by making a mark, by means of a door or a pillar.

30b-35. He should not enter into fruitless enmity, so also discussion, or should not entertain wickedness; he should never report about a cow grazing in someone else's field. He should not remain with a traducer; he should not use stinging words for anyone. A wise man should not tell another person about the sun's halo or the rainbow, the daily religious rite performed by another person, the moon or gold. He should not have hostility

with many and with his relatives also. He should not do to others what is unpleasant to himself. He should not tell about the date (*tithi*) of a fortnight (*pakṣa*); he should not condemn the stars. The best twice-born should not talk to a woman in her menses or a person who is impure. He should not stop what is being given to deities and preceptors (and elders) and brāhmaṇas. He should not praise himself and he should avoid censuring others.

36-42a. He should carefully avoid censuring the Vedas and the deities. O best sages, no expiation for him is seen in the sacred texts, who censures gods, sages or Vedas. The man who would censure a preceptor, a deity, the Veda, a garment, a pillow is roasted in Raurava (hell) for a hundred crores of kalpas. He should keep mum when censure is going on; he should not give any reply. Covering his ears, he should go (away from that place) and should not see him (who censures). A wise man should avoid (discussing) the secrets of others, and also censuring others. He should never enter into a discussion with his own people. The best twice-born should not talk about the sin of sinners or the absence of it. The fault would be equal to the fault due to (not telling) the truth. He would be guilty due to falsehood. The tears of men maligned kill the sons and beasts of the maligner.

42b-75. The wise have observed atonement for killing a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, or cohabiting with one's preceptor's wife; but there is no atonement for the maligner. He should not, without any (proper) ground, see the sun or the moon while rising or setting, or (reflected) in water, or touched (i.e. screened) by clouds, or (appearing) in the middle (of the sky), or screened, or reflected in a mirror etc. He should never see a naked woman or man, urine or excretion, (or a man and woman) united in copulation. A wise man, while impure, should not see the planets like the sun and the moon. With his hands etc. not washed after having eaten food, or covering himself with a veil he should not talk to another person. He should not have contact with a dead body, nor should he see the face of his angry teacher. He should not see his reflection in oil or water, and his wife when she is taking food. He should not see an elephant free from chains, nor an intoxicated one. He should not

eat with his wife, nor should he see her while she is eating, or sneezing, or yawning, or seated comfortably on a seat.* A wise man should not see his form (i.e. reflection) in water; and should never cross or stand by the auspicious or inauspicious. He should not offer advice, a dish of rice and peas mixed, milk or curds to a śūdra. A wise man should not give the remains of food, honey, ghee, and the hide of a black antelope and oblations. He should not also tell him a vow or rules of conduct. He should not be under the sway of anger, and should avoid hatred or passion. He should avoid greed, religious hypocrisy, wickedness, jealousy and censure, so also envy, pride, grief and infatuation. He should not inflict pain on anyone; but should beat his son or disciple. He should not serve inferior people, and should never have longing in his mind. He should not look down upon himself, and should carefully avoid low-spiritedness. A wise man should not disrespect a respectable person or himself through ignorance. He should not draw (lines) on the ground with his nails, nor should he sleep on (bare) ground. He should not talk about a river when in rivers, nor about mountains when he is (i.e. has climbed) on them. He should not abandon his co-traveller in an abode or at meals. He should not, being naked, plunge into water; so also he should not cross fire. He should not besmear his body with oil left after anointing his head. He should not play with serpentine weapons; he should not touch the apertures of, or the hair on the private parts of his body. He should not go with a person who is not respectable. He should not resort to wantonness in respect of his hands, feet, speech or eyes, also of the organs of generation or belly. He should not make a sound with the parts of his body or nails; he should not drink water from the cavity (made by joining his hands). He should never strike water with his feet or hands. He should not destroy roots and fruits with bricks. He should not learn the language of mleccchas; he should not drag the foot-stool. A wise man should not suddenly, and without any cause, split, crack, clip or write (with) nails or rub them together. He should not eat food (by keeping it) on his lap; he should not make any movement without any cause. He should not dance or sing or play upon musical instruments. He should not scratch his head with his hands joined. He should not please the deities with popular hymns or of the lord of speech (i.e. Bṛhaspati).

He should not play with dice; he should not run; he should not urinate or excrete in water. He should not sleep without washing his hands etc. after having taken food; he should not always bathe naked. He should not recite while going, nor should he touch his own head. He should not cut off his nails and hair with his teeth; he should not wake up a sleeping person. He should not resort to the morning sunshine; he should avoid the smoke of a dead body (being burnt). He should not sleep in a deserted house; he should not take his own shoes. He should not spit without any cause; he should not cross a river with his arms (i.e. by swimming). He should not wash his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet in fire, nor should he wash in a bell-metal (vessel). He should not open wide (his eyes before) a deity, brāhmaṇas, or a cow, or wind, fire, a king or the sun and the moon. While impure, he should never sleep, or drink, or study, or bathe, or take food or go out. He should always avoid sleeping, studying, bathing, smearing the body with perfumes, taking food or walking at both the twilights or at midday. A twice-born who has not washed his hands etc. after taking food should not touch with his hand a cow or a brāhmaṇa or fire; should not move his feet or should not touch the image of a deity. While impure, he should not touch fire, should not wait upon the deities or communicate with sages. He should not plunge into very deep water; he should not run without a cause. He should not drink water raising (the water pot) with his left hand or by (touching the water pot) with his mouth.

76-94. He should not cross (water) without bathing in it; he should not emit his semen into water. He should not cross an impure (object), an uncovered (object), a worthy object, blood, poisons, or a stream. He should not copulate in water. He should not cut the grove round a sanctuary; he should not spit into water. He should never stand on bones, potsherds, hair, thorns, chaff of grain, charcoal, or dry cow-dung. A wise man should not cross fire; he should never put it down. A wise man should not stir it with his foot or blow it with a winnowing basket. He should not climb up a tree, or being impure, think about (it). He should not throw fire into (another) fire, and should not put it

out with water. He should report the death of his friend to others. He should not use for selling (i.e. should not sell) what is not fit to be sold or what is spurious. A wise man, while impure, should not cause to burn brightly fire with the breath. He should not snatch the boundary line at an auspicious place, or a place of water. He should never break an appointment with a person that has come to him. He should not make beasts, tigers or birds fight among themselves. He should not trouble others by means of water, wind or heat. Causing (the preceptor) to do good things (for him), he should not later deceive his preceptor. For protection he should close tightly the doors of his house in the morning and evening. He should avoid using outside flowers, perfumes, taking food with his wife, or entry after fighting and disputing. A wise brāhmaṇa should not stand while eating, or talk or laugh. He should not touch his (sacred) fire with his own hand; he should not remain in water for a long time. He should not blow into fire with the wings (of a bird), nor with a winnowing basket or hand. He should kindle fire with the mouth. Fire was produced from the mouth. A wise man should not speak to another man's wife, nor should act as a priest at the sacrifice of him who does not deserve to perform it. A twice-born should not move alone, (but) should avoid a crowd. Never should he go to a temple by not turning to the right. He should not squeeze his garments, nor should he sleep in a temple. He should not travel all alone or with unrighteous persons, or with persons suffering from diseases or, with śūdras or with a fallen person, or without shoes, so also without (taking) water (with him). On the road, a twice-born should never cross an animal or funeral pyre. He should not censure meditating saints, siddhas, so also those who practise vows and ascetics. A wise man should not deliberately cross the shadow of a temple, (the images of) deities, sacrificers, brāhmaṇas and also of a cow. He should not allow his own shadow to be crossed by the fallen etc. and the diseased. He should never stand on the ashes of charcoal or hair etc. He should avoid the dust from a broom or the water for bath, for washing garments or from an earthen pot. A twice-born should not eat prohibited eatables and should not drink prohibited drinks.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

*Do's and Don't's in Eating**Vyāsa said:*

1-3. A twice-born should not eat the food of a śūdra through infatuation or longing. He who eats it when it is not a time of distress, is reborn as a śūdra. That twice-born who eats the condemned food of a śūdra for six months, becomes a śūdra even when alive, and after death is born as a dog. O best sages, a man who dies with the food of a brāhmaṇa, or a kṣatriya or a vaiśya or a śūdra in his belly, would get his birth (i.e. would be born as a brāhmaṇa etc.).

4-15. He should avoid the six (kinds of) food: the food of a king, the food of a dancer, the food of a eunuch, the food of shoe-makers, the food prepared for a number of persons in common, the food of a courtesan. He should avoid the food of an oilman, a washerman, a thief, a distiller, so also the food of a singer, a blacksmith, and food (impure due to) a dead person. (He should avoid) the food of a potter or a painter, and of a usurer, or a fallen person, so also of the son of a remarried widow, of the bearer of an umbrella, so also of one who is cursed, so also of a goldsmith, an actor, a hunter, a barren woman and of one who is afflicted; so also (he should avoid) the food of a physician, an unchaste woman and a staff-bearer. (He should avoid) the food of a thief, an atheist, of one who censures deities, of a seller of water, and especially of a cāṇḍāla. (He should avoid) the food of him who is subdued by his wife, or of him whose (wife's) paramour lives in his house; so also (the food) of him who is abandoned, who is a miser, so also of him who eats the remains of the food (eaten by others). (He should avoid) the food of a sinner, the food prepared for a number of people living together, and also the food of a professional soldier. (He should avoid) the food of a frightened person, of a person who is weeping, and food which is inferior and wasted. (He should avoid) the food of him who hates brāhmaṇas (or the Vedas), who takes delight in (committing) sins, so also the food prepared for a śrāddha ceremony, or (for a rite in honour) of the dead, or food that is prepared without any need, so also food (that is impure)

due to a corpse or the food of an afflicted person. (He should avoid) the food of women having no children, so also of an ungrateful man; (he should) especially (avoid) the food of an artisan and also of a dealer in arms. (He should avoid) the food of him who is addicted to liquor, a bell-ringer, so also of physicians; the food of the offspring of a learned man, so also that of the younger brother who has married before his elder brother. (He should) especially (avoid) the food of a widow who is remarried, so also of the husband of a woman who is married twice. (He should avoid) the food that is despised, rejected and (that is prepared) through anger or doubt. He should not even eat his preceptor's food which is not purified. All the wicked deeds of a man are settled in his food.

16-19a. He who eats the food of him (i.e. of a man), eats his sin. A friend who is a half-caste man, or of a low family, a cowherd, a porter, a barber, should be given food among (i.e. along with) śūdras; so also the person who declares himself. A bard, a potter, a peasant should be fed with the śūdras by a wise man noticing (their) little merit. Rice boiled in milk, so also (food) cooked in oil, curds (or butter-milk), barley-meal, oil-cakes, and oil should be accepted by the twice-born from śūdras.

19b-24. (But) he should avoid egg-plant, stalks of lotuses, safflower, gold or silver, onion, garlic, sour gruel, a thick fluid substance; so also chatraka (a kind of mushroom), vidvarāha, greasy milk of a cow during the first seven days of calving, vilaya (a particular product of milk) and mushrooms. By eating the small red variety of garlic, blossoms of kiṁśuka, a gourd, so also udumbara, bottle-gourd, a twice-born becomes fallen. He should also avoid kṛsara, cakes of wheat flour, and milky cakes, flesh (of a beast) not killed at a sacrifice, so also food prepared for deities and oblations, sour gruel, citron fruit, so also fish not killed at a rite; so also he should carefully avoid kadamba-flowers, wood-apple, figs; so also oil-cakes with oil taken out, and the grains offered to gods.

25-29a. At night he should carefully avoid curds with sesamum. He should not eat butter-milk with milk; he should not use prohibited food. He should avoid food impaired by worms, by thoughts, and having contact with earth; he should always avoid food spoiled by worms and insects and (prepared) by a

friend with suffering. He should avoid food smelt by a dog, recooked food and food seen by a cāṇḍāla; so also smelt by a woman in her menses, by the fallen ones or by a cow. He should always avoid the food that is not (properly) collected, stale and scattered; so also food that is touched by crows and cocks and containing worms; so also the food that is smelt even by human beings and touched by a leper.

29b-31a. He should not accept food given by a woman during the menses, an unchaste or a diseased woman, or by one who has put on a dirty garment. He should also avoid (using) another person's garment. Manu has said that the milk of a cow with no calf or a she-goat with a kid not more than ten days old, or of a sheep or a cow who has just taken the bull is not fit for drinking.

31b-46. He should not eat (the flesh of) a crane, a swan, a gallinule, a sparrow, a parrot, so also an osprey, a partridge, a goose, a cuckoo, crows, wagtails, a hawk, a vulture, so also an owl, a ruddy goose, a vulture (or a cock), a pigeon, a dove, a tiṭṭibha bird, a domestic cock, a lion, a tiger, a cat, a dog, a pig, a fox, a monkey and a donkey. He should not eat (the flesh of) serpents, deer, peacocks, aquatic animals, land-going animals. This is a settled rule. O best ones, Prajāpati Manu has said that these animals with five claws may be always eaten: alligator, tortoise, hare, rhinoceros, porcupine. He may also eat fish with scales, and the flesh of (the deer called) ruru after having presented them to deities and brāhmaṇas, and not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, so also (the flesh of) a peacock, a partridge, a pigeon, a cātaka, rhinoceros, a crane, a swan. Thus said Prajāpati (Manu). These fish, viz. (the glittering fish) śapharī, simhatuṇḍa, paṭhīna and rohita are directed as fit to be eaten. With a desire (to retain the status) as a twice-born he should eat the flesh of these after it is sprinkled over; even if he is about to lose his life he should duly use it. He should not at all eat flesh. He who eats what remains, is not smeared (with sin). If he is weak, he should eat flesh as medicine, or by an order or for sacrificial purposes. He, who would give up flesh when invited at a śrāddha or a rite in honour of a deity, goes to (i.e. lives) in hell for as many years as the number of hair of the beast. The settled (rule) is that the twice-born should not give or drink or

touch or see liquor. Therefore with all efforts he should always avoid liquor. Having drunk it he falls from his rites and would be unfit to be talked to. As long as a twice-born eats and drinks what is prohibited for eating or drinking and does not cast them down, he does not become entitled (to respect etc.). Therefore, a twice-born should, with effort, always avoid articles prohibited for eating and drinking. If he does (persist in eating or drinking) them, he goes to Raurava (hell).

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Acts of Charity Prescribed for a Householder

Vyāsa said :

1. I shall now explain to you the excellent merit of giving gifts, which was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages—the teachers of the Vedas.

2-30. The giving of proper objects with faith to a worthy recipient is designated as 'dāna' and gives the fruit of enjoyment and liberation. I take that to be 'datta' which is given with great faith to deserving persons. The rest he preserves for someone else. Dāna (giving gifts) is said to be of three kinds: obligatory, occasional, and optional. The fourth called vimala (i.e. pure) is said to be the best of all gifts. That gift which is everyday given to a brāhmaṇa who does not oblige and without desiring its fruit is said to be obligatory. That gift which is given into the hands of the learned for the appeasement of sin is said to be the excellent gift called 'occasional'. The sages who have thought about religious merit have called that gift which is given (for getting) a child, success, glory, happiness, as 'optional'. That gift which is given to those who know Vedas, to please the lord, and with a mind full of piety is pure and auspicious. Having secured a worthy recipient, he should, according to his capacity, resort to the merit due to gift. That worthy recipient whom he waits upon, protects him all round. That which is surplus in the food or garments of the family, should be given. If given otherwise, it

does not give the fruit of the gift. He should devoutly give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa, one born in a noble family, one who is modest, one who is practising a vow, and one who is poor. He who devoutly gives land to a brāhmaṇa who has maintained the sacred fire, goes to the highest place, going where he does not grieve. He who gives land with sugarcane (i.e. land where sugarcane is growing), so also land with wheat (growing in it), to (a brāhmaṇa) learned in the Vedas, is not reborn. He who gives (a piece of) land, even of the measure of a cow's hide, to a poor brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins. Here (i.e. in this world) there is no greater gift than the gift of land. Giving food is equal to that, and gift of knowledge (i.e. teaching) is superior to that. He who duly gives knowledge to a calm, pure, religious brāhmaṇa is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. A man should every-day give with devotion gold to a brahmacārī 'religious student'. Being freed from all sins, he would obtain the position of Brahman. By giving food to a householder a man obtains (its) fruit. Food alone should be given to him. By giving it the giver obtains the highest position. Observing a fast with his mind controlled, and being calm and pure, he should honour seven or five brāhmaṇas with black sesamum and especially with honey on the full moon day of Vaiśākha (saying), 'May Dharmarāja be pleased'; from the time he has this in mind, all the sin committed during his life time perishes in a moment. He who, having put sesamum seeds or gold, or honey or ghee on a hide of a black antelope, gives them to a brāhmaṇa, overcomes all sin. He who gives food with ghee, a jar with water to brāhmaṇas, especially on the full moon day of Vaiśākha, after having assigned it to Dharmarāja is freed from fear. He who pleases seven or five brāhmaṇas with water pots with gold and sesamum seeds, removes (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Being calm and fasting, wearing a white garment, a twice-born who gives on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Māgha after offering sesamum seeds into fire, sesamum seeds only, to brāhmaṇas, overcomes all the sin that he has committed from his birth. When the new moon day arrives, he should give whatever little (he can) to a poor brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, saying, 'May the ancient god Hṛṣīkeśa Viṣṇu be pleased.' That moment only his sin committed during the past seven births, perishes. He who would,

on the fourteenth day of the dark half, propitiate the trident-holder god (i.e. Śiva) through a brāhmaṇa, would not be re-born. Especially on the eighth day of the dark half, he having bathed and honoured a religious brāhmaṇa should, after washing his feet etc. duly give him his own wealth saying, 'May Śiva be pleased with me.'

31-43. Being freed from all sins, he obtains the highest position. Devoted twice-borns should worship Viṣṇu on the fourteenth day, or especially on the eighth day of the dark half, so also on the new moon day. He who observes a fast on the eleventh day, and would worship Viṣṇu through a brāhmaṇa, would go to the highest position. This day, the twelfth of the bright half, is called Vaiṣṇavī (i.e. sacred to Viṣṇu). On that day (a man) should carefully propitiate Viṣṇu. Whatever is given to a pure brāhmaṇa by dedicating it to lord Viṣṇu only, is said to have inexhaustible fruit. One who desires to propitiate a particular deity should honour brāhmaṇas. By that he would please that deity. Deities always dwell in the bodies of brāhmaṇas. Sometimes, when brāhmaṇas are not available, the deities are worshipped in their images etc. Desiring a fruit from them he should carefully worship the deities in images or especially in (i.e. represented by) brāhmaṇas everyday. He who desires power, should always worship Indra. He who longs for divine glory and knowledge, should worship Brahmā. He who desires good health (should worship) the Sun; he who longs for wealth, should worship Fire. He who desires success in undertakings, should worship Vināyaka. He who desires pleasures, should worship the Moon; he who longs for strength should worship the Wind. He who desires freedom from the worldly existence should carefully worship Viṣṇu. He who desires deep, abstract meditation, liberation and also divine knowledge, should carefully worship Śiva, the lord of gods. Those who desire great satisfaction worship Śiva and Viṣṇu. Giving water gives greater satisfaction than that.

44-55a. He who gives oil, gets desired progeny; the giver of a lamp gets excellent eye. The giver of land gets everything. One who gives gold gets long life. He who gives a house, obtains excellent houses; he who gives silver, gets excellent beauty. He, who gives a garment, lives in the same world as the Moon. The

giver of a horse gets an excellent vehicle. The giver of food gets the wealth desired by him; the giver of a cow obtains the world of Brahmā. The giver of a vehicle or a bed obtains a wife. He who grants fearlessness, obtains affluence. The giver of grains gets eternal happiness; he who gives (i.e. teaches) sacred text, reaches eternal Brahman. A man should give according to his capacity grains also to brāhmaṇas endowed with Vedic knowledge. After death he gets (i.e. goes to) heaven. By giving food to cows he is freed from all sins. By giving fuel a man has his fire kindled. He should always give fruits, roots, drinks and vegetables to brāhmaṇas. He should always be joyful. He who gives medicine, oil, food to a sick person for curing the disease, becomes free from diseases and happy and lives long. A man who gives an umbrella and sandals crosses the path that is sharp like a razor's edge leading to the hell Asipatravana and severe heat. He should give that, desiring that only eternally, to a virtuous person, which is most desired in the world and which is expected in the house. That which is given during the transition of one solstice to another, of the equinoctial point, at the time of the lunar or solar eclipses, or on a Saṁkrānti day etc., becomes inexhaustible. By giving (gifts) at sacred places like Prayāga, or at auspicious abodes, or at (the bank of) rivers and streams, he obtains inexhaustible (fruit).

55b-67. For beings there is no greater religious merit here than giving in charity. Therefore the twice-born should give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa. In the same way he who desires his well-being, he who desires liberation, should give (gifts) to brāhmaṇas for (going to) heaven or for the destruction of his sins. He who, of an irreligious nature, would stop through folly, (gifts) being presented to brāhmaṇas, fire or gods, would go to the womb of an animal. A king should drive him, after forfeiting all his wealth, out of his country, who, having earned wealth, would not honour brāhmaṇas and gods. That brāhmaṇa who, at the time of famine, does not give food etc. to twice-born ones who are dying, stands condemned. (Brāhmaṇas) should not accept (gifts) from him and should not stay with him. The king should find out (facts about) him and drive him out of his country. He who later gives his wealth, the means of religious merit, to good people, is a greater sinner than those (mentioned) earlier, and

such a man is roasted in hell. O best brāhmaṇas, a man should give gifts to those brāhmaṇas who study the Vedas, are learned, have their senses controlled, are endowed with truthfulness and restraint. A man should feed a learned, religious brāhmaṇa, even though he has eaten (his meal), but not a fool, who does not behave properly (though he) has starved for ten days. He who, ignoring a learned brāhmaṇa who has approached him, gives (gifts to someone else), becomes sinful due to that act and burns his family to the seventh (descendant). If there is a brāhmaṇa who is superior in respect of good character or learning, he should exert to give him by bypassing (the brāhmaṇa that is) nearby. He who would accept what is honoured and would give just what is honoured—both these go to heaven; but (if the reverse (is done) they go to hell.

68-78. A man knowing Dharma, should not give even water to an atheist, a sceptic, so also to all heretics and to one who does not know the Vedas. If a man who is not learned, would accept silver, gold, a cow, a horse, land, sesamum seeds, he is reduced to ashes like wood. An excellent brāhmaṇa should desire to get wealth from praiseworthy brāhmaṇas, even from kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, but never from śūdras. Seeking (i.e. he should seek) the contraction of his livelihood, (but) he should not long for enhancing his wealth. Attached to greed for wealth, he is deprived of his brāhmaṇahood. He would not obtain that position by studying all the Vedas and by fully accomplishing sacrifices, which he would obtain through contentment. He should not have a liking for accepting (gifts); he should not collect (a gift) from a śūdra. A brāhmaṇa who takes more (than necessary for) his maintenance, goes the downward path. He who is not contented, does not become fit for heaven. He afflicts people; he is like a thief. Desiring to emancipate his preceptor and servants he should gratify deities and guests, and should accept gifts from all (sources), but should never gratify himself. A householder who has thus controlled himself, and honours deities and guests, and who lives with a controlled mind, goes to that highest position. Entrusting his wife to his sons and going to the forest, the wise one, being neutral and composed should always move all alone. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you this way of life of the householders. Knowing it one should follow it and make the

twice-born ones follow it. In this way he should, following the householder's way, continuously worship the only, eternal lord. Going beyond all births as creatures, he goes to the original cause and does not get another birth.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Code of Conduct for an Anchorite

Vyāsa said :

1-4. Having thus remained in the householder's stage during the second part of his life, he should, with his wife and (the sacred) fire, resort to the third stage of life. Or, having entrusted his wife to his sons, he should go to a forest after seeing the child of his child (i.e. the grandchild) and when his body has become infirm. He, observing a vow and being calm, should practise penance after having gone to a forest in the forenoon (of a day) in the bright half of a month in the auspicious uttarāyaṇa (i.e. the summer solstice). He should everyday fetch for his food pure roots and fruits. With that which is his food, he should please the manes and deities.

5-15. He should everyday please the guests, and after bath he should worship gods. Being calm and getting eight morsels of food from his house, he should eat them. He should have matted hair and should not cut off his nails and hair. He should always recite sacred texts and refrain from talking about anything else. He should maintain the sacred fire and perform the five sacrifices with the various things that are produced (there) or with vegetables or roots or fruits; he should be clothed in bark and being pure should bathe thrice (a day). He should be compassionate towards all beings and should avoid accepting (gifts). A twice-born should always perform the new moon and full moon sacrifices. He should perform the seasonal sacrifice and also offer an oblation of the first fruits at the end of the rainy season and perform the cāturmāsya sacrifices (performed every four months, i.e. at the beginning of Kārtika, Phālguna

and Āṣāḍha). In the summer solstice and the winter solstice he should, in the proper order, perform sacrifices with products of the spring and the autumn seasons brought by himself, and should separately offer puroḍāśas and carūs. Having offered more auspicious oblations to deities and manes, he should eat the remaining, saline in taste and prepared by himself. He should avoid liquor and flesh and mushrooms growing on the ground. He should not eat fragrant or young grass, no fruits of śleṣmātaka, no products of ploughed land nor that which is abandoned by others. Even when he is sick he should not eat flowers and fruits growing in villages. He should always wait upon fire with rites as laid down in the Vedas. He should not bear malice against any being; he should be free from the pairs of opposites; he should be fearless. He should not eat anything at night, and should engage himself in meditation at night.

16-26a. He should control his senses, curb his anger and should think over the true nature of Brahman. He should always observe celibacy and should not even resort to (i.e. cohabit with) his wife. That twice-born, who, after having gone to the forest copulates at his will with his wife, has his vow lost, and he has to atone for it. The foetus (i.e. the child) that is born there (i.e. due to this copulation) should not be touched by twice-borns. He is not entitled to (the study of) the Vedas; the same is (the rule applicable to the members born) in his family. Intent on muttering the Gāyatrī-hymn, he should always sleep on the (bare) ground. He should protect all creatures, and should always give gifts to the good. He should avoid censure, telling lies, sleep, idleness. He should maintain one (sacred) fire; should be without an abode; and should resort to the ground that is sprinkled with water. Being restrained, he should move with animals and live with them only. Being calm, he should sleep on a stone or sand. He should cleanse (i.e. finish his stock) instantly or within a month, or should have the stock lasting for six months or for a year. Having collected food according to his capacity by day, he should eat it at night. He should eat every fourth time or eighth time, or should avoid (food) according to the cāndrāyaṇa vow in the bright and the dark fortnights. He should eat boiled gruel of barley once in every fortnight. Or he should, conforming to the creed of an anchorite,

subsist on the natural flowers, roots and fruits which are withered. He should roam about on the ground or stand on the fore-parts of his feet for a day.

26b-36. He should divert himself with (various) places and seats, and should never give up calmness. He should observe the vow of the five fires¹ in summer; should expose himself to the rain in rainy season; should put on wet clothes in winter. He should gradually increase his penance. He should bathe three times a day and should gratify his manes and deities. He should stand on one leg only, or should always drink the sun's ray. Or he should move in the smoke of the five fires, or should move in the heat or drink Soma. In the bright half he should drink milk and in dark half cow-dung. Or he should eat withered leaves or should live by bodily mortification. He should always engage himself in practising abstract meditation, or should always recite the Rudra (-hymn). He should study the Atharvaśiras, and should be intent on studying the Upaniṣads. He should carefully observe the restraints and vows. He should use the hide of a black antelope; should have an upper garment and a white sacred thread. Having put on the fires, he should be intent on meditating on his soul. An ascetic, not keeping the fire, having no abode, should be intent on (getting) salvation. Moving among ascetic twice-borns or among householders or other twice-borns moving in the forest, he should beg alms. Or getting it from the village, he should, living in the forest, eat eight morsels. He should eat from a leaf-vessel or from his hand or from a piece (of a pot etc.). He should mutter various Upaniṣadic hymns for self-realization; he should mutter particular incantations, Gāyatrī-hymn and Rudrādhyāya also. He should set out on the great journey (death) and stop taking food. Or following the religious commandment of offering himself to Brahman, he should enter fire.

1. Pāñcatapas—An ascetic who in summer practises penance sitting in the middle of four fires with the sun burning right over his head.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Rules of Conduct for a Sannyāsi

Vyāsa said:

1. Having thus lived in the stage of an anchorite for the third part of his life, he should gradually pass into the fourth stage of life in renunciation.

2-5. Having established the fires in the soul a twice-born would be a recluse. When he, engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, calm, intent on getting the knowledge of Brahman, has detachment in his mind for all objects, then (only) he should think of renouncing (the world). If reverse is the case, then he would fall. Having accomplished the Prājāpatya sacrifice (by giving away his own property) and the fire-sacrifice, he, being restrained, having put on a white or red garment should resort to the stage of the ascetic. Some are ascetics (following the path) of knowledge; some are ascetics (engaged in the study) of the Vedas; others are ascetics (following the path) of action. (Thus ascetics are said to be of three kinds.)

6-20a. He, who is free from everything, who is free from the pairs (like pleasure and pain), who is fearless and who is well-settled in himself is called *jñāna-sannyāsi*. He, who would be desireless and possessionless and would study the Vedas only, and desires salvation and has his senses controlled is called *Veda-sannyāsi*. The twice-born who having had fire in his possession, is intent on dedicating himself to Brahman and on performing great sacrifices, should be known as *karma-sannyāsi*. Of these three, the *jñāna-sannyāsi* is regarded as superior. For him, the wise one, there is nothing to be done nor does he have any mark. Free from the feeling of mine-ness, being fearless, calm, free from the pairs, subsisting on leaves, wearing an old strip to cover his private parts, or remaining naked he is engaged in meditation. He, a celibate, with his diet controlled, should fetch his food from the village. Being indifferent and desireless he should remain taking delight in the supreme spirit. He should move in this world for happiness with the help of his own soul (i.e. all alone). He should not desire death, nor should he desire life. He should wait for

death only as a servant waits for (his master's order). He should not study; should not engage himself (in any pursuit); should never listen (to anything). A meditating saint, who thus looks upon knowledge as the highest thing is fit for absorption into Brahman. The wise one should have one garment (only) or a small strip to cover (his private parts); should be clean-shaven or should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; should be tridaṇḍī and should have no possession; (or) should put on a red garment and always engage himself in deep meditation. He should live near a village, at the root of a tree or in a temple. He should be equal to his enemy or friend, so also (look equally upon) respect and insult. He should always subsist by begging, and should never eat from one place. For an ascetic who, through delusion or for some other reason, eats from one place only, no explanation is seen in the religious texts. He should be detached from love or hatred; should look equally upon a clod or stone or gold; should abstain from harming creatures, should observe the vow of silence and should be fully desireless. He should plant his foot kept pure by sight (i.e. watching that no impurity is contracted); should drink after it is filtered through a cloth; he should talk words that are purified by truth; and should behave in a way which is approved by his conscience.

20b-27a. Except in the rainy season a mendicant should not stay at one place (for a long time). Bathing everyday and being pure and virtuous, having a water-pot in his hand, he should always be engrossed in celibacy and be interested in living in a forest. If he is engaged in (reading) scriptures (leading to) salvation, is invested with the sacred thread, has his senses controlled, if he is free from religious hypocrisy and pride, and is free from censuring others and from wickedness, is endowed with the quality of the knowledge of the soul, he would obtain salvation. He should constantly meditate on the eternal deity called 'Om'. After having bathed and sipped water according to the proper rite and being pure, he, invested with the sacred thread, with his mind tranquil, with kuśas in his hand, with his red garment washed, with the hair (on his body) covered with ashes, should mutter hymns about the principal sacrifice or the presiding deity or the highest soul or whatever is said in the

Upaniṣads. Or the restrained ascetic, being a celibate, should live among his sons. He should everyday study the Vedas, (then) he goes to the highest position.

27b-31. These are his special vows : harmlessness, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, austerities, forgiveness, kindness, and contentment; or he should, having faith in the Upaniṣadic knowledge and being calm, and having bathed, should perform the five sacrifices everyday; and desiring alms, and being tranquil, should, from time to time, mutter the sacrificial hymns. He should everyday do sacred study, and should mutter the Gāyatrī-hymn at both the twilights. He should constantly meditate upon the absolute lord. He should always avoid food from one place, so also lust, wrath and possessions; he should wear one garment, or two garments; he should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; he should be invested with a sacred thread; the wise man having the tridaṇḍa in his hand goes to that highest Brahman.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Restraints for a Sannyāsi

Vyāsa said:

1-15. Thus the livelihood of the sages who have controlled themselves and are in the (fourth) stage of life is said to be (had) by means of begging or fruits and roots. He should beg for one time only; he should not be attached to expansion (of begging). An ascetic attached to begging, becomes also attached to objects of senses. He should beg from seven houses. He should not move again (for alms) if he does not get it (during the first round). An ascetic should wait (for alms at a door) with his face hung down for the time required for milking a cow. Saying, 'Alms (please)', he, pure and controlled in speech, should remain silent. The man, having washed his hands and feet and sipped water according to proper rite, and having presented the food to the sun, facing the east, should eat it. Having offered oblations to

the five vital airs, he, being calm, should eat eight morsels. Having sipped water, he should meditate upon the highest lord, Brahma. Manu Prajāpati has mentioned four (kinds of) pots for an ascetic: pumpkin gourd, wooden, made of clay and of bamboo. Before the fall of night, at midnight, during the last part of the night, he should everyday meditate upon the lord with special hymns at the twilights, after bringing to the lotus of his heart the lord called Viśva, the source of everything, the soul of all creatures dwelling beyond the darkness, the prop of all, the unmanifest, the joy, the immutable light, the one beyond Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the ether, fire and the auspicious one, that essence of all beings, the god of the form of Brahman. At the end of Omkāra, and having offered himself into the highest soul, he should meditate upon the lord, the ruler, living in the midst of the sky. He, meditating upon the ancient Puruṣa Viṣṇu, the cause of all objects and the only receptacle of joy, would be free from bondage. Or he should meditate in the heart, (on) the primal nature, the only cause of all beings, the abode of the illusion of the world, the life of all beings, where the world merges. The subtle joy of Brahman which those desiring salvation obtain, in that is placed Brahman—absolute and having knowledge as its characteristic. Having thought over the endless, true lord he should remain controlled in speech.

16-28a. This is said to be the most secret knowledge for the ascetics. He who always remains in this obtains the contemplation of the Supreme Spirit. Therefore, he should always be intent upon (securing) knowledge, should be greatly devoted to metaphysical knowledge, should study the Brahmanic knowledge, by which he becomes free from bondage. Regarding his being separate from all (else), he should meditate upon the absolute joy, the immutable one and the knowledge which is beyond that. Beyond that, from whom the beings originate, and knowing whom a man is not born here (i.e. in this world), stands one, the lord, the ruler. The man's entering him is eternal, auspicious and unchanging. He that is away from this is the lord, the great god. For the violation of each of the vows laid down for the ascetics and other vows an expiation is enjoined. A man having through lust, gone to (i.e. cohabited with) a woman, should being

calm and pure practise the expiation called Kṛcchra-sāntapana,¹ along with the restraining of his breath. Then, with his mind controlled, the ascetic should practise bodily mortification; and then having again come back to the hermitage, he should behave carefully. Falsehood that is not against Dharma, is not harmful—so say the wise. Yet such a horrible attachment should not be indulged in. An ascetic desiring religious merit, should observe fast for a night, and practise the restraint of breath a hundred times after having told a lie. Even if he is in a great calamity he should not steal (a thing) from others. The Smṛiti says that there is no worse sin than stealing. Doing harm to others, extreme avidity, solicitation destroy the knowledge of the soul. That which is (called) wealth, is the outward life. He, whose wealth a man snatches, takes away his life.

28b-40. The ascetic of a wicked mind, violating his (usual) mode of life, and fallen from his vow, being again depressed, should behave carefully. If an ascetic would cause harm accidentally, he should perform the expiation (called) Atikṛcchra² or Cāndrāyaṇa³. If through the weakness of his senses, he emits (semen) on seeing a woman, he should have the sixteen kinds of restraints of breath. The wise go through the restraint of breath a hundred times for three nights if there is an emission by day. The expiation called Prājāpatya⁴ is enjoined for taking food from one (house only), (eating) honey and flesh at the first śrāddha and on actually cognizing salt (*pratyakṣalavaṇaḥ*). All the sin of him who is always given to meditation, perishes. Therefore, a man should meditate upon Viṣṇu and be engaged in meditating upon him. He the great god should be known—that

1. Kṛcchra-sāntapana : Drinking the mixture of cow's urine, cowdung, milk, curd, ghee, water (flowing) from kuśa, and fasting the next day. (See Manu. 11.212)

2. Atikṛcchra : Eating one morsel for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and eating whatever is obtained without begging for three days, and fasting for the remaining three days. (See Manu. 11.213)

3. Cāndrāyaṇa : Bathing thrice a day, reducing one morsel on each day of the dark fortnight, and increasing one morsel on each day of the bright fortnight. (See Manu. 11.217)

4. Prājāpatya : Eating for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and three days without begging. (See Manu. 11.211)

is the highest light of Brahman, that has entered the indestructible and the immutable, and that is the inner soul, the highest Brahman. That alone is the indestructible, unchangeable, eternal, highest position. So he is worshipped and is called Mahādeva, in his abode called knowledge, the highest principle due to his contact with the soul. He does not recognize any other god than Mahādeva. He, who follows him—the soul—goes to the highest position. Those who regard themselves as different from the lord, do not realize that absolute highest Brahman, the indestructible principle. That god is Mahādeva. Knowing this, he is not bound. Therefore, an ascetic, with his mind restrained, engaged in (obtaining) knowledge and deep meditation, calm, and devoted to Mahādeva, should strive.

41-43. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you the auspicious stage (i.e. the way of life) of the ascetics, which was formerly told by the lord, the sage, viz. the Grandsire. A man should not give this auspicious knowledge about the way of life of ascetics, told by the Self-born one, to him who is not his son, or disciple or a meditating sage. Thus is made the statement about the restraints of an ascetic, which would be the only cause of the joy of the best of gods. Those whose minds are set upon (the lord) are neither born nor do they perish.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Devotion to Viṣṇu the Best Way to Salvation

Sūta said:

1-2a. Thus Vyāsa of immeasurable lustre spoke to the brāhmaṇas. Having said this much, having cheered up all the sages, the revered Vyāsa, the son of Satyavatī, went as he had come.

2b-8a. I have told you the rules about the castes and the stages of life. Having done this only, a man becomes dear to Viṣṇu, not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the

secret about it. Listen. O brāhmaṇas, the duties regarding castes and stages that were told now, are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the devotion to Viṣṇu in this world. In Kaliyuga only devotion to Hari is to be achieved. A man has to practise the duties in the other yuga. That religious man who keeping god Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, Hṛṣīkeśa, invoked by many, the ancient one, the great and the tranquil one, in his heart worships him, has conquered (all) the three worlds. A brāhmaṇa, having drunk the nectar of the devotion to Viṣṇu, has overcome the bite of the serpent of Kali-age, the blemish, the Kālakūṭa (poison).

8b-13a. What is the use of muttering (the names of other deities) if men (just) utter the name of Viṣṇu? What is the use of (holy) baths for him who has held the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet on his head? What is the use of a sacrifice for him who has held the lotus-like feet of Hari in (i.e. to) his heart? What is the use of giving (gifts) for him, if he has narrated the deeds of Viṣṇu in an assembly? He who, having heard about the multitudes of Viṣṇu's virtues, would again and again be delighted, gets the same state as he whose mind is fixed on Kṛṣṇa and is delighted through profound meditation. Those that bring in obstacles in it are said to be talking heretic and fraudulent things; the women who are in their company also obstruct devotion to Viṣṇu. The command given by the eyes of women cannot be overruled even by gods. He who has overcome it, is called Viṣṇu's devotee in the world.

13b-20. Even sages longing for the acts of women, become mad. O brāhmaṇas, where can there be devotion for Viṣṇu for those who are fond of women? O brāhmaṇas, they are demoneses moving in the guise of beautiful women; for they constantly eat up the minds of men. As long as there is no movement of the fickle eyes of a woman an art or science is effective, knowledge proceeds, the intellect grasping all sacred texts is very pure, muttering is (possible), resorting to sacred places is done, the preceptor is served, there is a desire to cross (the mundane existence), awakening takes place, discrimination is possible, there is a liking for the company of the good, there is a desire for (listening to) the Purāṇas. (Otherwise) O brāhmaṇas, a man would fall; and all dharmas would disappear. In the case of those who are favoured

with a little (portion) of the honey of the lotuses in the form of Viṣṇu's feet, the casting of the fickle glances of women is not powerful. Those, O brāhmaṇas, who have birth after birth served Viṣṇu, have given gift to brāhmaṇas, have offered oblations into fire, have been detached from that (i.e. being allured by women).

21-36. What indeed is said to be the beauty of women, is described as the lustre of their ornaments and garments. Why is the beauty of women described to be without love and knowledge of self? For, it is indeed the body possessing pus, urine, feces, blood, skin, marrow, bones and fat. Thinking it to be different in this way, a man having touched it would be pure after having bathed. O brāhmaṇas, the body formed by those (i.e. bones, marrow etc.) is found beautiful by men. Oh, what a bad condition of people, which is brought about by (their) misfortune, that a man proceeds, knowing that one without breasts is a man and one (with breasts is) a woman! On (proper) thought, what is a man and what is a woman? Therefore, a good man should, by all means, avoid the company of a woman. Who, on the earth, obtains success after having met with a woman? A man should avoid contact with a woman and with one who keeps contact with her. It is seen that her company is actually Raurava. People are greedy due to ignorance; and for that reason they are duped by destiny. A man would be roasted in the vulva of a woman—a hellish pit. He would again find delight in that (hell) from which he has come to the earth! Men take delight in that from which everyday urine and semen rising from filth come out. Who then would be impure due to that? In this world there is great trouble there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the mockery (done by) destiny! Again and again a man takes delight there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the shamelessness of men! Therefore, a wise man should think over the many multitudes of the faults of women. Due to coitus there is a loss of strength; and sleep becomes very young (i.e. overpowering). Due to his knowledge snatched away by sleep a man becomes short-lived. Therefore, a wise man should, with effort, look upon a woman as his death, and the wise one should cause his mind to seek delight in the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. Which great fool, leaving the service of the feet of Viṣṇu that gives pleasure in this world and in the

next, would serve the feet of a woman? The service of the feet of Viṣṇu causes absence of rebirth, (while) serving a woman's vulva (i.e. cohabiting with a woman) brings about the danger of (re-) birth. He would repeatedly fall into the womb (i.e. would be reborn) as one who is cooked out of a machine. He would again long for her and that would be his mortification.

37-48a. With my hands raised I am speaking. Listen to my important words. Put your heart into Viṣṇu, and not into the vulva (i.e. a woman) causing torment. That man who lives by avoiding union with a woman, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice at every step. There is no doubt that the lord of the world is pleased with him who through good luck has married a pious woman belonging to a noble family and avoids union with her after having produced a son on her. The pious ones declare that union with a woman is a bad union. When it is there, firm devotion to Viṣṇu comes never. Giving up all (others) attachments, he should entertain devotion to Viṣṇu. In my opinion devotion to Viṣṇu is difficult to get. There is no doubt that he who is devoted to Viṣṇu is happy. He should do that deed only which pleases Viṣṇu. When he is satisfied, the world is satisfied. When he is pleased, the world is pleased. The existence of human beings is declared to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Which man would not serve that unmanifest Viṣṇu whom gods like Brahmā and Śiva worship for pleasing him? The mother of him who keeps the pair of the feet of Viṣṇu in his heart, is very fortunate; (so also) his father is very blessed. Those men who say, 'O Viṣṇu, venerable to the world, affectionate towards those who seek your refuge' do not go to hell. Brāhmaṇas are especially the actual forms of Viṣṇu. With those who worship them suitably, Viṣṇu is pleased.

48b-72a. Viṣṇu would move (i.e. moves) over this earth in the form of a brāhmaṇa. Without a brāhmaṇa no rite is ever successful. Those who have devoutly put the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa on their heads, have gratified their dead ancestors and have also liberated their own soul. That sweet thing which is put into the mouths of brāhmaṇas is actually given into the mouth of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu himself enjoys it. Such people who worship Viṣṇu in his images etc. when he is actually seen in the form of a brāhmaṇa, are rare. That act (of

worshipping his image) is (to be done) when he (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) is not available. The earth is declared to be blessed due to its being the abode of brāhmaṇas. Whatever is offered into their hands, is offered into the hand of Viṣṇu. By salutation made to them wickedness disappears. By saluting a brāhmaṇa, a man is freed from sins like killing a brāhmaṇa. Therefore, good men should propitiate a brāhmaṇa after looking upon him as Viṣṇu. If something is given into the mouth of a hungry brāhmaṇa (by a man), he is sprinkled for crores of kalpas with streams of nectar after death (i.e. in heaven). The mouth of a brāhmaṇa is a great holy place which is not a barren spot with saline soil and which is without thorns. If something is sown there (by a man), he would obtain crore times the fruit. He who gives him (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) food of various kinds to please a brāhmaṇa (goes to) worlds full of great pleasures giving freedom till the end of crores of kalpas. He should, after honouring a brāhmaṇa, daily listen to a Purāṇa which is narrated by a brāhmaṇa and which is wild fire to (the forest of) sins. Of all the holy places, Purāṇa is said to be the best holy place, by hearing even a part of which Viṣṇu himself is pleased. As Viṣṇu taking up the form of the sun, moves for giving light to all the worlds, similarly for enlightening you Viṣṇu, in the form of a Purāṇa, moves among the beings. A Purāṇa is extremely sanctifying. Therefore, if one has a mind to generate (in himself) love for Viṣṇu, men should constantly listen to a Purāṇa, of the form of Viṣṇu. A tranquil devotee of Viṣṇu should listen to the narration of a Purāṇa, which is difficult to be had, which is spotless and which very much removes blemishes. A man should look upon it as the highest, since, O brāhmaṇas, having collected the significance of the Vedas, Viṣṇu, in the form of Vyāsa, created the Purāṇa. In the Purāṇa, piety is defined; and Keśava himself is piety. Therefore, when the Purāṇa is heard a man would become (one with) Viṣṇu. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) himself is a brāhmaṇa and Purāṇa also is like that. Having the contact of these two a man would be Viṣṇu himself. So also he could destroy his sin by sprinkling the water of Gaṅgā (over himself). Viṣṇu, in the liquid form liberates the earth. If a devotee of Viṣṇu is desirous of singing songs of Viṣṇu, he should have the sprinkling of (i.e. bath in) the water of Gaṅgā, which is pure and which purifies

(all other objects). The goddess Gaṅgā is said to cause devotion to Viṣṇu on the earth. That Gaṅgā is of the nature of Viṣṇu, and is the cause of the expansion of the world. A man should have devotion without any motive to brāhmaṇas, Purāṇas, Gaṅgā, cows and pippala (tree) looking upon them as Viṣṇu. The wise ones have determined these to be actually of the nature of Viṣṇu.

72b-87a. Therefore, he who longs for devotion to Viṣṇu should honour these. The existence of men is said to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Men resorting to the boat in the form of devotion to Viṣṇu cross (the ocean of worldly existence) which has the mass of the water in the form of the Kali-age, which is full of the alligators in the form of sins, which has the eddies in the form of indulgence in the objects of senses, which has abundant foam in the form of wrong knowledge, very severe on account of the great snakes in the form of wicked people, which is fearful and difficult to cross. Therefore, people should try to secure devotion to Viṣṇu. What pleasure does a creature obtain by enjoying in a false profession (when) he does not adhere to the playful account of Viṣṇu of wonderful sport? If the mind of men clings to the objects of senses, then they should listen to the wonderful stories about Viṣṇu which are mixed up with many (sensuous) objects. O brāhmaṇas, even if (they have fixed) their heart on (securing) salvation they should hear (stories about him). Even if they are casually heard, Viṣṇu would be pleased. Viṣṇu, affectionate to his devotees, though inactive, performed many acts for the well-being of his obedient devotees. He is not so (well) pleased by rites like a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices or a myriad Rājasūyas, as he is by devotion. Resort to the feet of Viṣṇu, which should be mentally resorted to, which were repeatedly resorted to by the good, and which are essential for crossing the ocean of mundane existence. O you wicked, cruel men, who are greedy for objects of senses, why do you yourself throw yourselves into Raurava (hell)? (The fall into hell) will come without resorting (i.e. if men do not resort) to the auspicious feet of Viṣṇu. If you desire to overcome your worries without any effort, then resort to the feet of Viṣṇu for not being reborn (i.e. to avoid rebirth). After thinking about where-

from a mortal has come and whereto he would go, an intelligent man should collect religious merit. (Even) if a man has risen after having fallen into many hells, and after having got bodies of the immobile gets manhood (i.e. gets birth as a man, yet) there (also) remaining in the womb (of the mother) is extremely painful.

87b-103. O Brāhmaṇas, if due to the inevitable consequence of his deeds a creature is born on the earth, he is afflicted by many blemishes like childhood. Having reached youth he is very much oppressed by poverty, or by a severe disease or by drought etc. also. A man would have indescribable trouble due to old age, or due to the mind's wandering here and there, or due to a disease. Then he would meet with death. Even in the mundane existence no greater grief than that is experienced. Then due to the inevitable result of his deeds a being is troubled in Yama's world. Experiencing severe tortures there, he is born again. A creature is born; he dies. He dies; he is again born. Such is the condition (of a man) when the feet of Viṣṇu are not worshipped (by him). Death without trouble or life without difficulty does not take place in the case of him who has not worshipped Viṣṇu. If there is wealth in the house what is the use of (just) preserving it? Would his wealth follow him when he is dragged by the messengers of Yama? Therefore, wealth given to brāhmaṇas after honouring them gives all pleasure. Giving (gifts) is a staircase leading to heaven; giving (gifts) destroys sins. Resorting devoutly to Viṣṇu increases great religious merit. If there is strength in a mortal he should not uselessly waste it. He should carefully dance and sing in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. Whatever men possess, they should dedicate it to Viṣṇu. What is dedicated to Viṣṇu gives happiness; but what is dedicated to someone else gives misery. By means of his eyes a man should observe the image etc. of Viṣṇu only. With his ears he should day and night hear the meritorious names of Viṣṇu. With their tongue the wise ones should taste the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. With their nose they should smell the tulasī-leaf (put) at the feet of Viṣṇu. Having touched with his skin Viṣṇu's devotee and having with his mind meditated upon his feet a man becomes blessed. No doubt should be raised about this. A wise man should set his mind upon him; similarly he should

have him in his heart. Men ultimately reach him only. No doubt should be raised about this. Which man would not resort to that beginningless and endless Viṣṇu who gives his own position if he is merely thought of in mind? A man should constantly fix his heart on Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. To please him he should, according to his capacity, salute him, think about and take delight in him. He should think of his two feet. Such a man alone would get respect in the world.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

The Merit of Reciting the Padma Purāṇa, Svargakhaṇḍa

Sūta said :

1-8a. Thus is the greatness of that highest lord Viṣṇu, taking up many forms, (Viṣṇu—) who is the cause of complete liberation in the world. One of the forms is the great *Padma* (*Purāṇa*). The *Brahma* (*Purāṇa*) is the head of Viṣṇu only. His heart is called *Padma*. The *Viṣṇu* (*Purāṇa*) is his right arm. The *Śaiva* (*Purāṇa*) is the left arm of the great lord. The *Bhāgavata* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his thighs. The *Nāradya* (*Purāṇa*) is his navel. The *Mārkaṇḍeya* (*Purāṇa*) is his right foot; the *Agni* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be (his) left foot. The *Bhaviṣya* (*Purāṇa*) is the right knee of the magnanimous Viṣṇu only. The (*Purāṇa*) called *Brahmavaivarta* is said to be his left knee. The *Līṅga* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be the right ankle and the *Varāha* is the left ankle. The *Skanda Purāṇa* is the hair, and the *Vāmana* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his skin. The *Kūrma* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his back; the *Matsya* is said to his fat. The *Garuḍa* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his marrow; the *Brahmāṇḍa* is said to be his bone(s). Thus Viṣṇu was having the *Purāṇas* as parts of his body. *Padma* there (i.e. in the body) is the heart, having heard which a man obtains nectar (i.e. immortality).

8b-9. God Viṣṇu himself became (i.e. turned himself into) this *Padma Purāṇa*, having taught one chapter of which a man is freed from all sins. There (i.e. of the *Padma-Purāṇa*) this

Svargakhaṇḍa gives the fruit of the entire *Padma*. Having heard the *Svargakhaṇḍa* even those who are great sinners are freed from sins as the serpents are free from their skins.

10-18. A man who hears this first (or best) *Svargakhaṇḍa* gets the same fruit even if he is extremely wicked and expelled from all religions. As a man having bathed at Prayāga in the month of Māgha is free from sins, similarly he would be free from sins by hearing (the *Ādi Svargakhaṇḍa*). He who has heard, and made (others) hear this *Ādikhaṇḍa* has given gold (equal to his own) weight, and has given the entire earth. He has given a gift to a poor man of the debt which he incurred; he has repeatedly recited the thousands of the names of Viṣṇu; he has studied all the Vedas, and has similarly performed all rites; he has settled teachers by giving them livelihood. O brāhmaṇas, he has also granted fearlessness to the people that were frightened; he has sought the consent of the virtuous, wise and pious persons. He has given very cold (water) between (i.e. during the period between) the sign of Aries and the sign of Cancer; he has also cast his life for brāhmaṇas and cows; He, the wise one, has also performed other good deeds.

19-25. Having well studied (i.e. if he studies well) the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, he obtains many pleasures. He, who has slept well, is awakened by women in his harem, by means of good (i.e. sweet) sounds of small bells and with sweet words. He enjoys half of Indra's seat and would live for a long time in Indra's heaven. From there he would go to the Sun's abode and then to the world of the Moon. Then enjoying pleasures in the abode of the Seven Sages, he goes to Dhruva, thence to Brahmā's world, and obtains a lustrous body. Having secured knowledge there only, he goes to (i.e. obtains) salvation. The wise one would live with the good, and would bathe at a holy place. The man would talk pious words and would listen to holy texts. (Among them) *Padma* (i.e. the *Padma Purāṇa*) is a great holy text, and gives the fruit of all the Vedas. In it *Svargakhaṇḍa* gives great religious merit. O people, if you want to cross easily the waves of longings, then resort to Viṣṇu, salute Viṣṇu, the only excellent god; you will go to worlds of very pure pleasures. Listen and utter the incomparable name of Viṣṇu. Obtain your desired objects.

THE
PADMA-PURĀNA

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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA : SECTION IV: BHŪMIKHAṆḌA

1. Who Are the Devotees of Viṣṇu?	1565
2. The Importance of Besmearing the Floor of Viṣṇu's Temple	1568
3. The Importance of Offering a Lamp to Viṣṇu	1571
4. The Importance of Fasting on the Jayantī Day	1573
5. The Deeds for Which One Becomes Sonless	1577
6. Acts Leading to Vaikuṇṭha	1580
7. The Greatness of Rādhāṣṭamī	1583
8. Prelude to the Churning of Ocean	1586
9. The Churning Starts	1588
10. The Birth of Lakṣmī	1590
11. The Importance of Observing a Vow in Honour of Lakṣmī	1592
12. Merit Earned by Protecting a Brāhmaṇa	1598
13. The Importance of the Vow of Janmāṣṭamī	1602
14. The Greatness of a Brāhmaṇa	1608
15. The Importance of Ekādaśī	1611
16. How to Win Favour of Viṣṇu	1615
17. The Importance of Water Flowing from Viṣṇu's Feet	1617
18. Purificatory Acts for One Guilty of Illegitimate Intercourse	1619
19. Purificatory Acts for Other sins	1621
20. The Greatness of the Worship of Rādhā-Dāmodara	1624
21. Restrictions While Observing the Kārtika Vow	1626
22. The Greatness of Tulasī	1629
23. The Importance of Viṣṇupañcaka	1632
24. In Praise of Giving Gifts	1635

25. The Importance of Uttering Viṣṇu's Name	1638
26. The Importance of keeping Promise	1642

SECTION V: PĀTĀLAKHAṆḌA

1. Rāma Sees Nandigrāma from Puṣpaka	1646
2. Rāma Meets Bharata	1649
3. Rāma Enters Ayodhyā	1652
4. Rāma's Consecration	1655
5. The Coming of Sage Agasti	1658
6. Agastya Begins Rāvaṇa's Story	1662
7. Elimination of Rāvaṇa by Viṣṇu	1666
8. Agastya Advises Rāma to Perform Horse Sacrifice	1668
9. Instructions in Religious Practices	1671
10. Rāma Appoints Śatrughna as the Protector of the Horse	1676
11. The Aśvamedha Horse Is Let Loose	1682
12. Ahicchatrā City, King Sumada and Kāma	1688
13. Śatrughna Enters Ahicchatrā City	1694
14. The Cyavana Episode	1699
15. Cyavana's Penance and Enjoyments	1703
16. The Horse Goes to Cyavana's Hermitage	1707
17. Arrival of a Brāhmaṇa Ascetic	1711
18. A Miraculous Happening	1716
19. Ratnagrīva Goes on a Pilgrimage to Puruṣottama	1718
20. The Importance of Gaṇḍakī	1723
21. Puruṣottama Appears to the King in the Guise of an Ascetic	1729
22. The Greatness of Nīla Mountain	1732
23. Damana Fights with Pratāpāgrya	1737
24. Puṣkala Defeats Damana	1742
25. Subāhu Gets Ready with His Army in the Krauñca Array	1746
26. A Fierce Fight Between Lakṣmīnidhi and Suketu	1748
27. Killing of Citrāṅga	1753
28. Subāhu's Defeat	1756
29. King Subāhu Surrenders to Śatrughna	1761
30. Janaka Releases Sinners from Hell	1765

Contents

31. King R̥tambhara Is Blessed with a Son	1770
32. Satyavān Meets Śatrughna	1774
33. Śatrughna's Army gets Ready to Fight Vidyunmālin	1776
34. Vidyunmālin Killed in Battle	1780
35. Dialogue between Lomaśa and Āraṇyaka	1785
36. Lomaśa Narrates the Deeds of Rāma to Āraṇyaka	1791
37. Sage Āraṇyaka Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven	1797
38. Getting Back the Horse from the Possession of an Underwater Female	1801
39. The Seizure of the Horse by Viramaṇi's Son	1806
40. Śatrughna Resolves to Fight Against Viramaṇi	1810
41. Rukmāṅgada Is Defeated by Puṣkala	1814
42. Viramaṇi Is Defeated	1816
43. Defeat of Puṣkala and Śatrughna	1822
44. Hanūmat on the Droṇa Mountain	1825
45. Śrī Rāma Appears on the Battlefield	1831
46. Viramaṇi Surrenders the Horse to Śrī Rāma	1835
47. The Sacrificial Horse Develops Stiffness	1837
48. The Horse Is Relieved of Stiffness	1841
49. King Suratha Seizes the Horse	1846
50. Aṅgada Delivers Śatrughna's Message to Suratha	1851
51. Hanūmat Frees Puṣkala from Campaka	1855
52. King Suratha Wins the Battle	1859
53. Rāma Frees the Bound Horse	1864
54. Lava Binds the Sacrificial Horse	1867
55. The Observation of the Spies	1869
56. Rāma Seeks Bharata's Advice	1875
57. The Washerman's Former Birth	1879
58. Lakṣmaṇa Leaves Sītā in the Forest	1883
59. The Birth of Kuśa and Lava	1888
60. Lava Defeats the Army and Kills the General	1894
61. Hanūmat Falls Unconscious	1898
62. Lava Becomes Unconscious	1902
63. Kuśa's Victory	1905
64. Rāma's Army Revives	1910
65. Sumati Describes the Adventurous Events to Rāma	1915
66. Singing of Rāmāyaṇa by Kuśa and Lava	1920
67. The Commencement of the Sacrifice	1932

IV BRAHMAKHAṆḌA

(Section on Brahman)

CHAPTER ONE

Who Are the Devotees of Viṣṇu?

Salutation to Śrī Vedavyāsa

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, now that the Kali age has arrived, tell me, by means of which acts a being would be liberated from that (mundane existence).

Sūta said:

2-4. Well (asked), well (asked), O best of sages, you are the best among the righteous people. You constantly desire the well-being of all people. O you devotee of Viṣṇu, listen to what Vyāsa, the omniscient brāhmaṇa, revered by all, said, when he was formerly asked by Jaimini. The best sage (Jaimini), having prostrated himself like a staff before preceptor Vyāsa, Satyavati's son, who had mastered everything, asked him:

Jaimini said:

5. Tell me how even with little religious merit people will obtain salvation in the Kali age, since they are short-lived.

Vyāsa said :

6. O lord, O brāhmaṇa, due to the contact with the good there would be the listening to (i.e. a man would listen to) the sacred texts. Due to that there would be (i.e. arise) devotion to Viṣṇu. Knowledge (would follow) from that, and (best) position (i.e. liberation) from that (knowledge).

7. The account of Viṣṇu is not liked by the most sinful man on the earth. Such a brāhmaṇa should be known (i.e. looked upon) as the most sinful (man).

8-13. A devotee of Viṣṇu is delighted on hearing the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). He who describes it to be false should be known as the greatest (i.e. worst) among the sinners. O brāhmaṇa, the lord of the world does not leave that place where the account of Kṛṣṇa is (being narrated), and does not at any time go (anywhere else). For a man who would create an obstacle in the act of the narration of Viṣṇu's account, there is no escape from hell for a hundred period of Manu. For those who, having heard the account (as narrated) in the Purāṇas, censure or scoff at it, always have the very afflicting hells on their hands (i.e. waiting for them). The sin earned in the previous existences (of him) who desires to listen to the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa, perishes just at that moment only. I do not know what (best) position the man who would devoutly listen to Śrīkṛṣṇa's account will have on hearing it.

14-16. All such (blemishes) of the sinner as the sin due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa, untimely death, and also (the sin due to) drinking liquor, perish. The sin of that man who (first) having committed a sin later keeps (himself) away from it, would perish as the heap of cotton perishes (i.e. is burnt) by fire. O brāhmaṇa, Yama's servants do not come near the house of him in whose house there is the book (containing) the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Jaimini said:

17. O preceptor, tell me, whom do they describe as the devotees of Viṣṇu. I have now a desire to know them and also (to know) their excellent greatness.

Vyāsa said:

18-20. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of bathing at a holy place for that sinful man who devoutly sprinkles upon his head the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu? O brāhmaṇa, the sins like killing a brāhmaṇa, of him who would have the company of the good for a moment or half a moment, perish. In whichever family (even) one (member) is a devotee of Viṣṇu, the family (even) when full of sins (or sinners), attains salvation.

21-32. Those men (only) who are free from (doing) harm (to others), religious hypocrisy, lust and anger, and also those who are bereft of greed and infatuation, who are devoted to their

parents, should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa. Those who are devoted to their parents, who are endowed with pity, who are engaged in the well-being of all creatures, who are free from jealousy, and who speak the truth should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. Also those who are devoted to brāhmaṇas, who are impotent to the wives of others, who are engrossed in the vow of Ekādaśī should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu. Wearing garlands of Tulasī(-leaves) those who sing the names of Viṣṇu, and who are sprinkled with the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, those also, on whose head or ears an excellent tulasī(-leaf) is usually seen, should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu. Those who are free from the company of heretics, and free from hating brāhmaṇas, who would sprinkle (water) over the tulasī(-plant) should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees. Those men who worship Viṣṇu, also who worship him with tulasī(-leaves), who are engaged in offering their daughters (to worthy grooms), who honour their guests, who listen to the account of Viṣṇu, should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees, and also the man in whose house the śālagrāma stone would be well-established (is a devotee of Viṣṇu). Those men also, who cleanse the abode (i.e. the temple) of Viṣṇu, who perform rites in honour of the manes, who are full of pity towards the helpless, should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. Those who look upon the wealth of others and of brāhmaṇas as poison, and those who eat the offering of eatables (after they are) presented to Viṣṇu should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. And also those men who love Vedas and sacred texts, who protect the tulasī(-plants), who are engaged in practising the vow of Rādhāṣṭamī (or Janmāṣṭamī), and those who devoutly present a lamp before (the image of) Śrīkṛṣṇa, who do not censure others, should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said :

33. Vyāsa who was asked by Jaimini, told him thus in the (proper) order. (Now) I am telling you what occasionally I heard from my preceptor, O brāhmaṇa.

34. Those best men who listen to the reading (of the account of Viṣṇu), are free from all sins, and go the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO

The Importance of Besmearing the Floor of Viṣṇu's Temple

Sūta said :

1. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall tell you (about) the ancient way of life (from) the conversation between Vyāsa and Jaimini, which destroys the sins of the listeners.

Jaimini said:

2. O lord, O preceptor, tell me today by (doing) which acts does a sinful man go to the abode of the lord of the world.

Vyāsa said :

3. That man who besmears (the ground) in the temple of Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins, becomes tranquil and goes to the abode of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu).

4-5. O Jaimini, listen, I shall tell you in brief about the religious merit of him who smears (i.e. sprinkles) with water (the ground) in the temple of the lord of the world. O best brāhmaṇa, he would live in the abode of Viṣṇu for as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles are seen there.

6-14. Formerly there was a thief by name Daṇḍaka. He was a terror to the people. He snatched away the wealth of brāhmaṇas; he killed his friends; in the yuga called Dvāpara he told lies; he was cruel; he took delight in going to (i.e. having illicit connection with) others' wives. He ate the flesh of cows; he drank liquor; and kept company of heretics. He cut off (the means of) the livelihood of the brāhmaṇas; he usurped the deposits (kept with him); he killed those who sought his shelter; he ardently longed for the amorous movements of prostitutes. Once that foolish man went to the temple of Viṣṇu belonging to a

brāhmaṇa to steal the wealth of Viṣṇu. When he entered (the temple). he put his foot (dirty) with mud at low-levelled ground at the door of the temple. Just by that act the ground was free from slope. With joy he opened the panel of the door with two iron rods. He entered the temple of Viṣṇu adorned with an excellent canopy. It was having a jewelled golden lamp which had dispelled the great (i.e. thick) darkness. It was rich with the fragrance of many flowers; it was full of many vessels. It was filled with the fragrance of fragrant oil. The thief saw (the image of) Viṣṇu clad in a yellow garment sleeping (i.e. lying) with Rādhā on a very lovely bed.

15-22. Having saluted (i.e. when he saluted) the lord of Rādhā he became free from sins. 'Shall I take (away this wealth) or shall I not take away? (In) what (way) would it be (useful) to me? Since I am an all-time thief, I am unable to serve (the lord). The wealth would serve my purpose.' Thinking thus, he made up his mind to take it (away). Dropping on the ground the silken garment of the lord of Lakṣmī and keeping all the things in his hand, he, trembling, tied them (in the garment). O Jaimini, all those things of Viṣṇu, the master of illusory power (Māyā), fell down (on the ground) making a very fearful sound. Abandoning their sound sleep, and running, (saying) 'Oh! what is this?', many people came there. The thief, being frightened, left the things and (other) wealth (there only) and speedily fled somewhere. Being bitten by a black and most poisonous snake, he died and was freed from sins. By Yama's order his messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands and clad in skins and having fangs came (there) to take him (to Yama's abode). They tied him with leather straps and took him along a difficult path. Seeing him, Yama was angry, and asked his counsellor:

Yama said :

23. O wise Citragupta, tell me (about) the entire deed, sinful or virtuous, which he has done.

Citragupta said :

24-25. This fool has committed all the sins that the Creator has created on the earth. I have told the truth; but O lord of the

world, listen. He has also (done) some good deed. I think, O brother of Yamunā, that would destroy all his sins.

Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) said :

26-27. O minister, tell me what religious merit he has Tell me the real truth. Hearing so, I shall put him where he would be fit.

Hearing the words of Yama, Citragupta, who was afraid, joined the palms of his hands, and spoke to his master, O brāhmaṇa :

Citragupta said :

28-29. This worst sinner among sinners had gone to steal the wealth of Viṣṇu. At the door of (the temple of) Viṣṇu, he threw the mud (clung) to his two feet. That floor was covered (with mud) and free from holes and pits. By the power of the religious merit his great sin has gone out (of him). He is fit for (staying in) Vaikuṇṭha. He is out (of the jurisdiction of) your punishment.

Vyāsa said :

30-31a. Hearing these words he (i.e. Yama) gave him a seat made of gold. He sat there; he was honoured by Yama. With his head (bent down) he saluted him, and politely said to him:

Yama said :

31b-33a. With the dust particles of your feet my abode is purified today. I am blessed, I am lucky, I am lucky; no doubt about it. O good one, now go to Viṣṇu's excellent abode which is full of many enjoyments and which keeps off birth and death.

Vyāsa said :

33b-37. Saying like this, that Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) placed him whose sins had gone (away), in a divine chariot which was made of gold and to which royal swans were yoked, and sent him to Viṣṇu's place which gives all pleasures. Thus he entered Vaikuṇṭha and lived there for a long time. O best brāhmaṇa, I do not know what will happen to them who do not devoutly besmear

the temple of Viṣṇu. The sin of him, earned during crores of existences, who would devoutly listen to this (account) or would attentively recite it, perishes. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER THREE

The Importance of Offering a Lamp to Viṣṇu

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, tell me the significance of (the month of) Kārtika. (Tell me) what the fruit of that vow is, and what the blemish of one who does not do it, is.

Sūta said:

2. On a former occasion, O best of sages, Jaimini asked (about) this to Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son. (Then) the sage (Vyāsa) commenced this narration:

Vyāsa said:

3-15. He who would give up sesamum-oil and copulation in the auspicious (month of) Kārtika, becomes free from sins committed during many (previous) existences and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. He, a fool, who does not give up (eating) fish and copulation in Kārtika, would certainly be (born as) a pig in every (subsequent) existence. A man who would worship Viṣṇu with the tulasī-leaves in Kārtika, obtains the fruit (of the performance) of a horse sacrifice for every leaf (that is offered to Viṣṇu). He who would worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika with the flowers of the muni-tree, obtains through Viṣṇu's grace salvation difficult to be obtained (even) by gods. The best man who eats the muni-vegetable in Kārtika, has all the sin committed during the year destroyed by (just) one vegetable (viz. muni). He who after offering to Viṣṇu eats the fruit of that (tree) in the month of Kārtika dear to Viṣṇu, (has all) his sin (committed) during crores of existences (destroyed). He who gives (an article of food), which is tasty and with ghee, to Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins and would

go to Viṣṇu's abode. A man, who offers even one lotus to Viṣṇu in Kārtika, in the end goes, free from all (his) sins, to Viṣṇu's position. He who would (everyday) bathe in the morning in (the month of) Kārtika dear to Viṣṇu, would obtain the fruit which (he would get) on bathing at all the sacred places. That brāhmaṇa, who would offer a lamp into water in Kārtika, is free from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and would go to the abode of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would offer a lamp even for a short time in Kārtika to please Viṣṇu, has Viṣṇu always pleased with him. Everyday the brāhmaṇa who would offer a lamp with ghee to Viṣṇu in his (own) house in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. I (shall) tell you the special significance (of the offering) of a lamp. O best of brāhmaṇas, being attentive, listen to it (as I tell it) with its tradition.

16-26a. Formerly, in Tretāyuga there was a pure brāhmaṇa Vaikuṇṭha by name. A sinner got (himself) liberated by virtue of his company. Once that best brāhmaṇa, having offered a lamp with ghee before Viṣṇu in Kārtika, went home. A rat came there to eat that ghee. When he started eating it from the lamp, the lamp burnt more brightly. The rat too, out of fear of the fire speedily ran (away); and all the sin of the rat perished due to the grace of Viṣṇu. The rat was bitten by a serpent, and it died. Then, by Yama's order (his) messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came (there) to take him (to Yama's abode), and tied him with leather-bands. When they made up their mind to take (him to Yama's abode), Viṣṇu's messengers having four hands (each) holding conches, discs and maces and mounted upon Garuḍa came (there). (There was) in the sky an aeroplane also. It was auspicious, and royal swans were yoked to it. It was made of pure gold and through Viṣṇu's grace it moved according to the wish (of the occupant). Having cut off the nooses (with which the rat was tied), the messengers spoke to Yama's servants: "O fools, this is Viṣṇu's devotee. In vain you had tied him. O servants of Yama, go (back) if you desire to live." Having heard (these words) they trembled and asked with politeness: "Please tell us, due to what power of his merit you are taking this great sinner to the city of Viṣṇu".

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

26b-34a. The rat revived the lamp in front of Viṣṇu. Due to that act, O messengers (of Yama), we are taking it to Viṣṇu's abode. He who even without desiring (to do so), revives the lamp of (i.e. offered to) Viṣṇu, abandons his sin earned in crores of (previous) existences, and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Nobody except Viṣṇu is able to describe the merit of him who would devoutly offer on days of (i.e. auspicious to) Viṣṇu, a lamp (to Viṣṇu). What is the use of performing a thousand horse sacrifices for him who would offer in his house a lamp full of ghee to Viṣṇu? (As he) who performs the horse sacrifice on a day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu goes to heaven, so also, he who offers a lamp (to Viṣṇu) in Kārtika, would go to Viṣṇu's abode.

Vyāsa said:

Hearing this, (Yama's) messengers went as they had come; (and) Viṣṇu's messengers, having put it in a chariot went to Viṣṇu's abode. He passed a hundred ages of Manu in Viṣṇu's proximity only. Then, through Viṣṇu's grace he was (born) as a princess in the mortal world; and with her sons and grandsons she enjoyed pleasures for a long time. From here (i.e. the mortal world) she again went to the world of cows due to her service to Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

34b-35. A man who devoutly listens to this excellent importance of the lamp, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Importance of Fasting on the Jayantī Day

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, tell (me about) the importance of Jayantī (birth day anniversary). When is it celebrated by the people? You are a boat in the ocean of the mundane existence.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, O best sage, listen; since I am asked, I shall tell you. This was formerly asked by Nārada from Brahmā in heaven.

Nārada said:

3. O grandsire, tell me the significance of Jayantī (i.e. birth day anniversary), hearing which I shall go to that highest position of Viṣṇu.

Brahmā said:

4-8. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. I shall tell you. He (i.e. a man) goes to Viṣṇu's world by fasting on a Jayantī (day). Jayantī, O sage, burns, through remembering, narrating (the account of Viṣṇu), the sin earned during the (previous) seven existences. The more so in the case of the sin of one who observes a fast (on that day). The Janmāṣṭamī, the auspicious ninth day of the bright half in Caitra, the fourteenth day of the dark half of Māgha, the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra, the Durgāṣṭamī in Āśvina, the twelfth day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa—these six are said to be very meritorious Jayantis, causing auspiciousness. The Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī (mentioned) first is well-known and destroys sins. It is equal to a crore of sacrifices and to myriads of holy places.

9-18. By fasting on a Jayantī-day, one gets the fruit that is obtained by him who gives a thousand cows everyday. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the same fruit as by (the gift of) a thousand bhāras of gold at the time of (the auspiciousness) of the planet sun. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the same fruit as by giving thousands of black antelope-hides and hundreds of sesamum-cows. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man gets that fruit which he obtains by offering thousands of crores daughters (in marriage). A man gets that fruit by fasting on a Jayantī-day which he obtains by giving this earth with the oceans. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the fruit which he obtains by constructing a well, a pond etc. in a temple. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man obtains the same fruit as he, being devoted, does by doing (service) to his mother, father and preceptor. That merit which is obtained by those who, of a truthful vow, have made

themselves blessed by resorting to a sacred place for the removal of a calamity, is obtained by fasting on a Jayantī-day. That religious merit which a man obtains by bathing in Gaṅgā or Narmadā, or in the water of Sarasvatī, is obtained by him by fasting on a Jayantī-day. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man obtains that fruit which the performers of a śrāddha in honour of their dead ancestors on a new moon day, obtain.

Nārada said:

19a. O grandsire, tell me, who formerly observed (a fast on) the Jayantī-day ?

Brahmā said:

19b-26a. (The fast on) the Jayantī-day was formerly observed by Kārtavīrya, Karṇa, the intelligent Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya), by Sagara, Dilīpa—the descendant of Kakutstha, by Gautama, Gārgya, the intelligent son of Jamadagni (i.e. Paraśurāma); so also it was formerly observed by Vālmiki, and the good son of Draupadī. (The fast on) the eighth of the bright half of Bhādrapada gives the desired objects. The eighth day is said to be of special importance when in union with the sun. For pleasing the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), it should be observed every year. The sin earned in crores of existences vanishes in a short time. Having kept awake during the night, a man with his senses controlled, should devoutly worship (Viṣṇu) separately with sandal, flowers and offerings of food. O brāhmaṇa, the sin earned deliberately or without knowledge, of him who observes a fast on a Jayantī-day, perishes in half a watch, by the grace of the son of Devakī (i.e. Kṛṣṇa).

26b-37. There is no doubt that those mean men who eat when the day of Jayantī has arrived (i.e. on a Jayantī-day) suffer the sin produced in the three worlds. All the holy places like the ocean, all the places (which are) the abodes of the liberated, remain in all the parts of the house of him who observes the Jayantī-vow. All the holy places and deities live in the body of that man who devoutly observes (a fast on) the Jayantī-day, dear to Kṛṣṇa. O great sage, I have not seen in the Vedas or the Purāṇas a vow equal or superior to the vow of Kṛṣṇa-Rādhāṣṭamī. The man who does not devoutly observe

it, would be (born as) a cruel demon. O brāhmaṇa, that foolish man who eats (food) on a Jayanti-day as on the day (sacred) to Viṣṇu, obtains (i.e. goes to) a great hell. Due to his taking food on a Jayanti-day, one hundred and one preceding and succeeding (members of) his family would fall into a terrible hell. O best sage, what is the use of crores of vows, if a fast is observed when Jayanti would be (i. e. fall) on a Wednesday (when the Moon is) in unison with Rohiṇī ? (A fast on) a Jayanti-day observed according to the proper rule, destroys sin in the Kṛta-age, Tretā-age, Dvāpara-age and Kali-age. The sin earned from birth, of him who, keeping awake, causes to read aloud the Purāṇa of Viṣṇu, burns like a heap of cotton. The sin earned in a crore of existences, of the man who devoutly listens to the Purāṇa on a day (sacred) to Viṣṇu perishes at that moment only. On the day (sacred) to Viṣṇu a man should honour a suppliant, O sage. He liberates a crore (of the members) of his family and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

38-50. A man who does not observe a fast on a Jayanti-day and is averse to it, being bereft of all virtue, certainly goes to hell. A man should worship (Viṣṇu) with sandal, flowers, incense, and lamps full of ghee, and should give a present to a brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, that man who celebrates Jayanti in this manner, would, due to his devotion, liberate twentyone members of (his family). In his house there would be no misfortune, no widowhood, no quarrel, so also no opposition from his children. He never sees (i.e. experiences) loss of wealth. He who observes a fast on a Jayanti-day, obtains all the objects desired by him, and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. Those who fix their mind on observing the Jayanti-vow and are very much devoted to Viṣṇu, are blessed, are well-born, are wealthy and wise. Whatever sacred places, vows and restraints are there, they do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) even the sixteenth part of the Jayanti-day. O child, he who with his wife observes (a fast on) the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī day in both the fortnights of Bhādrapada, reaches Viṣṇu's proximity. He who always observes the merit-giving vow, who observes a fast on a Jayanti-day, goes to Viṣṇu's Vaikuṇṭha. Jayanti, dear to Viṣṇu, quickly destroys the sin due to want of good conduct, (having) fallen (or been expelled) from the family, (being) deprived of fame, and

birth in a bad stock. He who observes a fast on a Jayantī, completely burns all sins comparable to Meru, and those like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. He who desires a son gets a son observing a fast on the Jayantī-day, who desires wealth obtains wealth, who desires salvation obtains salvation. Even Yama is afraid of those who greatly fix their mind on observing (a fast on) the Jayantī-day. They reach the highest position.

Sūta said:

51-53. Having (thus) told Nārada (about Jayantī), he (i.e. Brahmā) went as he had come. O sage, O brāhmaṇa, I have also told you what was asked by you. They too, who devoutly listen to the importance of Jayantī, go to the highest abode (after being) freed from all sins. O brāhmaṇa, similarly sinful men who see the reader of a Purāṇa and him who observes the Jayantī-vow, go to the highest place.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Deeds for Which One Becomes Sonless

Śaunaka said :

1. O you very intelligent one, tell me, due to which act (of a man) he becomes sonless (i.e. does not have a son), and due to (i.e. by doing) which (act) he would have a son.

Sūta said:

2. Formerly this was asked by the magnanimous Nārada from Brahmā. O best sage, listen to what he said (then).

Nārada said :

3-5. O grandsire, O very wise one, O you who have mastered all the truth, O you lotus-born, tell me by (i.e. doing) which deed a mortal would become sonless; due to what sin a woman would be barren. O you who are intent on the well-being of all

creatures, tell me, who am listening. Due to which deed a daughter is born, or an important son is born; due to what a child is still-born. A woman bringing forth a stillborn child is extremely unhappy. O Brahman, tell me due to which religious merit a son would be born.

Brahmā said :

6-7. I shall tell you in brief. Listen to it attentively. You are asking about an amazing account. Listen (to it). It is said that a brāhmaṇa who would snatch away or would cause to snatch away (i.e. who has snatched away or has caused to snatch away) the means of subsistence of a brāhmaṇa, would be sonless.

8-9. That man who in this existence would devoutly listen to a Purāṇa, or would make a present of a land with a crop on it, or who would give a golden cow of many qualities and giving profuse milk along with a present, so also one who would give a golden image (of a deity to a brāhmaṇa), would certainly get a son.

10. That woman who would in her former birth deceitfully kill (i.e. who has deceitfully killed) the child of someone else, would certainly be sonless.

11-12. That woman who, endowed with devotion, would make a present of a golden image (of a deity), and would devoutly drink the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, would listen to a Purāṇa, or would offer a large present (to a brāhmaṇa), would have many children, and would have her children alive. There is no doubt about this.

13-15. A man or a woman who would not take out a child drowning in water, would certainly be sonless in this world. He who would give a bull, a pumpkin gourd with gold and cloth or would observe the auspicious vow for having a child, or would offer (the image of) a fair virgin, or would listen to a Purāṇa destroying all sins, would have a son.

16-17. That man who in his previous existence would disappoint a guest or would angrily punish him (i.e. who has disappointed or angrily punished a guest), would certainly be sonless. A man should devoutly honour a brāhmaṇa and a guest. He should give food, water, and (should construct) an auspicious temple.

18. That woman or that man who would cause (i.e. who has caused) abortion in her or his previous existence would certainly have a stillborn child.

19. That woman who along with her husband, would observe (a fast on) the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, would have good sons and would be a favourite wife of her husband in every existence.

20-21. A man who would make wealth with cows, or a śūdra who, being infatuated, would kidnap a brāhmaṇa-woman, would be born impotent due to (that) act. O brāhmaṇa, a daughter is born due to (that) act. O brāhmaṇa, a daughter is born by the power of the religious merit (to him) who, having committed this sin, later performs (acts of) religious merit.

22-25. O brāhmaṇa, in Tretāyuga there was a king by name Śrīdhara. He was sonless (but) wealthy. His wife was Hemaprabhāvatī. He asked Vyāsa who knew all sacred texts, who desired the well-being of all people, and who had come to him: “O brāhmaṇa, how (is it that) I am sonless?” (Seated) on a seat made of gold etc. and offered by the king, he, having heard the polite words of the king, answered thus: The king and the queen, being delighted washed his feet, and drank the water (with which) his feet (were washed), and which destroyed all sins.

Vyāsa said :

26-29. O king, hear (about) what you have asked me, (also about) the deed due to which you are sonless. This your queen also is sonless and you observe the vow of having one wife (only). In your former existence, you, the moon, were known by the name Varatanu. Your wife of a fair body was known by the name Śaṅkarī. Once you were going along a path. Though you saw the son of a low (-caste person) drowning in water, you contemptuously went ahead. The son died. By the power of your great religious merit, you became king and queen. (But) as a result of that deed, you would (i.e. did) not have a son.

The king said :

30. O lord, due to which (act of) religious merit, would a son be born (to us)? For, the life of persons having no son is fruitless.

Vyāsa said:

31-32. Give a gift of a pumpkin gourd with gold, cloth and a bull. Observe vow for obtaining a child, give (the image) of a fair virgin, and also listen to a Purāṇa. Then a son, destroying all sins, will be born.

Brahmā said :

33-34. Hearing this, the king gave an excellent gift as told by Vyāsa, and with his sins destroyed listened to a Purāṇa. Then within a year a son honoured by all was born (to them). The king became a sovereign emperor, handsome and the chief of his family.

Sūta said :

35-38. He who having no son, would devoutly listen to this, and make excellent presents, gets a son. I have told (this to you) in brief. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who would devoutly honour a brāhmaṇa according to the rules laid down in the sacred texts, would always have good sons. (So also the man) who would devoutly put on the book (of the Purāṇa) gold, silver, cloth, garland of flowers and sandal—which destroy all sins (would get good sons). A cruel son would be born to the fool who in his former existence has killed a brāhmaṇa or a child, and would be a brāhmaṇa after seven existences.

CHAPTER SIX

Acts Leading to Vaikuṇṭha

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, tell me who am listening, due to which (acts of) religious merit Vaikuṇṭha is obtained (by a man), for you are a boat in the ocean of the worldly existence.

Sūta said :

2-7. O best sage doing auspicious (things) for all, (you have

asked) well. I shall tell you in brief (the rite) destroying all sins. Listen, O best brāhmaṇa, hear about the merit of him who would give a house made of clay to a brāhmaṇa devoted to Viṣṇu. That brāhmaṇa, free from all sins, would always live in a palatial building in Viṣṇu's heaven. He is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. He who would present a palatial building to a brāhmaṇa devotee of Viṣṇu, would, on reaching Viṣṇu's abode, certainly be a resident of heaven. O brāhmaṇa, he, with a crore of (members of) his family ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's city, and staying in a palatial golden building, he would enjoy pleasures as he pleases. (Even) the Creator, the cause of all, is unable to measure the religious merit that one would get by causing a brāhmaṇa to settle well (in his life), O sage.

8. Dust particles are (i.e. can be) counted; drops of rains are (i.e. can be) counted; (but) the fruit (obtained) by settling well a brāhmaṇa (in his life) cannot be gauged even by the Creator.

9-23. O great sage, listen to what Brahmā, the Creator, the origin of the mundane existence, told Nārada, when he was formerly asked by him. O brāhmaṇa, formerly in Dvāpara age, there was a woman by name Cañcalāpāṅgī; she was very beautiful, her hair was excellent, her eyes were like that of a female deer, her waist was charming, and her smile was lovely. Once she went to another country. Full of all sins, and causing people to fall into hell due to her contact (like that) of liquor, she went to a temple. For a moment she sat there and ate a tām̐būla. Through curiosity she threw the remaining powder on the lowly part of a wall. Then desiring (to secure) a paramour, and to secure wealth (from him) she went to the city. The prostitute rashly made an appointment with some paramour. Being fascinated she went to the appointed place (in) the forest at night. The merchant (her paramour) did not come to the rendezvous. She expected (him) and thought to herself: 'How (is it) that my lover has not come? Has he been eaten up by serpents or tigers? How has he, beside himself due to passion, gone (elsewhere) leaving the place of appointment? Is he hankering after some other unknown woman?' O brāhmaṇa, thinking (like) this in her mind she through the fear of the fort-guard did not arrive into the city as the public road was covered with darkness. O brāhmaṇa, in the meanwhile a hungry tiger that took up any form that he liked, that was sent

by the god of death, came there and forcibly ate her up. Then the messengers of Yamunā's brother (i.e. Yama), whose forms were fearful, whose bodies resembled mountain-peaks, came there to take her (to Yama's abode) due to her sinful deed. Their feet were crooked, their faces were crooked, their noses were projecting, and they had many jaws. O brāhmaṇa, taking leather straps and hammers the very frantic messengers tied up that licentious harlot with leather straps. The messengers of the magnanimous Viṣṇu who holds a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, that were going along the path saw her. They resembled black clouds, their lotus-like faces were throbbing, they formed a group, their noses were charming, and they were adorned with divine ear-rings.

The messengers of Viṣṇu said :

24-27. Who are you of deformed forms, who appear like demons? Where are you going carrying this excellent (lady), the most beloved of Viṣṇu?

Hearing these words of them, they (i.e. Yama's messengers) went (away) quickly. Then those very powerful messengers of Viṣṇu, who were full of anger, struck the messengers of Yama, the lord of the world, with multitudes of weapons like the disc, having the brilliance of that of a crore of suns. All the warriors of Yama ran away, crying; and O brāhmaṇa, they who were frightened, narrated the entire account to Yama. Yama too, having heard that account, said to Citragupta:

Dharma (i.e. Yama) said :

28. O minister, due to which (act of) religious merit has the prostitute gone to (i.e. obtained) salvation? Tell all this according to its merit, to me who am asking (you).

Citragupta said :

29-32. From her birth she had earned very many sins; but, O lord of the world, hear if she might have some merit (to her credit). O lord of Dharma, once (this) prostitute, adorned with all ornaments, seeking wealth and looking for a paramour, went to a certain city. There (i.e. in that city) having remained in the temple, and having eaten a tāmḃūla, she threw, out of curiosity, the remaining powder on a wall, By the power of that

merit the harlot with her sins gone (away), and free from your punishment, goes to *Vaikuṇṭha*.

Sūta said :

33-37. Hearing these words the messengers and Yama also set their mind on other work, O *brāhmaṇa*. That harlot also, mounted in a divine chariot yoked with royal swans and surrounded by Viṣṇu's servants, went to Viṣṇu's world. O *brāhmaṇa*, she by the order of Viṣṇu stayed along with a crore (members of) her family in a palatial building and enjoyed many pleasures. O best *brāhmaṇa*, I do not know (i.e. cannot judge) the merit of him who devoutly and carefully puts powder into Viṣṇu's temple (to beautify it). He who would devoutly recite (this) chapter or listen to it with respect, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Greatness of Rādhāṣṭamī

Śaunaka said :

1. O very wise one, O you very intelligent one, tell me due to which act a man goes to the world of cows from the ocean of the mundane existence which is difficult to cross and, O *Sūta*, about *Rādhāṣṭamī* and its excellent importance.

Sūta said :

2. O *brāhmaṇa*, O great sage, formerly *Nārada* had asked this from *Brahmā*. Listen, in brief, to what he had asked him.

Nārada said :

3-5. O grandsire, O very wise one, O best among those who know all the sacred texts, O dear one, tell me (about) *Rādhājanmāṣṭamī*. O lord, what is its religious fruit? Who observed it in olden days? O brahman, what would be the sin of those men who do not observe it? In what way is the vow to be observed?

When is it to be observed? Tell me (all) that from the beginning, from whom Rādhā was born.

Brahmā said:

6-12. O child, listen very attentively to (the description of the vow of) Rādhājanmāṣṭamī. I shall tell you in brief the entire (account). O Nārada, except Viṣṇu it is not possible (for anyone) to tell about its meritorious fruit. That sin like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of them who have earned it through a crore of existences, perishes in a moment, (when) they devoutly observe it (i.e. the vow). The religious merit of Rādhājanmāṣṭamī is hundred times more than the fruit which a man obtains by observing (a fast on) a thousand Ekādaśī (days). The merit due to Rādhāṣṭamī observed (but) once, is hundred times more than the fruit obtained by giving gold equal to the Meru (mountain). People obtain that fruit from the Rādhāṣṭamī, which (merit) they obtain by giving a thousand virgins (in marriage). A man gets that fruit of the Aṣṭamī of the beloved of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Rādhāṣṭamī), which he would get by bathing in holy places like Gaṅgā. (Even) a sinner who observes this vow casually or devoutly, would along with a crore members of his family go to Viṣṇu's heaven.

13-20. O child, formerly in Kṛtayuga an excellent, very beautiful woman, having a beautiful (i.e. slender) waist, having eyes like those of a female deer, of a beautiful form, having lovely hair, lovely ears, was known by the name Līlāvatī. She had committed very grave sins. Once, she, hankering after wealth, went to another city moving out from her own city. There, in a beautiful temple, she saw many wise people intent on observing the Rādhāṣṭamī vow. They were worshipping devoutly the excellent image of Rādhā with sandal, flowers, incense, lamps, (pieces of) cloth and various kinds of fruits. Some sang, danced, recited the excellent hymn of praise. Some (others) joyfully played upon the lute and beat the drum. Seeing them like that, she, full of curiosity, went near them, and politely asked them: "O you religious-minded ones, what are you, full of joy, doing? O virtuous ones, tell me who am full of politeness (what you are doing)."

21-24. Those devotees, intent upon the observance of the

vow, and interested in obliging and doing good to others, started speaking.

Those who observed the Rādhā (-aṣṭamī) vow said: “Today that eighth day on which—i.e. on the eighth day of the bright fortnight—Rādhā was born, has arrived. We are observing it carefully. This (vow of) the Aṣṭamī which is observed (like this) quickly destroys men’s sins like the sin due to the murder of a cow, or arising from stealing, or killing a brāhmaṇa, or which is due to carrying off the wife of another person, or due to (a man’s) violating his teacher’s bed (i.e. wife).”

25-42. Hearing their words, and repeatedly thinking (to herself), ‘I shall observe (this vow) which destroys all sins’ she observed that excellent vow there only along with those who were observing it. That pure woman died due to being hurt (i.e. bitten) by a serpent. Then (Yama’s) messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came there by Yama’s order, and tied her in a very painful way. When they decided to take her to Yama’s abode, messengers of Viṣṇu holding conches and maces came (there). (They had brought with them) an auspicious aeroplane made of gold, to which royal swans were yoked. Having quickly cut off (the nooses) with edges of their discs, they put that woman whose sin had gone (away), into the chariot. They took her to the charming city of Viṣṇu, called Goloka, where she stayed with Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā due to the propitiousness of the vow. O dear one, for him who, a fool, does not observe the vow of Rādhāṣṭamī, there is no acquittance from hell even for hundreds of crores of kalpas. Those women also who do not observe this vow which causes auspiciousness, which delights Rādhā and Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, go to Yama’s city in the end and fall into a hell for a long time. If per chance they get a birth on the earth, they certainly (become) widows. O child, once (this) earth was struck by the groups of the wicked. She, being extremely helpless, became a cow, and approached me. Weeping again and again, she told me (about) her grief. Hearing her words, I went to the proximity of Viṣṇu. I quickly narrated to Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) the intensity of her grief. He said (to me): “O brahman, with the gods go to the earth. Later I (shall) also go there with my attendants.” Hearing that I, along with the gods, came to the earth. Then Kṛṣṇa, calling Rādhā (who was to him) greater than

his own life, said (these) words (to her); “O goddess, I am going to the earth to destroy the burden of the earth. You (also) go to the earth.” Having heard those (words), Rādhā also then went to the earth. That Rādhikā sprang up by day on the sacrificial ground of Vṛṣabhānu on the day called Aṣṭamī in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada. When purified for the sacrifice, she, having a divine form, was seen (there). The king, delighted in mind, took her to his house and handed her over to his queen. She, too, nourished her.

43. Thus, O child, the words that I have told you are to be kept secret, to be kept secret, to be kept secret carefully.

Sūta said:

44. He who would devoutly listen to this (account of the vow) giving the fruit of the four goals (of human life), becomes free from all sins and ultimately goes to Viṣṇu’s house.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Prelude to the Churning of Ocean

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O preceptor, why was the ocean churned by the gods in ancient days? Curiosity is produced in my mind to hear it.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you in brief the reason for the churning of the ocean. Listen also to the account of the dialogue between Durvāsa and Indra.

3. Once, the brāhmaṇic sage Durvāsa who had practised great (i.e. severe) penance, who was very lustrous, who was born of a portion of the Lord, went to heaven to see Indra.

4-6a. At that time he saw Śacī’s lord (i.e. Indra) mounted on the elephant (called Airāvata). Seeing a garland of Pārijāta (flowers) the great sage gave it to him (i.e. to Indra). O brāh-

maṇa, Indra, the lord of gods, taking that garland, and putting it on the head of the elephant went with his army to Nandana (garden). The elephant seizing that garland, cut it off and hurled it on the ground.

6b-7. The great sage, getting very angry, thus spoke to him: “Since, you being endowed with the glory of the three worlds, are thinking lightly (of me), there is no doubt that your glory of the three worlds would perish”.

8-12. Then Indra quickly went to his city and then slept. The mother of the worlds saw (this) and disappeared. When she disappeared, the three worlds also disappeared. All (creatures) being hungry and thirsty constantly cried. The clouds did not shower (rain), and reservoirs of water went dry. All the trees were dried up and were bereft of fruits and flowers. All (gods) oppressed by hunger and thirst approached Brahmā. They told the grandsire about their distress and grief. Hearing the words of gods, the Creator, along with hosts of gods and sages like Bhṛgu, went to the milky ocean.

13-16. The Creator, muttering the eight-lettered hymn and meditating (on Viṣṇu), worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, on the northern shore of the milky ocean. Then Viṣṇu was pleased with all the gods, and the kind lord having mounted upon Garuḍa came there. (Gods) on seeing Viṣṇu who had worn a yellow garment, who had four arms, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace, who was the lord of the worlds, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who was a boat of (i.e. to cross) the ocean of mundane existence, who was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers, who had a curl of hair and the Kaustubha gem on his chest, had their eyes full of tears of joy, and praised with cries of victory and continuously saluted him.

The lord said:

17. O gods, choose a boon. Why have you come to me? I am the giver of boons. So speak (out). I (shall) give you (what you want). (This will not be) otherwise.

Gods said:

18-19a. O kind one, due to the brāhmaṇa's curse, the three worlds are bereft of wealth; O lord, with gods, demons and men

they are oppressed by hunger and thirst. Protect all these worlds. We have sought your refuge.

The lord said:

19b-23. O gods, Indirā (i.e. Lakṣmī), due to whose mere glance the world is endowed with glory, has vanished due to the curse of the brāhmaṇa (viz. Durvāsa). Then, O gods, all of you, along with the demons, having uprooted the golden mountain Mandara and making it, with the king of serpents going round it, the churning-rod, churn the milky ocean. O gods, from it Lakṣmī, the mother of the world will spring up. O glorious ones, there is no doubt that because of her you will be delighted. I myself, in the form of a tortoise, shall fully hold the (Mandara) mountain (on my back).

Saying so, that lord Viṣṇu disappeared. O brāhmaṇa, all the gods and demons went for churning the ocean.

CHAPTER NINE

The Churning Starts

Sūta said:

1. Then the hosts of gods with gandharvas and demons uprooted the Mandara mountain and put it into the ocean.

2-7a. Then the glorious, kind, ancient lord of the world supported on his back the bottom of the mountain. (Then the gods) putting Ananta (the lord of serpents) round it churned the milky ocean. When it was being churned on the Ekādaśī day, all of them ran away seeing the Kālakūṭa poison that had come up. Seeing them running away Śaṅkara said these (words): “O hosts of gods, hand over the poison to me. I shall quickly inactivate the great (i.e. severe) poison, viz. Kālakūṭa”. Saying so, that lord of Pārvatī, meditating upon Viṣṇu in his heart and uttering the great hymn, took that fearful poison. By the power of the great hymn, that great (deadly) poison was digested.

7b-22. He who, being controlled, would devoutly mutter the three names, viz. Acyuta, Ananta, and Govinda, of Viṣṇu with Praṇava (i.e. Om) at the beginning and Om at the end, has no fear of taking poison, or from fire and also from death. Then gods with their minds delighted, churned the milky ocean. Then Alakṣmī (i.e. Evil Fortune), of a dark face and red eyes, having rough and tawny hair, and having an old body, sprang up. She, the eldest one, said to the gods: "What should I do?" The gods spoke to that goddess, the repository of misery: "O goddess, we are giving you a place in the homes of those men where quarrel takes place. O eldest one, accompanied by evil stay (there). Always remain, causing misery, in the houses of those men who speak cruel and false words and who the mean men, eat at dusk. O eldest one, there is no doubt that your stay will be there where there are skulls, hair, ashes, bones, and chaff fire. Always remain, causing grief and poverty in the houses of those mean men who eat without washing their feet. Stay, always giving grief, and with dissension, in the houses of those who clean their teeth with sand, salt or charcoal. O you eldest one, causing filth, your stay will be in the houses of those mean men who eat mushrooms and a left-over coconut. There is no doubt that you will stay in the houses of those men of sinful thoughts, who eat sesamum-flour, bottle-gourd, garlic, shoots of young plants, a species of kadamba (called kalambaka) and onions. O you inauspicious one, always stay there (i.e. in that house) which is bereft of sacrifices (offered to) preceptors and gods, and bereft of gifts to guests, and where the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas is absent. O you inauspicious one, always stay there, where there takes place quarrel between a husband and his wife, where no worship of the dead ancestors or gods takes place, and where there is (indulgence in) gambling. Causing sins and poverty, always stay in that place where there dwell men who are adulterers, who snatch away the wealth of others, and where brāhmaṇas, good men and old men are not honoured." Having thus directed that eldest of all, who liked (to set up) quarrels, the gods again together churned the ocean.

CHAPTER TEN

The Birth of Lakṣmī

Sūta said:

1-4. Then Airāvata sprang up (from the ocean), so also the horse Uccaiṣravas. Then (sprang up) Dhanvantari, and the fragrant Pārijāta. So also there was the rise of the celestial nymphs. Then on the twelfth day in the morning, when the sun had risen, the great Lakṣmī, graced with all (auspicious) characteristics, sprang up. All the religious deities saw that great mother of all creatures having her abode in the heart of Viṣṇu, and were delighted. Then, the cool-rayed one (i.e. the Moon), the brother of Lakṣmī, sprang up with nectar. (So also) Tulasī, Viṣṇu's wife, purifying the world, came up.

5-6. Then they, with their desires fulfilled, put the mountain as it was before, and having together praised the mother, muttered the excellent Śrī-sūkta (i.e. hymn in honour of Lakṣmī). Then that goddess, who was pleased, said to all gods: "Well-being to you, O best gods, ask for a boon. I shall grant it."

The gods said:

7-8. O goddess Kamalā, O mother of all, O you who are dear to Viṣṇu, be pleased. Without you the world is a void. Protect our lives.

Thus addressed, that great Lakṣmī, dear to Viṣṇu, said: "Now I shall protect the lives of all creatures."

9-11. Then Viṣṇu, the kind lord of the world, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, suddenly appeared (there). Then the gods saluted the lord of the worlds and praised him. With the palms of their hands joined they spoke with a faltering voice: "O Viṣṇu, accept this Lakṣmī, the mother, your dear queen, who does not go away, for the good of the mundane existence." As long as he did not take the pledge (of marrying her) Lakṣmī said to Viṣṇu:

Lakṣmī said:

12. O Madhusūdāna (i.e. Viṣṇu), O lord, how do you

desire to marry me, the younger (sister), without marrying the elder sister, Alakṣmī? Does the younger sister get married when the elder remains unmarried?

Sūta said:

13-18. Having heard this, Viṣṇu, along with the gods, and according to the Vedic text, gave Alakṣmī to Uddālaka. Then the glorious Viṣṇu accepted Lakṣmī. Then all the hosts of gods again and again saluted him. Then they, superior in power, struck all the demons. All of them, crying, went into the ten directions. By the order of Viṣṇu the gods arranged a line in due order to eat (i.e. to drink) the nectar, and said to one another: “You give it, you give it, you give it.” Thus they spoke. They said: “I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.” Then Viṣṇu stood up, and took up a feminine form and distributed the nectar with a golden vessel.

19-22. When Rāhu ate up (i.e. drank) the nectar, the Moon and the Sun said: “This is a demon, who has come here deceitfully.” Then the lord of the world was angry, and struck him with the golden pot. His (i.e. Rāhu’s) head dropped on the ground, and came to be known as Ketu. Then, Rāhu and Ketu, afflicted with fear quickly went (away) from there. Now (even) when that day arrives he fights with the Moon and the Sun. The son of Simhikā (i.e. Rāhu) would live (in them). That would be a moment difficult to secure. (At that time) all water is like (that of) Gaṅgā, and all brāhmaṇas are like Vyāsa.

23-25. He, who, (at that time) bathes at the Vyāsatīrtha, would obtain the fruit of the bath at Gaṅgā. The gifts given (at that time) would have an inexhaustible merit; and the sin earned (i.e. committed) during crores of existences would completely perish; what then is the use of crores of sacrifices? One who longs for knowledge, gets it. One who desires a son, gets one. One who desires salvation, obtains it. A spell would certainly become effective. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, I have told you (the account of) the churning of the ocean.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Importance of Observing a Vow in Honour of Lakṣmī

Śaunaka said:

1-3. Now I desire to hear, O you who were actually instructed by Veda Vyāsa, of the nature of Viṣṇu. O you who have no pride, O you who favour the world, tell me properly as to how (i.e. by doing what) a sinful and very miserable woman would be fortunate. By (doing) what would she be dear to her husband, would she be beautiful, and nectar to (his) eyes? O you, rich in penance, tell me by which (means) wealth is produced.

Sūta said:

4. O brāhmaṇa, if (you think) this is a meritorious account, difficult to be had, (then) listen. I shall tell it to you briefly and properly.

5-13. In the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a king by name Bhadrāśravas. He was a resident of the Saurāṣṭra country and had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He had a wife by name Suratacandrikā. From her the king got seven attractive sons. Then a beautiful and truthful daughter, Śyāmābālā by name was born. She delighted her father. Once Śyāmābālā went joyfully with her friends to the ground under a nipa tree, very difficult to be met with, in the golden sands to play with attractive gems (to be) concealed (and then to be discovered). In the meanwhile, O brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī, rescuing people from the worldly existence and giving (i.e. teaching) them the right course and having taken the form of an old brāhmaṇa lady, herself came (there); and O brāhmaṇa, thinking in her mind (i.e. to herself), ‘Barring the house of the king, the ruler of all the people, to the house of which mean people should I go now?’ she went to the king’s abode which had golden walls and which was adorned with banners. Then having crossed the main gate, she said to the door-keeper: “O you of auspicious characteristics who are appointed at the door, leave it (and report to the queen). I am quickly going and seeing queen Suratacandrikā”.

14. Hearing those words of her, uttered like the note of a

cuckoo, (the doorkeeper) holding a golden staff in her hand, was extremely delighted.

The doorkeeper said:

15. O old lady, what is your name? Who is your husband? How have you come (here)? What is your business in seeing (i.e. with) the queen? For what reason (do you want to see her)? What (is your intention), O brāhmaṇa lady? I have curiosity to hear it.

The old lady said:

16-18a. Listen, O you (queen's) employee, O you who hold a jewelled staff (i.e. you who are the doorkeeper) of the great king's wife, since you have curiosity for (i.e. to know) the reason for my arrival, I am (that) well-known (goddess) named Kamalā, and the lord of the worlds is known as the lord of my life. (My) city is Dvāravatī by name. O employee, the lord of my life lives in that (city). O you having a jewelled staff in your hand, listen with curiosity. I have come from there. Now, to you, I shall tell the reason for my arrival.

18b-26. Formerly (i.e. in a former existence), your queen, born in a vaiśya family, was unhappy. One day, O employee, that unhappy lady quarrelled with her husband, and then tormented by her husband, she, weeping repeatedly, immediately went out of the house. Hearing her weeping, I approached her. I asked her all (her) account, and was properly told. Then I taught her the excellent vow. On my having taught the vow to her, she gladly practised the vow. O you doorkeeper, due to its propitiousness she became happy. Once she, born in a vaiśya family, died with her husband. Then lord Dharmarāja, who brings about the destruction of all, sent his fearful servants to bring the two (to his abode). The fierce messengers came (there) by Yama's order. They, with iron hammers in their hands exerted to go to Yama's abode.

27-31. In the meanwhile, those messengers of Lakṣmī, who were Viṣṇu's devotees, and who had held conches, discs and maces, came (there) to take them (to her abode). Seeing them like that, Yama's messengers fled (away). (Then) the magnanimous, self-radiant messengers of Lakṣmī cut off the nooses and

having put them in a chariot to which royal swans were yoked, they all suddenly went along the aerial path to Lakṣmī's city. For so many thousands of kalpas the two lived in Lakṣmī's city, as many times the excellent vow was practised by the vaiśya lady. To enjoy the remaining religious merit, the two are now born in a royal family. O you doorkeeper, the two, proud of the royal glory, have forgotten the vow. Therefore, to advise her and you also about the vow I have come (here).

The doorkeeper said:

32-33a. O old lady, in what manner is the vow practised? Practised in which month is the vow the best? Which is the deity that is worshipped? O mother, tell properly this to me who am asking you.

Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) said:

33b-43a. O employee (i.e. O doorkeeper), when the month of Kārtika has passed and the month of Mārgaśīrṣa has arrived, in that month, on a day called Thursday, in the morning, a woman surrounded by those who practise the vow, should worship Lakṣmī along with Nārāyaṇa. O you employee, she should propitiate Lakṣmī with sweets (mixed) with sweetened milk, and (articles of) food mixed with candied sugar, and then should pray like this: "O Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), you who are worshipped by the worlds and you who are dear to Viṣṇu; as you are unshakingly (devoted) to Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), in the same way remain (firmly) in me. O goddess Lakṣmī, you who rule (everything), O sinless one, give me shelter." Assuring Lakṣmī with many presents, she should please her. She should worship the goddess with great festivity by reciting sacred texts. O employee, then giving the remains of the articles of food to the deity, to the best brāhmaṇa, she should (distribute it among) herself, her husband, sons and other servants. O beautiful lady, listen to the speciality of the second Thursday: She should propitiate Lakṣmī with auspicious fried articles of wheat baked in earthen pots and variegated powders. She should devoutly (worship) Lakṣmī. On the third (Thursday) she should offer present of boiled rice mixed with candied sugar. On the fourth (Thursday) she should carefully and joyfully worship goddess

Lakṣmī with excellent śyāmāka and śāli (rice), O you having a jewelled staff in your hand. Then to please goddess Lakṣmī, she should please brāhmaṇas with (i.e. by giving them) money, cloth, ornaments, various articles of food and fruits.

The doorkeeper said:

43b-47a. O old lady, stay here only; informing the queen (of your arrival) I shall take you (to her). O best one, do not be angry.

Saying so, that beautiful lady went to the queen. O brāhmaṇa, that doorkeeper, having put her joined palms on her head told all that Lakṣmī had said from the beginning to the end to queen Suratacandrikā. Having heard the words of the doorkeeper queen Suratacandrikā went near the brāhmaṇa lady, and the beautiful lady proudly spoke to her.

The queen said:

47b-48a. O old brāhmaṇa lady, to advise what have you come here? Tell it to me quickly, as you please and giving up fear.

The brāhmaṇa lady said:

48b-50a. Seeing your immorality I desire to go quickly. O wicked one, what shall I tell you, since today, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Lakṣmī, O you cāṇḍālā, you are not observing that vow very difficult to have? I have seen that. Now, O proud one, who will (live) in your house?

50b-52. Hearing these words of the brāhmaṇa lady, she (i.e. the queen) with her eyes red with anger struck the old brāhmaṇa lady. Then that old Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) ran away crying. Then that girl Śyāmā, having penance as her wealth, who was playing, came near that brāhmaṇa lady on hearing her weeping.

Śyāmābālā said:

53-61. O old lady, tell me who caused you pain like this.

O best of brāhmaṇas, having heard her words, Kamalā, with

her voice faltering due to grief, told her the entire account. Śyāmābālā, having heard from her that vow extremely difficult to have, practised it, as told in the sacred texts, with faith and devotion. When the first three days (i.e. Thursdays) were over, and the fourth (Thursday) arrived, her marriage rite was accomplished by the grace of Lakṣmī. The son named Mālādhara, of king Śrīśiddheśvara, having royal lustre, took her and went home. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the wonder (that took place) when she had gone. O brāhmaṇa, it was not known who had taken away the very many rich articles that were there in the house of the queen. She sat without wealth, without ideas and without food and clothes; and to ask (her daughter) for something, she sent her husband with someone to her daughter's house. O brāhmaṇa, after some time he went with difficulty to the village of that Mālādhara, and reached the bank of a lake. Her maids had come there to take water from that (lake). Seeing him who was most unhappy, they, sympathising with him, said (to him).

The maids said:

62. Tell us all that—who you who have lost flesh and blood, whose body and hair are rough, are; wherefrom you have come.

The poor man said:

63-67. I am Śyāmābālā's father. I have come from Saurāṣṭra city. O maids, tell this to Śyāmābālā.

Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, they who were full of curiosity, laughed after looking at one another's face, and went to their city; and O brāhmaṇa, they told the entire account to Śyāmābālā. Hearing their words, she sent her servants. The beautiful lady gave her father flowers, oil, divine garments, sandal, betel-leaf and a horse. All the servants also went (to him) and having made him well-dressed, took him to Śyāmābālā's house, resembling a palace.

68-71. Then Śyāmābālā also carefully fed her father who was most unhappy, with food of śāli (i.e. boiled rice) with ghee. When four days had passed, she gave him money concealed in a vessel, and sent him (back), O you whose wealth is your pen-

ance. Then after entering his house, he found that the money that was there in the vessel (had turned into) a heap of charcoals, and being extremely unhappy he wept. He who had come (back) to his (own) house, went out of it to go to his daughter's house. She also went to the bank of that lake.

72-80. The chaste lady (i.e. Śyāmābālā) honoured her who was dearer to her than her own life, in the same way through affection for her mother. At this time Śyāmābālā thought of making her mother observe (the vow of) the excellent day of Lakṣmī. Her mother, having incurred the wrath of Lakṣmī, experienced poverty, and secretly ate what was left over by young ones of animals. Three days sacred to Lakṣmī passed, and on the fourth one she (i.e. Śyāmābālā) firmly made her observe (that vow). That queen Suratacandrikā came (back) to her city. She saw her house divine like that (i.e. as before) by the grace of Lakṣmī. O best of brāhmaṇas, Śyāmābālā on some occasion again went to the house of her mother with a desire to see her glory. Seeing Śyāmābālā from a distance, she became angry; and saying, "I shall not see her face", she remained hidden. Going into the interior of the house, and taking salt (from there), she (i.e. Śyāmābālā) quietly came to her house resorted to by Lakṣmī. The king, her lord, asked the chaste lady whose husband was her god: "O dear one, tell me what you have brought."

The wife said:

81-84. I have brought the essence of the kingdom; I shall show it to you at (the time of) the meal.

Saying so she cooked food without salt and gave food etc. to king Mālādhara. Then king Mālādhara eating the seasoned article without salt, became sad. Then she gave him (the salt) the essence of the kingdom. O brāhmaṇa, then the king's mind was pleased and he took his meal. And (repeatedly) saying, '(You are) blessed, (you are) blessed,' he praised the woman. One who does not observe this vow with great respect would become poor and luckless in existence after existence.

85-86. He who would listen to this with devotion, or would recite it attentively, would be freed from all sins, and would

obtain (i.e. go to) Lakṣmī's world. There is no doubt that for her who observes this vow without listening to its story, the fruit of the vow is lost.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Merit Earned by Protecting a Brāhmaṇa

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, kindly tell (me) due to which other religious merit a man with his sins gone (away) goes to the place of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said :

2-5. That man, O best brāhmaṇa, who protects a brāhmaṇa with his (own) wealth or his (own) life, goes to Viṣṇu's world. Formerly, in the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a king (named) Dīnānātha who was sonless (but who was) a devotee of Viṣṇu and a sacrificer. Once that king politely asked Gālava: "O best sage, O ocean of compassion, tell me due to which religious merit a son is born. I shall practise it by your order. The life of those men who do not have a son is useless."

Gālava said:

6-7. O king, I shall tell you in brief the cause of a son's birth about which you have asked me. Listen attentively. O best king, perform the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. Then you will have progeny endowed with all (good) characteristics.

The king said:

8. O preceptor, O brāhmaṇa, tell me by bringing what kind of man I shall perform the great human sacrifice, the best among sacrifices

Gālava said:

9-22. If a man has a handsome body, a charming face and

is proficient in all sacred texts, then he is fit for sacrifice. He who is crippled, has a black complexion, is a fool, would not be fit (for sacrifice).

O brāhmaṇa, when Gālava spoke like this, that king, the lord of men, sent his messengers, telling them the words of Gālava; and giving much money he selected brāhmaṇas like Gālava who had mastered all Vedic texts. Then by the order of the king the messengers gladly went carefully from country to country, village to village and even to cities, O best brāhmaṇa. Not finding (such a man) anywhere they then went to a country (and the city) called Daśapura which, O brāhmaṇa, was crowded with virtuous brāhmaṇas; where seeing the women having lovely hair and eyes like those of the young ones of deer, men were infatuated, since the women were moon-faced. In that charming city was (i.e. lived) a brāhmaṇa named Kṛṣṇadvija with his three sons and his amiable wife. He was a devotee of Viṣṇu, always spoke agreeably and was engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu. He maintained the (sacred) fire, was devoted to his parents and was a benefactor of the devotees of Viṣṇu. Then the messengers of the king requested the best brāhmaṇa: “O best brāhmaṇa, say, ‘give a son, give a son’. O best brāhmaṇa, the king does not have a son who would remove his affliction. For that (son) be initiated into the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. We shall take your son to offer him as a victim in that great sacrifice. O brāhmaṇa, carefully take a lakh of (coins of) gold (in exchange for your son). If, due to your fondness for your son, you would not give your son ungrudgingly, then we shall take him forcibly (because) we carry out the order of the king.” Hearing the words of the messengers the brāhmaṇa and his wife were afflicted with grief and with their minds full of fear, they were, as it were dead. “What is the use of wealth, gold, life or house?” The brāhmaṇa spoke these words to the royal officers.

The brāhmaṇa said:

23-27. O messengers, if you have certainly come to take (away) my son who removes the darkness of grief (in my life), then (please) listen to my words. Who living on the earth desires

to disobey the king's order ? But, leaving my son you (please) take me, an old brāhmaṇa (to the king).

Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the messengers, full of anger, forcibly left (coins of) gold in his house. When they angrily made up their mind to take away the son, the brāhmaṇa, weeping, and with the palms of his hands joined said: "O men, these words viz. 'leaving the eldest among my sons, take the other excellent one' do not come to my mouth (i.e. my tongue)."

28-30. Hearing the words of the brāhmaṇa, the messengers said to the brāhmaṇa's wife who was weeping: "O best one, give us the younger son." Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) them, the brāhmaṇa woman, being extremely grieved, fell on the ground as a plantain-tree falls on the ground due to (strong) wind. Taking up a hammer, she violently struck it on her head: "O messengers, I shall never give you my youngest son."

31-36. O brāhmaṇa, at this time the middle son of the brāhmaṇa, full of modesty and weeping, said to his parents: "Who would be the protector if the mother gives poison (to her son), or the father sells his son, or the king snatches away everything." Saying so, the son, saluting his parents with his head (bowed down), went with the speedy messengers of the king who was initiated. Then the brāhmaṇa and his wife, with their minds afflicted by the separation from their son, wept again and again and became blind. Then they (i.e. the messengers) on their way went to the hermitage of sage Viśvāmitra, which was full of (his) disciples and resorted to by young deer. The sage, seeing the royal officers, respectfully asked them: "O (men), who are you? Where had you gone? What is your profession?"

The king's messengers said:

37-40. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. A son is not born to the king. For (i.e. to obtain) that the king is initiated into the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. We are taking this brāhmaṇa-son (to be offered) as a victim in that (sacrifice).

Hearing these words of them, the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Viśvāmitra) became compassionate. 'Let even my life depart; (but) the boy

be happy. Those people who in this world cast their life like (a blade of) grass for a child, or a brāhmaṇa, or their master, obtain eternal worlds.'

41-44a. Thus thinking in his mind, the best brāhmaṇa said: "Leaving this brāhmaṇa-son to be offered as a victim in the sacrifice, (please) quickly take me. This is an excellent boy. Having obtained birth in this mundane existence, this child has not got any happiness. How (then) will he die (i.e. Why should he die)? O messengers, when he came from his house, his unlucky parents became unhappy. Indeed he has as it were gone to Yama's house." Having heard these words of him, the messengers said to the brāhmaṇa:

44b-48. "O wise brāhmaṇa, how shall we take an old man like you, without the order of king Dīnānātha?" Speaking thus the messengers then went to the city of the king. The sage also went to the city of the king. The sage also went to the sacrificial chamber with the host of the messengers. The messengers told the king the brāhmaṇa's gesture. He, hearing that, and with his mind full of doubt said to him: "If by performing this sacrifice without a victim I get a son, then you (may) take (back) this son of the brāhmaṇa."

The sage (Viśvāmitra) said:

49-62a. O king, when the sacrifice is performed, a mighty son will be born. Do not entertain a doubt about this. (Your) seeing (me) will not be fruitless.

Hearing these words of him (i.e. of Viśvāmitra), the king with joy performed the sacrifice with the 'complete oblation' with (the help of) all the sages. Then that best sage took the brāhmaṇa's son (with him) and went to the city named Daśapura; and having gone to his house the sage said (these) words: "O brāhmaṇa, you are staying at home." (The brāhmaṇa said): "O sage, I am staying as if I am dead. The king forcibly took (away) my son. What shall I do? O brāhmaṇa, when our son had gone, our eyes became blind due to weeping." O brāhmaṇa, when the best sage said, "See your son (and) take him (back)", the brāhmaṇa and his wife became glad. For the sake of the son, the two in a moment went out;

and due to perfection of the sage the eyes of the two quickly obtained light (i.e. power of seeing); and then on seeing the son the two drank for a long time the lotus-like face of the son with their bee-like eyes, and repeatedly saluted the sage, and O brāhmaṇa, the two i.e. the brāhmaṇa and his wife, who spoke agreeably, said these words: “O sage, you have indeed made to us a good present of our life.” O brāhmaṇa, the sage, the ocean of kindness, having given them blessings, went to his own hermitage. Having the great seat of Viṣṇu at his hand, the magnanimous sage practised a great penance difficult to be obtained (i.e. practised) even by deities. O brāhmaṇa, when some time passed, the king obtained a son. He was handsome, proper for a king, and like the moon in the ocean. O brāhmaṇa, the king too, free from grief and with curiosity arisen in him enjoyed like a god wealth on the earth.

62b-64. He, who protects brāhmaṇas by giving his life and wealth, goes to Viṣṇu’s abode, from which a return (to the mortal world) is difficult to have. Those who here (i.e. on the earth) recite or hear devoutly from a brāhmaṇa the story, or the account, or (even) one verse, go to Viṣṇu’s abode.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Importance of the Vow of Janmāṣṭamī

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, O you very wise one, tell me (about) Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, and its excellent importance, (and) emancipate me from the great ocean (of the mundance existene).

Sūta said :

2-8. O brāhmaṇa, he who devoutly observes the (vow) Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, ultimately goes to Viṣṇu’s city along with a crore (members) of his family. O best brāhmaṇa, when Aṣṭamī falls on a Wednesday or Monday in conjunction with Rohiṇī, it gives salvation to a crore (members) of his family. Even if a great sinner observes (this) excellent vow, he is freed from all sins and

in the end goes to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, that mean man who does not observe (the vow of) Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī, meets with misery here (i.e. in this world) and after death he would go to hell. That foolish woman who does not observe the vow of Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī goes to a terrible hell year after year. That foolish man who eats (food) on the day of Janmāṣṭamī, attains to a great hell. I am telling (you) the truth and truth (only). Formerly Dilipa asked the best sage Vasiṣṭha. Listen to that (conversation), destroying all sins, O you very intelligent one.

Dilipa said :

9-10. O great sage, tell me, I desire to hear (about) the Aṣṭamī in the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādrapada on which Viṣṇu was born. How was the lord, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, born in (i.e. from) the womb of Devakī, to do what and for what purpose (was he born from her womb)?

Vaiṣṭha said :

11-21. O king, I shall (tell you). I shall tell you for what purpose the lord of the world left the heaven and was born on the earth. Formerly the Earth was oppressed by kings like Kāṁsa. She, struck by Kāṁsa's messenger who was proud of his office, cried again and again, went with her eyes rolling to that place where the chief of gods, the lord of Umā and the bull-bannered god remained to tell him: "O lord, I am struck by Kāṁsa". Tears flowed (down her cheeks); she had become pale and insulted. The great god, seeing her weeping, came, with his lower lip throbbing with anger to the house of the Creator. Having gone to Brahmā he asked him for the destruction of Kāṁsa. (He said to Brahmā:) "O Brahman, along with Viṣṇu, produce (i.e. find out) a means". Having heard those words of the lord (i.e. Śiva), Brahmā went to the milky ocean where Viṣṇu was lying asleep on the serpent. Mounting upon the back of a swan he (i.e. Brahmā) came to Viṣṇu. Having gone there, the Creator, the best among the speakers, joined by gods led by Hara (i.e. Śiva), praised him softly with words: "Salutation to the lotus-eyed one, Viṣṇu, the highest soul, the protector of the world. O you lord of Lakṣmī, salutation to you." Having heard this praise from

them, Viṣṇu said to all gods with saddened faces: “How (i.e. for what reason) have you come?”

Brahmā said :

22-26. O god, O lord of the world, listen, I (shall) tell you why we have come, O best of the gods, O cause of the worlds. King Kāṁsa has become arrogant due to the boon given by Śiva. He has become unconquerable. He has struck the Earth; has afflicted her with the blow of his hand. After a boon was granted to him he was deceived by a trick. (He had said:) “O Śiva, I should not meet with death except through my sister’s son.” Therefore, O god, having gone to Gokula, and obtained birth in (i.e. from) Devakī’s womb, go yourself to kill that unconquerable Kāṁsa.

The god, sent forth by Brahmā, said to Śiva: “O lord of gods, hand over Pārvatī. Having remained for a year, she will go.”

27-49. With Pārvatī as his protector the god holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, undertook his journey to Mathurā. The maceholder there (i.e. at Mathurā) obtained birth in (i.e. from) the womb of Devakī. The lotus-eyed Pārvatī resorted to the womb of Yaśodā. Having rested in (Devakī’s) womb for nine months and nine days, the lord of the world, the enemy of Kāṁsa and the son of Vasudeva, was born (on) the night when Rohiṇī was in conjunction (with the Moon), when clouds were thundering, of the day called Aṣṭamī, (falling) in the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādrapada. Yaśodā, the daughter of Virāṭa and the wife of Nanda, gave birth to a daughter. Ānakadundubhi (i.e. Vasudeva) seeing his son, having lotus-like navel, and eyes like lotus-petals, began to be joyful, when Devakī, trembling with the fear of the demon, viz. Kāṁsa said (to him): “O lord, go, and hand over the son to Vairāṭī (i.e. Yaśoda). Having given (our) son to Yaśodā, bring (here) her daughter.” Hearing her words Vasudeva also was grieved. Placing the son on his side, he went to Yaśodā. On his way Yamunā was full of water, fearful, very long, having deep water and flooded. Seeing this, Vasudeva remained on the bank watching Yamunā and afflicted with grief he cried through anxiety: “What (shall) I do? Where (shall) I go? Even destiny has deceived me. Now, how shall I go to Yaśodā, to Nanda’s

house?" At that time, Viṣṇu gladly deceived, by means of a trick, his father who watching Yamunā remained on her bank for a moment. He looked (at Yamunā) again. In a moment she became (i.e. her water was) as high as the knee. Happy on seeing her (like that) he rose and started going. The lord of the world resorted to his magical power and fell into the water from his side. Seeing the son fallen (into the water) he wailed loudly and was extremely grieved. That Creator again deceived him by adoptnig a great trick. (He cried): "O lord of the worlds, protect me. O best god, protect my son." Seeing his father crying, (Kṛṣṇa) the enemy of Kāṁsa, sported repeatedly in the water and with compassion again went to (i.e. clasped) the bosom of his father. Then with him the best of the the Yadus went to Nanda's abode. Having given the son to Yaśodā, he brought her daughter. Then having come to his abode, he handed over the daughter (of Yaśodā) to his wife (Devakī). The news that Devakī had delivered was received by the enemy of (Devakī's) son. Then his messengers set out to bring (either) the son (or) the daughter. Those messengers of Kāṁsa, having come (there), proceeded to take the daughter. Having dragged her forcibly from Devakī and Vasudeva, the messengers of Kāṁsa, seized her and gave her to the enemy of gods. That great unconquerable king having held her was frightened. Kāṁsa, the greatest among the demons, seeing her whose complexion was like pure gold, whose face was like the full moon, and whose eyes were like flashes of lightning, and who was smiling, ordered: "Take her and kill her (by dropping) her on a slab of stone." Receiving the order, the demons proceeded to destroy her. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) suddenly went to the sky.

Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) said :

50. O king, listen, I shall tell you where your greatest enemy is. O greatest of the demons, your killer is hidden in Nanda's house.

Vasiṣṭha said :

51-57. Having spoken like this, the goddess went to her abode. Having heard the words of the goddess, king Kāṁsa was extremely pained. He said to his sister, Pūtānā: "You go to Nanda's house. Killing the son fraudulently, obtain many things

that you desire, which I shall give for killing my enemy. O you auspicious one, go very quickly.' That demoness, having received (Kāṁsa's) order, went to Gokula. Taking up an illusory form of a beautiful lady, she entered Gokula. Holding poison in her breasts, she went to kill (Kṛṣṇa). Having entered unnoticed through the door of the cowherds' house, she went inside, took up the child, gave him her breast and obtained beatitude. Then having hurled (the demon) Śakaṭa, and having crushed Tṛṇāvarta and others, and having curbed Kāliya, he went to the city of Madhu (i.e. Mathurā). Having gone there he killed the cruel Kāṁsa and vanquished his wrestlers. O king, I have told you this vow of (i.e. to be observed on) the day of Viṣṇu's birth.

58-62a. On hearing it, the sins (of the person who hears it), perish. (Then) what will happen on observing it? A man or a woman who observes this vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, obtains unequalled wealth as (much as is) desired in this (very) existence. (The vow should) not be observed on the third or the sixth day joined with the previous day. For those who desire religious merit, Aṣṭamī is Ekādaśī; (they should) carefully avoid Aṣṭamī joined with Saptamī. Even without (the rise of) the constellation, Aṣṭamī, joined with Navamī should be observed (as a fast day) if the constellation has risen, and there is partial Aṣṭamī and full Navamī (then the vow should be observed). Aṣṭamī that is united with (i.e. has) Rohiṇī (risen) for a short time, should be (regarded as) complete.

62b-67. O king, what is the use of observing crores of vows if Aṣṭamī with Rohiṇī falls on a Wednesday or with the Moon (i.e. on a Monday). Such Aṣṭamī is obtained or not obtained even after hundreds of years when it falls on a Monday or Wednesday. Without (the rise of) the constellation (Rohiṇī) the vow of Aṣṭamī should not be observed when the Aṣṭamī is joined with Navamī. The vow of Aṣṭamī should be observed even on the seventh day, if it is joined with Rohiṇī. When the eighth day of Kṛṣṇa is (there) even for fortyeight seconds, for kāṣṭhā (i.e. one thirtieth part of a kalā, which is equal to fortyeight seconds) or for a period of fortyeight minutes on the ninth day, the vow of Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī should be observed. That Aṣṭamī is acceptable (i.e. the vow should be observed even) on the ninth day, but not on that eighth day which is united with the seventh day. What (then

should be told) about Wednesday and especially about Monday? What (should be told) about Aṣṭamī that is united with Navamī? It gives salvation to crores of the members of the family. If there is the connection with the seventh day, (even) by (the measure of time called) pala, then a man should avoid the vow of Aṣṭamī (on that day) like the pitcher of water full of the water of Gaṅgā coming in contact with a drop of liquor.

Dilīpa said :

68. O great sage, O lord, tell (me), who first observed (this vow). Who brought it to light? What is its religious merit? What is its fruit?

Vasiṣṭha said :

69-77. The great king Citrasena indulged in great sins and in illicit intercourse, and stole the gold of a brāhmaṇa. He was always delighted with (i.e. always drank) liquor and flesh(-eating). Thus he was full of sins, and always took delight in killing animals. He always conversed with cāṇḍālas and the fallen. The king who was like this thought of hunting. Knowing (that there was) a tiger in the forest and carefully surrounding it, he spoke these words to all his soldiers: "I alone shall kill it. If anyone else strikes him, he will be undoubtedly killed." The tiger came along the path of the king. The king, though ashamed, then went after the tiger. With much trouble and difficulty he became intent upon killing the tiger. In the evening he oppressed with hunger and thirst (remained) on the bank of Yamunā. That was the eighth day, united with Rohiṇī—the birth-day (of Kṛṣṇa). O king, cāṇḍāla-girls observed the vow in (i.e. on the bank of) Yamunā with many articles as presents, and very auspicious incense and lamps. Seeing the sandal, the flowers and (other) very charming articles like saffron, and food with many excellences, the kings' mind was perturbed.

The king said :

78a. For want of food my life shall certainly and instantly depart today.

The women said :

78b-85. O sinless king, on the day of Janmāṣṭamī of (i.e.

sacred to) Viṣṇu, you should not eat the hard flesh of a vulture, (of) a crow or of a cow, so also (you should not eat) food. There is no doubt (you have formerly) eaten it. What blemish would not come to the men who in this world eat (on the day of Kṛṣṇā-ṣṭamī)? For him who, when his vital airs remain in his body (i.e. while alive), has not observed (the vow of) Jayantī, and has not observed a fast (on that day), the punishment is (going to) Yama's abode. His manes do not accept whatever he has offered to them with proper rites. When food is taken on a Jayantī, all the manes are thrown (down).

Hearing this, O king, the king then observed that vow. Being delighted, he brought a few flowers, a little sandal, a small (piece of) cloth, observed the vow, and broke the fast at the end of the (Aṣṭamī) day. By the power of this vow Citrasena along with his dead ancestors got into a divine aeroplane and went to Viṣṇu's abode. Men obtain that fruit from the Aṣṭamī-vow which they get after going to Mathurā and seeing the lotus-like face of Kṛṣṇa. The poor obtain that fruit by observing the Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī-vow which they get by going to Dvārakā and seeing Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Greatness of a Brāhmaṇa

Śaunaka said:

1. O you very wise one, O you ocean of compassion, kindly tell me the importance of a brāhmaṇa, the best of all the castes.

Sūta said:

2-8. O best brāhmaṇa, a brāhmaṇa is the preceptor of all the castes. He should be known to be the resort of all gods, and he is actually Viṣṇu, the lord. O best brāhmaṇa, the wealth etc. of him who devoutly salutes a brāhmaṇa, looking upon him as Viṣṇu, enhances. Viṣṇu would always desire to cut off

the head of him who, being proud, does not even casually salute a brāhmaṇa. Those of sinful minds, who hate a brāhmaṇa who has committed an offence, should be known to be hating Viṣṇu. They go to a terrible hell. Yama torments with a heated needle the eyes of him who would look angrily at a brāhmaṇa who has come to make a request. The messengers (i.e. servants) of Yama put (a piece of) heated iron into the mouth of the foolish mean man who threatens a brāhmaṇa. Kṛṣṇa himself along with gods eats in the house of those in whose house a brāhmaṇa with penance as his wealth eats.

9-13a. All the sins, like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of that man who takes just a drop of water (flowing) from the foot of a brāhmaṇa, perish. I tell you the truth—the man who would devoutly wash the feet of a brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins. That woman who has no sons or that woman whose child was stillborn, would (respectively) have a son, would have her child alive. Those holy places which exist in the world, those holy places which exist in an ocean, those holy places that exist in a sea, exist in the feet of a brāhmaṇa. He whose head is always sprinkled with the water from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, has (indeed) bathed at all the places (and) is free from all sins.

13b-20. O you Śaunaka, having penance as your wealth, listen, I shall tell you the greatness destroying all sins—the history, of the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly there was a śūdra named Bhīma who was engaged in the occupation of a vaiśya. Even in Dvāpara (yuga), he, a cruel man who killed a thousand brāhmaṇas, was satisfied with a vaiśya wife. That Bhīma had given up the conduct of a śūdra and had illegitimate connection with his preceptor's wife. How can I tell each one (of his sins)? The sins of the śūdra, viz. Bhīma, of a wicked mind, could not be counted. Once he went to a brāhmaṇa's house. He made up his mind to enter the brāhmaṇa's house and to take (away) his money. He remained near the outer gate (of the house) of the brāhmaṇa. He spoke piteous words to the brāhmaṇa, the treasure of penance: "O lord, listen to my words. I think you are kind. I am oppressed with hunger; give me food, (otherwise) my life will soon depart (i.e. I shall die soon)."

The brāhmaṇa said:

21-23. O you who are oppressed with hunger, listen to my words. There is nobody (in my house) to cook food. There is rice. Take it and eat it as (much) as you like. I do not have a father or a mother; I do not have a son or a brother; I do not have a wife or the brother of my mother (i.e. maternal uncle). Leaving me all of them are dead. O guest, being jobless and unlucky I am staying in the house (all) alone. Viṣṇu alone lives in my abode. I do not know anyone else but him.

Bhīma said:

24. O best brāhmaṇa, I too do not have any (relative). I am a śūdra by caste. I shall remain in your house always serving you.

Sūta said:

25-33. Hearing (those) words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the brāhmaṇa who was delighted, quickly cooked food and gave it to him, O ascetic. He too being delighted lived in the brāhmaṇa's house doing to the brāhmaṇa affectionate and good service. 'Today or tomorrow I shall kill him, I shall take away his money and make it mine. Certainly I shall take it (away).' Thinking and deciding like this, he did, by (bowing) his head, whatever work like washing his feet, the brāhmaṇa would tell (him to do); (thus) he was free from sins. The brāhmaṇa having sipped water, everyday put before him under some pretext, the water flowing from his feet. Once a thief came there to take away money. At night having drawn out the panels (of the door) he entered the interior of the house. Seeing Bhīma (there), he came with a staff in his hand to strike him. The thief having broken his head, quickly ran away. Then Viṣṇu's soldiers, holding conches, discs, and maces came (there) to take Bhīma whose sins had gone. O brāhmaṇa, a divine chariot to which royal swans were yoked, also came there. Getting into it, he went to Viṣṇu's abode, not easily accessible. I have narrated this greatness of a brāhmaṇa. It destroys the sin of him who listens to it.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

*The Importance of Ekādaśī**Śaunaka said:*

1. O illustrious one, tell me the importance of Ekādaśī, and also what its fruit is and the sin (that accrues) to him who does not observe it.

Sūta said:

2-40. Now why should I tell the importance of (the vow of) Ekādaśī? The messengers of Yama, who cause fear to all beings, are frightened on hearing the name of Ekādaśī. There is no doubt about this. A man should observe a fast on the auspicious (day of) Ekādaśī which is the best of all vows, should keep awake and highly decorate Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, the man who worships Viṣṇu with Tulasī-leaves, obtains the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. That sin which is said to be due to illicit intercourse, perishes due to a fast on the (day of) Ekādaśī. O brāhmaṇa, he who would offer a lamp full of ghee (to Viṣṇu) on the Viṣṇu-day (i.e. Ekādaśī), in the end goes to Viṣṇu's place. "Do not bring to me these meritorious beings who observe a fast on (the day of) Viṣṇu's going to bed or his turning aside, and especially on the Prabodhini (Ekādaśī)." Thus orders Yama to his messengers day and night. Ekādaśī is dear to the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) and enhances religious merit. Viṣṇu does burn the body (of a man) on (his) eating food on that (day). Fie upon the life, wealth, handsomeness and conduct of those, the most sinful ones, who eat food on (the day of) Ekādaśī! They are the eaters of feces. O best brāhmaṇa, on merely eating food on Ekādaśī(-day), many and various sins attend upon the eater. As a great sin would accrue by having coitus with women on the new moon day, in the same way sin would be there (i.e. would be committed by a man) on eating on an Ekādaśī (-day). Beings (i.e. men) become diseased, crippled, and suffer from cough, and congenital leprosy on eating food on that (day). They become (i.e. are born as) village-pigs and are reduced to poverty. O best brāhmaṇa, people are bound by the king on eating (i.e. if they eat) on that (day), O brāhmaṇa,

(all) the sins that are there in the worldly existence resort to food. There would be escape from hell of those who commit all sins (but) drink water (on that day only) through the order (of a superior person etc.). There is no escape (from hell) for those men who eat on Viṣṇu's day. Sin due to crores of brāhmaṇa-murders would accrue to those men for each kind of food that they eat. O men, listen, listen, I tell again, I tell again: On the day of Viṣṇu, (food) should not be eaten, food should not be eaten, food should not be eaten. That fruit is obtained by him who fasts on an (Ekādaśī-) day which is obtained by bathing in Gaṅgā etc. and at holy places or at the (time of) lunar or solar eclipse. He having worshipped (i.e. who worships) with lotus-garlands lord Viṣṇu after having properly broken the fast, does not have a place in mother's womb (i.e. is not reborn). O brāhmaṇa, he who makes a decoration in Viṣṇu's abode (i.e. temple) on an Ekādaśī(-day), gets the highest status and would stay in Viṣṇu's house. Those who having waited for the Ekādaśī(-day) observe a fast on that day, undoubtedly stay in Viṣṇu's city. There is no doubt that those whose minds are clung to the devotion of Viṣṇu, go to the highest place of Viṣṇu. Those too who have no longing for others' wealth and whose minds are contented, certainly have (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's city. Those best men, who having encountered famine give food to creatures, undoubtedly get (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's abode. Those, who cast their life for protecting cows, brāhmaṇas, (their) master, and a woman, certainly get (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's city. Creatures (i.e. men) should never observe a fast on (an Ekādaśī day) joined with Daśamī (i.e. the tenth day). O best brāhmaṇa, it should be avoided like the proximity of a wicked man. Having fasted on that day, if the Ekādaśī-day is joined with Daśamī at the break of day, having fasted on that day, there would be Dvādaśī, and breaking of the fast would be on the thirteenth day. A devotee of Viṣṇu should not observe the Ekādaśī-vow on that day if the day-break is said to be the four ghaṭikās of the morning. This is the time of the bath for the ascetics, and is said to be like the water of Gaṅgā. If at the time of day-break Daśamī is seen (to continue), then on that day Ekādaśī destroying religious merit, worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyments, should not be observed. A wise man should avoid the Ekādaśī joined even a little with Daśamī,

as he would abandon a pitcher full of ghee spoiled by the contact of a drop of liquor. When there is the full Ekādaśī (i.e. it falls on the eleventh day) and again continues (in part) on the twelfth day also, then the latter should be observed by ascetics and a householder should observe a fast on the former day. When a part of Ekādaśī does not go beyond Dvādaśī, the merit there is of a hundred sacrifices; and the breaking of the fast (should be done) on the thirteenth day. If the Ekādaśī is omitted and is further united with Dvādaśī, then a man should fast for the entire twelfth day if he desires the highest place. If it is the entire Ekādaśī (day) and if it is there in the morning also, then, if Dvādaśī is after it (commencing on that day) all should observe the (fast of Ekādaśī) on the latter day. Those men whose mind clings to the Ekādaśī-vow, live in heaven and go to Viṣṇu's house. There is no greater means than Ekādaśī for (going to) the next world. He who, full of many sins, observes (a fast on) the day of Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

41-42. That woman who along with her husband observes (a fast on) the day of Viṣṇu, gets good sons, is fortunate to have a (good) husband. and after death goes to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, the religious merit of him, who devoutly offers a lamp before (the image of) Viṣṇu on the day of Viṣṇu (i.e. Ekādaśī), cannot be measured (i.e. is immeasurable).

43-44. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who with her husband keeps awake on the day of Viṣṇu, would stay for a long time with her husband in the abode of Viṣṇu. The religious merit due to an object offered to Viṣṇu on his day is always inexhaustible.

45. Formerly there was (a man) named Vallabha in a city named Kāñcana. The lord of wealth had much wealth.

46-58a. O brāhmaṇa, his very beautiful wife was Hemaprabhā by name. The great characteristic of Kali, viz. being talkative, assaulted (i.e. overpowered) her. O you great ascetic, she would always quarrel with her husband. She would always censure her elders with mean words. She, the impure one, would always secretly eat from the cooking utensils and every-day would offer the remnants of the food to the elders. Her heart was always set on her paramour, (yet) she would say, 'I

am a chaste woman.' She always caused anxiety to her husband by her quarrels. Once seeing her who had come (to him), her husband censured her and struck her who was full of all sins. Full of anger, she went to a vacant house, and without anybody's knowledge slept and remained there and did not (drink and) eat water or food. Fortunately for her on that day of Viṣṇu (there was the festival of) Viṣṇu's turning upon other side¹—the Ekādaśī-vow, destroying all sins. Then, when it dawned, Dvādaśī with the Śravaṇā (constellation) came. Then that woman with her mind full of anger, observed two fasts, and became pure; and O brāhmaṇa, on the day of the Jayantī, she died at night. By Yama's order, his fearful messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came there to take her like that (to Yama's abode). When they decided after binding her to take her to Yama's abode, Viṣṇu's messengers holding conches, discs and maces came (there). Having cut off the noose, they put her, free from sins and (therefore) pure, into a divine chariot. Surrounded by them, she then went to Viṣṇu's auspicious house, not easily accessible (even) to gods.

58b-60. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you the importance of Viṣṇu's day. He who observes this vow even unwillingly goes to Viṣṇu's abode. A man who would go to Viṣṇu's temple on an Ekādaśī-day to offer him a lamp, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice at every step. Those who listen to or read the Purāṇas on Viṣṇu's day, obtain, for every letter (listened to or read), the fruit due to the gift of a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa).

1. Pārśvaparivartana—Name of a festival on the eleventh day of the first half of Bhādrapada when Viṣṇu is supposed to turn upon the other side in his sleep.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

*How to Win Favour of Viṣṇu**Śaunaka said:*

1. O Sūta, kindly tell (me) that due to which act the sins would perish and grace of Viṣṇu would follow.

Sūta said:

2-4. O Śaunaka, I shall tell you what destroys the sins of the listeners, by which Viṣṇu's grace, destroying sins, would take place. O sage, the sin of him, earned during crores of existences disappears, who, with devotion and in many ways, offers on a full moon day worship to the lord of the world, O sage. Certainly the favour of the lord of Śrī would come to him.

5. The sins of him who would devoutly give food to a brāhmaṇa on Dvādaśī, would perish like darkness at day-break.

6-14. Śrī Viṣṇu instantly loves the man who would bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with milk, sugar etc. on a Dvādaśī day, O brāhmaṇa. The giver who would offer a stone-like flower to Viṣṇu without any hymn, has a downfall. That man who would give a stone-like gift, a foolish brāhmaṇa, does not have religious merit. The foolish brāhmaṇa who, having no knowledge, accepts a gift like wasted fire at the time of deluge, through delusion, would, due to that, go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, the three, viz. a wooden elephant, or a deer drawn in a picture, or a brāhmaṇa having no knowledge, (simply) bear their names. As the water remaining on a path is purified by means of wind or the sun, in the same way the sin of him who devoutly sees the retinue (of a god), perishes. He who would devoutly offer on the full-moon day of the month of Āśvina parched grain with ghee and cowrie for playing to Viṣṇu goes, free from rebirth, to Viṣṇu's place. A man who through folly would not give to Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu is not pleased with him. He who would offer cowries to Viṣṇu on the full-moon day will certainly live in Hari's abode for as many days as the number of cowries (offered).

15-17. O best of brāhmaṇas, formerly in the city of Kara-vira lived a cruel and fearful śūdra whose name was Kāladvija. Engaged in his own duty, he destroyed the business of his

master. Once (when) he died, the fearful messengers of Yama came to take him to Yama's abode. Having tied him, they took him (to Yama's abode). Seeing him, Yama asked his minister (Citragupta):

Yama said:

18. O wise minister Citragupta, tell me from the beginning the good or bad deeds of (i.e. done by) him.

Citragupta said:

19-20. This sinner is of a wicked conduct; he has destroyed the business of his master. He does not have religious merit even of the size of an atom. Let him be roasted in hell for a hundred ages of Manu, O king. Then let the cruel one be born in the species of serpents and let him continuously live in a cave.

Sūta said:

21-28. O brāhmaṇa, for that much period he fell into (and lived in) hell, and then, being very unhappy he was born in the species of serpents in a cave. Once, O brāhmaṇa, on the full moon day in the month of Āśvina he threw out from the hole fried grain and cowries. That fell before Viṣṇu. Kind Viṣṇu who removes unhappiness, himself quickly destroyed his sin. When the time for his death arrived, he died. O brāhmaṇa, many messengers of Yama came to take him (to Yama's abode). When after binding him they started taking him to Yama's abode, messengers of Viṣṇu, holding conches, discs and maces came (there). They cut off his nooses and quickly put him whose sins had perished, into a divine chariot. The messengers of Yama ran (away). Surrounded by them the serpent went to Viṣṇu's house. Being free from rebirth he remained before (i.e. near) Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I certainly do not know what the religious merit of him who devoutly offers fried grain with ghee and cowries to Viṣṇu, would be.

29. O brāhmaṇa, the sins of him* who devoutly listens to this chapter destroying sins, perish due to the grace of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

*The Importance of Water Flowing from Viṣṇu's Feet**Śaunaka said :*

1. O you ocean of compassion, O you very wise one, tell me from the beginning the greatness of the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which destroys sins.

Sūta said :

2-11. The water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu destroys all sins and is auspicious. He who would carry (even) a drop of it, would obtain the fruit of (visiting) all the holy places. O brāhmaṇa, the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet destroys the sin of him who touches it; he does not meet with an untimely death and would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā. O brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that the sin in the body of the sinner who would drink the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu, would perish. That man who would devoutly carry on his head the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet along with a Tulasī-leaf in the end goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Men obtain that fruit by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which is obtained by giving (pieces of) gold resembling Meru. That fruit is surely obtained by offering water to Viṣṇu's feet and touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which is obtained by (offering) thousands of crores of cows. The fruit that is obtained by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, is crores of times greater than the fruit which is obtained by performing thousands of crores of sacrifices. O brāhmaṇa, the fruit (obtained) by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet is greater than the fruit got by men by giving a crore of virgins (in marriage to worthy grooms). That fruit which a man obtains by giving a crore of elephants or by giving a crore of horses is obtained by a man by touching the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, a man would get a larger fruit by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, than that which he would obtain by giving (the earth) with the seven islands along with crops (growing on it).

12. O brāhmaṇa, listen, I shall tell you in brief. (What is the

use of) telling more? By touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, a sinner goes to Viṣṇu's house.

Śaunaka said :

13. O Sūta, kindly tell me which creature formerly reached Viṣṇu's abode by touching and drinking the water flowing from Viṣṇu's feet.

Sūta said :

14-18. Formerly in Tretāyuga there was a sinful brāhmaṇa by name Sudarśana. O best brāhmaṇa, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu he would always eat (food, i.e. would not observe a fast). He always censured the sacred texts and always condemned the vows. Except his own belly he did not recognise anything else. O brāhmaṇa, when once the time of his death arrived, he died. The messengers of Yama came (to his place), and binding him they took him to Yama's abode. Seeing him, the brother of Yamunā (i.e. Yama) angrily asked his minister: "O minister, tell (me) from the root (i.e. from the beginning) what his merit is and what his sin is. This brāhmaṇa seems to be a great sinner and a man of cruel acts".

Citragupta said :

19-21. Listen to his sins(s). He has no merit even of the size of an atom (to his credit). O lord, even on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, he always used to eat (food). O king, that mean man who would eat on the day of (i.e. sacred to) the lord of Kamalā (i.e. on the day sacred to viṣṇu), would eat feces and goes to a fearful hell. Give him a place in a hell for a hundred periods of Manu. Then he will be born in the stock of a śūdra.

Sūta said :

22-28. O brāhmaṇa, then, by Yama's order his terrible messengers threw him into feces (where he remained) for more than a hundred ages of Manu. Freed from there he became (i.e. was born as) a village-pig on the earth. For a long time he would remain in hell due to his having eaten food on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the time of his death arrived, and he died. He obtained a birth (i.e. was born) in the stock

of crow and always ate feces. O brāhmaṇa, one day this crow of a śabara drank the water, after the śabara's death, (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet and remaining (i.e. collected) at the door (of the temple) and being killed by a hunter, fell (dead) on the same day. He, the eater of offerings, got into a divine, auspicious chariot to which royal swans were yoked, and went to Viṣṇu's abode. (I have) told you the greatness of the water (flowing) from (Viṣṇu's) feet. The sin of a sinful man who listens to it, perishes.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Purificatory Acts for One Guilty of Illegitimate Intercourse

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, tell me fully, with what can a man who having through delusion had illegitimate intercourse, be purified?

Sūta said :

2-8a. The best brāhmaṇa, who cohabits with a cāṇḍāla woman or an outcaste woman, should observe three fasts, then should observe the Prājāpatya vow, get clean-shaved with (even) the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed), and should give a couple of cows (to a brāhmaṇa). The brāhmaṇa becomes purified after giving proper present (to a brāhmaṇa). If a kṣatriya or a vaiśya cohabits with a cāṇḍālī, he should (observe) the Kṛcchra Prājāpatya (vow) and should give two pairs of cows to (a brāhmaṇa). O you ascetic, if a śūdra cohabits with an outcaste woman, he should give four pairs of cows (to a brāhmaṇa) and observe the Prājāpatya vow. If a man being infatuated, cohabits with his mother or sister or daughter, or his daughter-in-law, he should observe three Kṛcchra (-vows). Having observed three Cāndrāyaṇa (-vows), he should give three pairs of cows. Getting clean-shaved with (even) the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed), he should drink the mixture of the five products of a

cow. O ascetic, in this case he becomes purified even after making offerings into fire.

8b-10. O best brāhmaṇa, if a man through infatuation, cohabits with the wife (other than his mother) of his father, or his mother's sister, or his preceptor's wife, or his maternal uncle's wife, or his brother's wife born in the same family, he should observe a couple of Prājāpatya (-vows). O brāhmaṇa, he should observe three Cāndrāyaṇa-vows, (should give) five pairs of cows to brāhmaṇas and should give them a present. He is (by doing so) purified. There is no doubt about this.

11-14a. That fool who cohabits with a cow, should observe three fasts; there is no doubt that he is purified by giving a cow and food. He who cohabits with a prostitute, a female ass, a female pig or a monkey or a she-buffalow, should remain without eating in mud after having thrown himself there upto his neck. He is purified after three nights. He should observe fast for three nights after having got clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed). Undoubtedly he is purified on remaining in water for a night.

14b-17a. O you ascetic, he who being infatuated by love, would cohabit with a brāhmaṇa-woman should observe three Prājāpatya (-vows) and three Cāndrāyaṇa (-vows). Similarly he should give three cows (to a brāhmaṇa). The brāhmaṇa woman should drink the mixture of the products of a cow for five nights, O brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt that by giving a pair of cows and a present (to a brāhmaṇa) she is purified. When a man cohabits with the wife of someone else he should observe (the vow of) Kṛcchra Sāntapana.

17b-24. A woman is like a bar. Therefore, he should avoid her. If a man (even) once cohabits with a woman out of his caste or a mean one, he should observe Prājāpatya Kṛcchra. There is no doubt that thereby he is purified. A woman is like a burning charcoal. A man is like ghee. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, he should never remain in her vicinity. O brāhmaṇa, that woman, the destroyer of the family, who conceives (due to cohabitation) with her paramour, should be altogether abandoned. There is no blemish in doing so. That woman who would, leaving her own relatives, go (away) from her house, is spoiled, has fallen from the family. One should have no contact with her again. That

woman who, being infatuated, cohabits with another man (who is not her husband), should observe the Prājāpatya Kṛcchra, and then should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then she should give a pair of cows (to a brāhmaṇa). She is (thus) undoubtedly purified. When a childish brāhmaṇa woman, being deluded, cohabits with a stranger, she should be abandoned by (her) men. There is no blemish (in doing so). O brāhmaṇa, that brāhmaṇa who, being deluded by passion of love, would cohabit with a brāhmaṇa-woman, should give a cow and sesamum. Undoubtedly he is (thereby) purified.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Purificatory Acts for Other Sins

Sūta said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, listen, I shall tell you, how those who, through ignorance, have eaten feces (or drunk) urine or have sipped liquor, are purified.

2-4a. O sage, he should observe two Prājāpatya (-vows); he should go to a holy place. He should give a bull and eleven cows, and then should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed). Having gone to all crossways he should observe the Prājāpatya (-vow). Then he should give a pair of cows and drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. There is no doubt that he is purified after having fed brāhmaṇas.

4b-8. If a man eats the food of a cāṇḍāla or drinks his water knowingly or while in a difficulty, he should observe Kṛcchra Cāndrāyaṇa; (and) having got himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed), he should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. One or two or three or four cows should be respectively given to brāhmaṇas if he eats the food of a cāṇḍāla or of (i.e. prepared by) a woman recently delivered or food which is not fit to be eaten or water which should not be drunk. If knowingly or while in difficulty he eats

the food left over by a śūdra, he should observe two Prājāpatya-vows and three Cāndrāyaṇa-vows. O brāhmaṇa, then he should give a couple of cows and drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then, after offering oblations into fire and having fed many brāhmaṇas, he would certainly be purified.

9. There is no doubt that if (a portion of) the food is eaten by rats, mongooses or cats it is purified, when it is sprinkled over with water mixed with sesamum and darbhas, O brāhmaṇa.

10-11. O brāhmaṇa, a man who eats an onion, garlic, a pot-herb, bottle-gourd, a small red variety of garlic and meat, should observe the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. Due to his doing vile acts a śūdra loves liquor and meat. One should avoid from (i.e. keep at) a distance such a śūdra like a cāṇḍāla.

12. Those who are engaged in serving the twice-born who avoid liquor and meat, who are engaged in giving gifts and in their own duties, should be known to be best vṛṣalas.

13-17a. O brāhmaṇa, if a brāhmaṇa unknowingly eats (food) in a family where impurity is caused by child-birth or by death, he would be purified by reciting the Gāyatrī(-hymn) ten thousand times. O ascetic, a kṣatriya would be purified by reciting it thousands of times, and a cāṇḍāla by (taking) the mixtures of the five products of a cow. A man of a (higher) caste, who, even unknowingly, would drink ghee, or water of curd contained in a vessel of a low-caste man, should observe the Prājāpatya vow. He should give many gifts. By offering oblations into the fire according to the proper rite he is purified. For a śūdra there is no fast. He is purified just by giving gifts. Observing a fast day and night he should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed).

17b-19a. O brāhmaṇa, a man who is beaten by the low-caste ones with sticks etc. should observe (either) the Prājāpatya-vow or the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. He should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed) and should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then he should give a couple of cows and offer oblations of food etc. into fire.

19b-23. O brāhmaṇa, if a man takes liquor knowingly or casually in his house, he should be dropped from (i.e. driven out of) the family. A man who destroys cow's seed or cuts off shoots, or steals gold, should observe Kṛcchra and three Prājāpatya

-vows. Having got himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed), he should also drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. In the same way he should thrice offer oblations into fire. O ascetic, food and water from him may be accepted. He should eat in the morning for three days without begging. For three days he should not eat. This is the Prājāpatya -vow.

24-29. O sage, he should drink cow's urine. cow-dung, (cow's) milk, curd, ghee and water mixed with kuśa for two days and should observe fast for a night. This is said to be Kṛcchra Sāntapana which removes all sins. He should eat one morsel for three days in the morning and in the evening without begging and should fast for three days. This vow is (called) Atikṛcchra. O brāhmaṇa, he should drink hot water, milk and ghee for three days. O sage, he should bathe once (a day). This is said to be Tapta-Kṛcchra. Not taking food for twelve days is known as Parāka Kṛcchra, which removes sin and is well-known. He should increase one morsel everyday in the bright half and reduce one morsel everyday during the dark half. He should not eat when the moon has waned (i.e. on the new-moon day). This is known as the Cāndrāyaṇa -vow. A brāhmaṇa should eat four morsels in the morning, four when the sun has set (i.e. in the evening). This is known as Śīśu-Cāndrāyaṇa.

30. A woman who destroys a pumpkin gourd, should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow for three days and should give five pumpkin gourds along with gold and garments (to a brāhmaṇa). (Then) O ascetic, water and food of (i.e. offered by) her may be accepted.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Greatness of the Worship of Rādhā-Dāmodara

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, (tell me which) you said to be the (deeds of) merit, doing which, the frogs (men) in the blinding well due to darkness, will cross the ocean of mundane existence.

Sūta said:

2-10. That woman who, bathing (every) morning in Kārtika, being dear to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, being composed and devoutly worshipping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, gives up eating meat etc. and is engaged in serving her husband, goes to Viṣṇu's place called *Goloka* which is very difficult to obtain (i.e. to reach). She who would offer incense and lamp to Rādhā and Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) in Kārtika, goes, with her sin abandoned (i.e. removed), to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who would offer a garment to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa would, for a long time, live in the abode to Śrī Viṣṇu. She who offers to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa fragrant flowers and garlands in the month of Kārtika, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Also she who would offer sandal and make an offering like sugar to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, the merit of that woman who gives something to a brāhmaṇa in the month of Kārtika to please Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, becomes inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who devoutly worships Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the month of Kārtika goes (to Viṣṇu's abode); she would not live in hell for long, even if she was a widow in a previous existence or was not dear to her husband.

11-18. O brāhmaṇa, in olden days in the Tretāyuga there lived a śūdra named Śaṅkara in the Saurāṣṭra country. His wife was Kalipriyā by name. She always longed for a paramour, and looked upon her husband like (a blade of) grass (i.e. treated him disgracefully). 'This husband is not proper for me, my lord is some other man.' Thinking like this she always gave him food that was left over. The very foolish woman (drank) liquor and ate meat due to the company of mean people. The cruel

one always reproached her husband at her will. 'He is a rope (tied to my) feet; why did he not die? When he dies I shall enjoy at will.' O brāhmaṇa, thinking like this to her mind, she made an agreement with a paramour as: "We shall go to another country". O brāhmaṇa, at night she cut off the throat of her husband with a sword for the sake of her paramour, and went to the rendezvous. O brāhmaṇa, the paramour that had come there was eaten up by a tiger. Seeing it she wept and fell down in a swoon. Being composed after a long time the foolish woman wept piteously.

Kalipriyā said:

19. Having killed my own husband, I approached a stranger. Due to my (ill luck) a tiger has eaten up that lord of mine (also). What shall I do? Where shall I go? I am deceived by the Creator.

Sūta said:

20. O brāhmaṇa, then Kalipriyā came to her own house. Putting her mouth into that of her husband she wept.

Kalipriyā said:

21-22. O lord, what a very terrible deed have I done? Which world shall I go to? O lord, speak (at least) a few words. I, who am very much condemned, reproached you at will. O lord, you are not at all speaking. There is not a single sin that I have not committed.

Sūta said:

23-26. She saluted his feet, and went to another city. Having entered it, that woman saw many meritorious people, devotees of Viṣṇu, engaged in bathing in the Narmadā (river) in the morning in the month in Kārtika. Seeing there even women devoutly worshipping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the sounds of conches with great festivity, with sandal and flowers, incense and lamps, pieces of cloth and fruits of various kinds, with perfumes used to scent the breath, asked them modestly: "O ladies, (please) tell me, what is this that you are doing."

The ladies said:

27-33. O mother, in the morning in Kārtika, the best of all months, we offer the auspicious worship to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, which removes all sins. (Due to that worship) sin earned in a crore of existences is destroyed, and Viṣṇu's abode is reached.

Giving up (eating) flesh, she performed the worship on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, being free from blemish, she died on the full-moon-day. Yama's servants, full of anger, quickly came there to take her to Yama's abode and tied her (body) with leather straps. Then there came in an aeroplane made of gold Viṣṇu's messengers holding conches, discs, maces, lotuses and struck them with the edges of the discs (i.e. with sharp discs); the messengers of Yama ran away. She got into an aeroplane which was made of gold and to which royal swans were yoked. Surrounded by them, she went to Viṣṇu's abode. There she lived for a long time enjoying pleasures as she liked. O brāhmaṇa, she who would worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, goes, due to her sins having perished, to the charming world called *Goloka*.

34. The sin earned during a crore of existences of him who listens to this or the sin earned during a crore of existences of a woman who, being purified, listens to this, perishes.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Restrictions While Observing the Kārtika Vow

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O sage, please tell me properly the rites and restrictions (to be observed) in the best month Kārtika.

Sūta said:

2-7. O best brāhmaṇa, a man, being pure, should (begin to) observe the vow of the Kārtika month on (i.e. from) the full moon of Āśvina (and should continue it) till the Udbodhini (i.e.

the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Kārtika). O brāhmaṇa, a man should excrete or pass urine by facing the north during the day time. He should observe silence (while excreting or passing urine); and O you omniscient one, he should excrete or pass urine by facing the south during the night. O brāhmaṇa, he who has undertaken the vow (of Kārtika) should not excrete or pass urine on a path, in water, in a cow-pen, in a crematory or an anthill. He should not excrete or pass urine at excellent places. Taking pure clay he should first wash his left hand with clay and water for cleansing it twenty times. He should apply it (i.e. the clay) once to his generative organ and five times to his anus, ten times to his left hand, and then ten times to both (his hands), and three times to (each of) his feet. Then he should cleanse his face and then resolve to bathe.

8-10a. Meditating on Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) in his mind, he should then recite this hymn: “O Janārdana, in (the month of) Kārtika I shall every morning have a bath that destroys sins, to please Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā. O Śrīkṛṣṇa, my salutation to Pañkajanābha (i.e. Viṣṇu) lying in water; my salutation to you along with Rādhā. Accept the objects (I am offering and) be pleased with me.”

10b-21a. Then he should bathe and put on the mark. If he, being without the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra¹ (i.e. upright lines made on the forehead), does any act, all that (i.e. the entire) act of him becomes fruitless. This is the truth that I am telling. That body of a human being which is without the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra should not be seen. If one sees it, one should look at the sun. Even a cāṇḍāla, on whose forehead white upright lines are made with clay, is of a pure soul. There is no doubt that he is venerable. There is no doubt that on the heads of those mean men who make the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra without a hollow, the foot of a dog is always (placed). O brāhmaṇa, having finished the rite spoken (i.e. laid down) for the morning, he should, according to his capacity,

1. Ūrdhvapuṇḍra—Upright lines made on the forehead with some colouring substance. It is one of the five saṁskāras that a devotee of Vāsudeva was supposed to undergo. The other four are: Tapa (branding on the arm and other limbs), Name (Names of Vāsudeva), Mantra (a hymn), Yāga (worship of the images of Vāsudevao).

worship Tulasī that destroys sins. Then, O brāhmaṇa, having, with his mind concentrated, listened to Viṣṇu's account from a Purāṇa, he who observes the vow, should devoutly and duly worship him. O brāhmaṇa, a man should always avoid (using) the seat of another person, avoid food of others, so also the bed of another person, and another man's wife; (he should) especially (avoid these) in Kārtika. He who observes the vow (of the Kārtika month), should always avoid a jujube, beans, meat and honey, royal beans etc. in Kārtika. O brāhmaṇa, (he should also avoid) the citron fruit, meat, flower and stale food. Masurika (a kind of pulse) is declared among the grains; the milk of cows is said to be vegetarian; O brāhmaṇa, salt is produced from earth; the limb of an animal is meat. O best brāhmaṇa, he should use all fluids bought by a brāhmaṇa, water remaining in a small lake, practice celibacy in the fourth period, and eat food from a dish made of rows of leaves. He should avoid besmearing his body with oil.

21b-35. He who observes the Kārtika-vow, should avoid mushrooms, lotus-stalks, asafoetida, onions, leave of (a kind of herb called) pūtikā, garlic, radish, potherb, so also a gourd, wood-apple, egg-plant, a pumpkin gourd, eating from (a vessel of) bell metal, (food) cooked twice, the food prepared by a lying-in woman, fish, bed and a woman in her period, food prepared by two women and the company of women. O brāhmaṇa, a householder should always avoid the dhātrī-fruit on a Sunday. On (eating) a pumpkin gourd a man would lose his wealth; on (eating) a br̥hatī he would not remember Viṣṇu; on (eating) a cucumber there would be no prosperity; on (eating) a radish there would be a loss of strength. One becomes defamed on (eating) bilva; he is born in the stock of an animal on eating nimba; on eating a palm-fruit there is the loss of the body; there would be folly on (eating) a coconut; a gourd is like the flesh of a cow; on eating kalindaka (the sin) would be (equal to that of) killing a cow. Kidney-beans are said to cause sin. The pūtikā-herb is declared to be causing the murder of a brāhmaṇa. On (eating) the egg-plant one's son would be lost; on (eating) beans one would be ill for a long time. On (eating) meat there would be a great sin (incurred); he should avoid (these) on the first day etc. (of the month). A man should give

that food, which he would avoid, to a brāhmaṇa, and have it in his meal at the end of the vow. As elephants flee away on seeing a lion, the messengers of Yama run away on seeing a man who duly observes the Kārtika-vow. O brāhmaṇa, the vow of (in honour of) Viṣṇu is the best; even a hundred sacrifices are not equal to it. By performing a sacrifice he would go to heaven, (while) one who observes the Kārtika-vow would go to Viṣṇu's world. O brāhmaṇa, whatever bad deed a man has done through mind, speech or act, perishes in a moment on seeing him who observes the Kārtika vow. Even the four-faced Brahmā would not be able to narrate the religious merit of him who observes the Kārtika-vow as (already) told, observing which, O brāhmaṇa, all the sin would go (away) through the fear of him who performs the Kārtika-vow (saying to itself): 'Where shall I go? Where shall I stay?' O brāhmaṇa, a man should give according to his capacity food, garments etc. (to brāhmaṇas), and should also feed brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu. The observers of the vow should keep awake at night by dancing, singing etc. The sin of him who devoutly listens to this, perishes.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Tulasī

Śaunaka said:

1. O you omniscient one, kindly tell me, for the good of all creatures, the greatness of Tulasī which destroys the sins of those who listen to it.

Sūta said:

2-13. The servants of Yama do not come to his house in the vicinity of which there is a grove of Tulasī, due to the house having the nature of a holy place, O brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, the Tulasī-grove is auspicious and removes all sins. Those excellent

men who plant it do not see the Sun's son (i.e. Yama). O best brāhmaṇa, all the sin of him who plants it, nourishes it, attends upon it, looks at it and touches it, perishes. O brāhmaṇa, those high-souled ones who worship Viṣṇu with tender Tulasī-leaves do not go to Yama's abode. The best rivers like Gaṅgā, the best (gods) Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva, along with deities and holy places like Puṣkara, remain in a Tulasī-leaf. A sinner who, endowed with Tulasī-leaves, casts his life, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told (you) the truth. The man who, besmeared with the clay of Tulasī (i.e. in which Tulasī is growing), casts his life, goes, though full of hundreds of sins, to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, sin does not touch the body of the man who would wear the sandal-like Tulasī-wood. He goes to the highest position. He, who, though impure and of bad conduct, wears the rosary of (the beads made of) Tulasī-wood round his neck, goes, due to his devotion, to Viṣṇu's house. That man on whose body is seen the rosary made of Dhātrī-fruits or (beads of) Tulasī-wood, is a devotee of Viṣṇu. He again who, putting round his neck the garland (of the leaves) of Tulasī, would worship Viṣṇu, obtains, for each flower, a myriad of cows.

14-19. Those men who, of wicked minds, are sceptics, and who do not wear the (Tulasī)-garland, being burnt by the fire of the wrath of Viṣṇu, do not return from hell. A man should not abandon a garland of Tulasī-(leaves), especially of the fruits of Dhātrī, which destroys great sins and gives religious merit, worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyments. A man lives in Viṣṇu's house for as many thousands of years as the hair (on his body) the Dhātrī-garland would touch. That man who after having offered the rosary of (the beads of) Tulasī-wood to Viṣṇu, devoutly wears it, has no sin at all. On seeing the rosary made of the beads of Tulasī-wood, the messengers of the king of the dead (i.e. king Yama) run away as a leaf shaken up by the wind. O best brāhmaṇa, the dead ancestors of him who offers them piṇḍas in the shadow of Dhātrī in the Tulasī-grove, are emancipated.

20-25. O brāhmaṇa, he who keeps the Dhātrī-fruit in his hand, on his head, round his neck or in his ears should be known as Viṣṇu himself. O brāhmaṇa, the sin earned during crores of existences of him who would worship Viṣṇu with the

leaves and fruits of Dhātrī, at once perishes. O brāhmaṇa, sacrifices, gods, sages and holy places always remain by resorting to the Dhātrī-tree in Kārtika. A man who collects a leaf of Dhātrī or a leaf of Tulasī on the twelfth day in Kārtika, would not go to hell full of torment. O brāhmaṇa, the sin, due to the contact of food of the man who eats food under the shadow of Dhātrī in Kārtika perishes for a year. O brāhmaṇa, a man should worship Viṣṇu in a Tulasī-grove and at the root of a Dhātrī in Kārtika; he certainly goes to Viṣṇu's world.

26-27. O best brāhmaṇa, if a sinner devoutly holds on his head the water remaining at the root of Tulasī, he goes to Viṣṇu's abode. He who would hold on his head the water flowing from a Tulasī-leaf, has bathed (i.e. has obtained the fruit of having bathed) at all sacred places, and in the end he goes to Viṣṇu's house.

28-41. O great sage, formerly in the Dvāpara age there was an excellent brāhmaṇa. Once, having bathed and having offered a sacrifice to Tulasī, he went home. He became like the sun in lustre, and like Mārtaṇḍa in religious merit. A glutton, a great sinner, oppressed with thirst, came there, and having drunk the water at the root of Tulasī, had his sins perished. A hunter named Asimardana, came quickly, and said: "The food is eaten." Having eaten it and shattered the food in the cooking vessel has he gone? He killed him. Yama's servants, angry and with nooses and hammers in their hands came by Yama's order to take him to Yama's abode. (When) they thought of binding and taking him, Viṣṇu's servants came (there). Then having cut off the leather-straps, they quickly put him in a charming chariot. They (i.e. Yama's servants) politely asked them: "O good ones, due to which religious merit of him are you taking him (to Viṣṇu's abode?)" They said: "Formerly he was a king. He has done many (acts of) religious merit. He kidnapped some beautiful woman. Due to this sin, the king went to Yama's abode. There you tortured him by Yama's order. Lying there he sported with a woman of a coppery red colour. Due to this sin the king went to Yama's abode. By Yama's order you tortured him there. He remained there. He embraced misery and suffered for a long time. In Yama's abode

he was sprinkled with streams of salt water. Then for the remaining part of his stay in hell, he was repeatedly born in sinful stocks, and suffered unhappiness as a result of his own deeds. After drinking the water at the root of Tulasī he goes (i.e. would go) to Viṣṇu's abode." Hearing these words of them the messengers (of Yama) went as they had come. The messengers of Viṣṇu went with him to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you Tulasī's abode.

42. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you Tulasī's importance which destroys sins. I do not know what would happen to them who serve (Tulasī) with devotion, O sage.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Importance of Viṣṇupañcaka

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O sage, kindly tell me the importance of the remaining five days of Kārtika, which destroys sins.

Sūta said:

2-16. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall narrate (to you) the importance, which destroys sins, of the remaining five days of Kārtika. O best sage, of the five vows Viṣṇupañcaka (i.e. the vow observed for the remaining five days of Kārtika), is the best. He who, during that (period) worships Śrī Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) with Rādhā, by means of sandal, flowers, incense, clothes and various kinds of fruits, goes, freed from all sins, to Viṣṇu's abode. Without doing the vow of Viṣṇupañcaka, a religious student, (or) a householder, (or) an anchorite, (or) an ascetic does not obtain the highest position. Viṣṇupañcaka removes all sins, is meritorious and well-known. He who would bathe during that (period), would obtain the fruit of (having bathed at) all holy places. He who, to propitiate Viṣṇu, devoutly offers a lamp full of ghee in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu, or near Tulasī, in

water, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. A sinner goes to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told the truth. A man should bathe with devotion (the image of) Viṣṇu with honey, milk, ghee etc. What would Viṣṇu being pleased not give to that good man? He should present excellent cooked food to the god of gods. (Even Brahmā) having four faces is not able to measure his religious merit. Being pure, he worships Viṣṇu on Ekādaśī day. Having secured cowdung he duly waits upon (the god) with the sacred hymns. He who observes the vow, should similarly again drink cow urine (reciting) the sacred hymns on the twelfth day. Similarly he should drink milk on the fourteenth day. Having got (these) for the purification of his sins, and having passed the four days, he should, on the fifth day, having bathed and duly worshipped Viṣṇu, devoutly feed brāhmaṇas and should give them presents. Then at night he should eat the mixture of the five products of a cow, which is well consecrated with sacred hymns. He who is unable to do this, should eat fruits, roots and food; O brāhmaṇa, he should offer an oblation according to the rite that is laid down. Lord Viṣṇu who is fit to be known, would himself honour him who would observe (the vow of) Pañcaka with Tulasī-leaves.

17-20. In olden days, in the Tretāyuga, there lived a śūdra, intent on leading the life of a villain, named Daṇḍakara, who always censured religious practices, who told lies, who hurt his friends, who had an ardent longing for enormous gestures of prostitutes, who snatched the wealth of brāhmaṇas, who was cruel, who was interested in another's wife, who killed those who sought his refuge, who kept the company of heretics, who ate cow's flesh, who drank liquor, who always defamed others, who was a traitor, who deprived his kinsmen of their means of livelihood, O brāhmaṇa. Observing him—the cruel one, intent on (committing) sins like that—the kinsmen, being angry, came to his house, O brāhmaṇa.

The kinsmen said:

21-26. O fool, O you of wicked conduct, you are destroying the glory in (i.e. of) our pure family, which was earned by (our) ancestors.

O brāhmaṇa, they who were thus angry, abandoned, out of respect for their family and through fear of bad name, that greatest (i.e. the worst) among sinners. Then, with all his glory lost, he went to a great forest. He would continuously practise the deeds of the villains along with them. O brāhmaṇa, when they were going along the path, they did not get anything to eat through fear. Being oppressed with hunger, they went to another place. Having entered (i.e. gone to) that place, seeing many excellent and meritorious brāhmaṇas who were seated at the root of a Dhātrī (tree) and who were the devotees of Viṣṇu, all the dasyus went (near him). That, Daṇḍakara also went near them, and saluted them.

Daṇḍakara said:

27. O best brāhmaṇas, I am oppressed with hunger. Surely my life will depart (now). Give me something to eat. I have sought your shelter.

28-33. Having heard his words, those (brāhmaṇas), who had a high regard for religious practices said: “How do you have a desire to eat (food) on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, during the Viṣṇupañcaka, well-known as the remover of sins? Tell (us) your particulars. (Tell us) now what your name is.” He joyfully said: “O brāhmaṇas, I am (a śūdra) by name Daṇḍakara. I am full of all sins. How can I be emancipated?” They said (to him): “Observe the best vow (called) Viṣṇupañcaka.” O brāhmaṇa, by the order of the brāhmaṇas he observed the (vow of) Viṣṇupañcaka. After death, he got into an excellent chariot, and having reached Viṣṇu’s place and his form, he remained (there) free from birth. The sin earned during a crore of existences of him who would devoutly listen to this account destroying sins, perishes at that moment (only).

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

In Praise of Giving Gifts

Śaunaka said:

1. O sage, O best among the learned, O you who know the essential nature (of things), tell me in order the importance of VOWS.

Sūta said:

2-6. O best sage, giving (a piece of) land is regarded as the best gift. He who made that gift (has given) a gift having the fruit of all gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would give a gift of land with a crop (growing in it) to a brāhmaṇa, enjoys happiness in Viṣṇu's heaven as long as (the regimes of) fourteen Indras (last). Then, O king, he, having obtained a birth on the earth, (becomes) a sovereign emperor. Having enjoyed the earth for a long time, he would go to the abode of Viṣṇu. He who gives land of the measure of a cow's hide to a brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. The sages described that land to be of the measure of a cow's hide (*gocarmamātra*) where a hundred cows and a bull remain uncontrolled.

7-10. He who receives the land and he who gives it, both go to heaven. Wise brāhmaṇas should abandon (i.e. refuse) hundreds of other gifts and accept (the present of) land. That ignorant brāhmaṇa who, being deluded, rejects (the gift) of land, becomes extremely miserable in every existence. To him who, having secured land from some other source, would give it to a brāhmaṇa, the lord of the world gives the highest position. He who destroys the land given to himself or to someone else, goes, along with a crore members of his family to a very fearful hell, O brāhmaṇa.

11-12. O brāhmaṇa, for him who would snatch the land of a deity or a brāhmaṇa, an expiation is not seen for hundreds of crores of kalpas. The religious merit of that king who protects the land given (by him) to someone else would be a crore times greater than that of people.

13-17. A man giving a cow would obtain that merit which is obtained by giving the earth consisting of seven islands, O

brāhmaṇa. He, who gives a bull to a member of a poor family, is freed from all sins, and goes to Śiva's world. He who gives gold of the measure of a sesamum to a brāhmaṇa, goes, along with a crore members of his family, to the abode of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give silver to a good brāhmaṇa, obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Moon and he would always drink nectar there. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a coral, a pearl, a diamond or a gem (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to heaven.

18-25. A man would get a crore times more religious merit by giving a śālagrāma stone, than what he obtains by the gift of gold, jewels, or other valuable things equal to his own weight. The giver of a śālagrāma stone gets that religious merit which a man would get by giving the earth consisting of seven islands along with mountains, groves and forests. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give a śālagrāma stone to a brāhmaṇa, has given the fourteen worlds (to a brāhmaṇa). O best brāhmaṇa, he who makes a gift of gold, jewels or other valuable things equal to his own weight (to a brāhmaṇa), is not again born in (i.e. from) the womb of a mother. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives (in marriage) his daughter that is adorned (with ornaments to a brāhmaṇa), would go to Brahmā's abode. He is not reborn. For a man who sells his daughter, there is no escape from hell; and for one who gives his daughter (in marriage according to the proper rites) there is no coming (back to earth) from heaven. He, who gives sandals or an umbrella to a brāhmaṇa, goes to Indra's city after death, and would live (there) for four kalpas. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a divine garment to a good brāhmaṇa, puts on a divine garment and would live in heaven for a long time.

26-27. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give an old cow or an old garment or a young girl in her menses, would go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, a man should not see the face of him who sells his daughter. Having seen (i.e. if he sees) it unknowingly, he should look at the sun.

28-58. O best brāhmaṇa, a man who gives (the gift of) fruits would go to heaven. There he would enjoy for thousands of kalpas the fruit (of his gift) like nectar. O brāhmaṇa, the man who gives vegetables (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to Śiva's abode; and (there) enjoys, with gods, rice boiled in milk for a couple of kalpas. He who gives ghee, he who gives curd, he who gives

milk, he who gives butter milk, goes to Viṣṇu's abode (and there) he drinks nectar. The man who gives sandal, who gives flowers goes to the abode of gods. Decorated with sandal and flowers, he would remain (there) for thousands of yugas. He who gives the gift of a bed—the best gift—to a brāhmaṇa, goes to Brahmā's abode, and sleeps (there) on a bed for a long time. The giver of a seat or the giver of a lamp, being free from all sins, would remain, surrounded by a row of burning lamps, on a seat in heaven. A man who would give betel-leaf, happily enjoys the entire earth. He sleeps, being clasped to the bosom by a divine lady, and eats tām̐būla. The best man who makes the gift of knowledge—the best gift—would, after death, live near Viṣṇu for three hundred yugas. O best brāhmaṇa, having obtained there knowledge difficult to be obtained, he, O brāhmaṇa, obtains salvation through Viṣṇu's grace. That best brāhmaṇa who would teach a helpless, miserable brāhmaṇa, goes, free from rebirth, to Śrī Viṣṇu's abode. One who would devoutly and with faith give (the gift of) a book would obtain, for every letter, the merit due to the gift of a crore of tawny cows. One who gives honey, who gives jaggery, goes to the Ikṣu-sāgara. One who gives salt, goes to the world of Varuṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, of all the gifts, the gift of food or water is declared to be the best by all sages knowing the truth. O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given food or water on the earth, has given all (kinds of) gifts, O best among brāhmaṇas. O brāhmaṇa, one who gives food is declared to be the giver (i.e. the saver) of life. Therefore, the giver of food gets the fruit of all (kinds of) gifts. As is food, so is water. The two are said to be equal. O best brāhmaṇa, food would not be prepared without water. O best brāhmaṇa, the two i.e. hunger and thirst are declared to be equal. Therefore, even the wise have declared food and water to be the best. O brāhmaṇa, those best men who make the gift of food on the earth, are freed from all sins, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa ascetic, as many (sins of) brāhmaṇa murders, as the kinds of food a man gives on the earth, perish. O Śaunaka, the sins of those that give food abandon their bodies and go to the bodies of those that receive it. Therefore the wise do not accept the food of the most sinful one. The fools that accept it through delusion, become sinful. O best brāhmaṇa, one should make water remain on the ground

(after it flows from the palm of the brāhmaṇa to whom a gift is given). He (who offers a gift) is freed from all sins, and would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, wealth should be accumulated with effort. A man should spend the accumulated wealth in giving gifts. Those who through miserliness tinkle (i.e. only preserve) their wealth, are extremely unhappy. O sage, in the end, leaving the wealth, they go (i.e. die) wealthless. Those men who by repeatedly giving (gifts) become poor, should not be regarded as poor. They are great lords in the human world. O best brāhmaṇa that which is given to a cruel, relative-less (brāhmaṇa) who does not have proper restraint, does not stand by (the giver) in the other world. One who, when he has wealth, does not (either) enjoy it or give it (to others) should be known as poor, and would leave a sigh (of grief) after death. Those who see the truth have declared that giving gifts is superior even to austerities. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, one should give gifts. That giver who gives gifts (to persons of other castes) excluding a brāhmaṇa, goes to a terrible hell, which is fearful to all beings. The giver who does not remember the gift and the recipient who does not ask for it, both remain in hell as long as the moon and the sun last. O best brāhmaṇa, those sins like a brāhmaṇa's murder perish due to giving gifts. Therefore, one should give gifts.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Importance of Uttering Viṣṇu's Name

Śaunaka said:

1-4a. That man who devoutly listens to the account of Viṣṇu, which is the abode of glory, which removes all harms, which destroys all sins, which wards off all evil planets, which gives proximity with Viṣṇu, which gives the fruit of the four goals of human life, goes to Viṣṇu's abode in the end. The importance of the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) names is said to be very wonderful; merely by uttering it a man would go to the highest

position. Therefore, O Sūta, now tell me the manner of the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) names.

Sūta said:

4b-6. O Śaunaka, listen, I shall tell you the dialogue (between Sanatkumāra and Nārada), which would accomplish salvation. I shall tell you what formerly Nārada asked (Sanat)kumāra. Having heard various kinds of prescribed courses of conduct and their (various) mixtures Nārada, having joined the palms of his hands, once asked Sanatkumāra, of a tranquil mind, who was seated on the bank of the Yamunā:

Śrī Nārada said:

7. O you dear to the lord, tell me how there would be the destruction of the obstacles of dharma about which you had told (me) formerly.

Śrī Sanatkumāra said:

8-13. Listen, O Nārada, dear to Viṣṇu, and knowing the way to reach Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu). (I shall tell you) that which you asked, viz. the cause of freedom from the world which is beyond the darkness (of ignorance). O brāhmaṇa, even all those mean men who are destitute of (i.e. who do not practise) all (good) ways of behaviour, who are of a wicked mind, who are outcaste, who deceive the world, who are intent upon religious hypocrisy, pride, drinking liquor, and wickedness, who are sinful and cruel, who are interested in another man's wealth, wife or sons, become pure if they resort to the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. The name (of Viṣṇu), sure (to succeed) here, protects those sinful men who transgress even him who causes divinity, who, the kind one, the great one, gives salvation to the immobile and the mobile. A man who has done all sins, is freed if he resorts to Viṣṇu. If a contemptible, wicked biped would commit sin against Viṣṇu, and by chance resorts to his name, he is emancipated due to the name. A man falls down due to his sin against (Viṣṇu's) name which is the friend of all.

Śrī Nārada said:

14. O best brāhmaṇa, which are those sins against the

name of the lord, which, when done, impede men's acts and take them to a low status?

Śrī Sanatkumāra said

15-20. The censure of the good causes a great sin against the name (of Viṣṇu). How does (i.e. would) it tolerate the censure of those on account of whom it has become famous? He indeed does ill to the name of Viṣṇu, who, in this world, would regard all (things) about the auspicious Śrī Viṣṇu, as different from his own mind. He who does not disrespect his preceptor, who does not censure sacred texts, who does not look upon Viṣṇu's name as (merely) glorificatory, who does not have a wicked idea about (i.e. to look upon) name (as) sinful, has purification by means of restraints. Indifference to religious vows, sacrifice (for others), offering oblations, all good actions is also a fault. Not having faith, turning away one's face, not listening to advice is also a sin against the auspicious name. He, the mean man, who, even after hearing the greatness of (Viṣṇu's) name, remains without love for it, and is only intent upon 'I', 'mine' etc. (i.e. is selfish), has committed sin against the name (of Viṣṇu). O Nārada, Śiva, with grace, told the sages and me the great name of the lord, bringing happiness. It should always be carefully preserved. They who even knowing (the importance of name), do not suddenly avoid the ten sins against the name, are like children, who being angry, afflict their mother. Being free from sins, always mutter the name (of Viṣṇu). O divine sage, due to name only you will accomplish everything and not by any other means.

Śrī Nārada said:

21. O Sanatkumāra, how is it that those who like rash acts, who are bereft of discrimination and detachment, who are intent upon themselves as they love their own bodies, arise from (amongst) us?

Śrī Sanatkumāra said:

22-29. When somehow a sin or a blemish takes place against the name, the man should always recite the name and seek its refuge only. Names alone remove the sin of those having (i.e. who have committed) the sin against the names (of Viṣṇu), since

they alone, employed (i.e. recited) without rest (i.e. continuously) bring wealth. It is the name (alone) which being the characteristic mark, when remembered or heard, either in a pure form or with incorrect syllables, would protect a man, when it is recited without interruption. This alone is the truth. If it is resorted to hypocritically or for greed born of love for body or wealth, it would not quickly produce the fruit here, O brāhmaṇa. O Nārada, this great secret, which removes all inauspiciousness, and keeps off sins, was formerly heard (by me) from Śiva. O Nārada, even those who are intent on committing sins, but who know the names of Viṣṇu, would be liberated merely by reciting them. The entire greatness of the name (of Viṣṇu) is sung (i.e. narrated) in the Purāṇas. Therefore, O you who respect (others), please listen to a Purāṇa. O brother, Śiva, Viṣṇu himself with his followers would be pleased with him who has faith in listening to Purāṇas day after day. The fruit of him who listens with faith is double the fruit that accrues by bathing at the holy place Puṣkara or at Prayāga or at the confluence (of a holy river) with the ocean.

30-37. Those who attentively recite the Purāṇas or listen to them, obtain for every letter the fruit of giving a tawny cow. A man who is sonless obtains a son; he who desires wealth obtains it; he who longs for knowledge gets it; he who desires salvation secures it. Those who listen to the Purāṇas, having destroyed the mass of their sins earned during crores of existences, go to Viṣṇu's abode. O sage, a man should devoutly worship the brāhmaṇa who reads a Purāṇa, with (the gift of) a cow, land, gold, garments, sandal, flowers etc. O ascetic, he should joyfully give (the brāhmaṇa) a pot made of bell-metal, a water-vessel, so also an ear-ring or a ring made of gold, so also a seat, flowers and garlands. He should not do (i.e. show) wickedness in (giving) wealth (to the brāhmaṇa), since, in that case the gift would be without its fruit. O brāhmaṇa, a man should read a Purāṇa for the accomplishment of all objects. He who would devoutly give gold, silver, garments, flowers and garlands, sandal or a book, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, Citragupta would respectfully write the names of those who would in this manner get the entire book (read).

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Importance of Keeping Promise

Śaunaka said :

1-2. O wise one, I desire to hear, (therefore) tell me fully what the religious merit there is in keeping a promise, and what the sin is in breaking it. O you ocean of compassion, (tell me) what would happen if one takes a false oath or a true one, and by one's offering one's right hand or favouring (someone).

Sūta said :

3-13. O best sage, listen, I am telling it from the beginning. You are the foremost among Viṣṇu's devotees and are engaged in the good of all people. O brāhmaṇa, the merit in (i.e. due to) keeping a promise is a crore times greater than the fruit which a man obtains by giving a hundred cows. There is no doubt that a fool by breaking his promise goes to a terrible hell and is roasted there for a hundred periods of Manu. Then due to his own deeds he obtains birth (i.e. is born) on the earth in the house of a poor person, and bereft of food and garments he is afflicted. One should take an oath truthfully in the vicinity of a deity, fire, or one's preceptor. Till that time the body is burnt; but the family of Viṣṇu is not lost (i.e. continues). O brāhmaṇa, what should I now say about a false oath? O brāhmaṇa, a man (lives) in hell for a hundred periods of Manu due to a false promise. O best sage, he who touches the flowers taken off after Viṣṇu's worship and takes a truthful oath (but does not keep it), is roasted, taking with him seven members (of his family), in hell for a long time. If by chance he gets a birth, then in every existence (he becomes) a leper. This would never happen due to truthful promise. What can be said about (what would happen) due to a false oath? The man who offer his right hand (to give a promise) and keeps it, would obtain Kṛṣṇa. I am telling the truth, (and) the truth (only). The dead ancestors of him who, having offered his hand (to make a promise), does not keep it, are tormented in hell; and undoubtedly the dead one (i.e. he, after death) goes to a terrible hell, and is emancipated by crores of men (of his family, i.e. after a very long time).

Śaunaka said :

14. O sage, tell me, I desire to listen respectfully (to the account of him) who obtained Kṛṣṇa by keeping the promise made by him with his right hand.

Sūta said :

15-18. Formerly in a city lived a śūdra named Vīravikrama. He ate much, was bulky, talked much and was very handsome. He was wealthy, he had sons, was polite, learned, and dear to all people. He always honoured brāhmaṇas and guests. O best brāhmaṇa, he was devoted to his father and always kept his promise. He kept his promise, protected his elders and waited upon Viṣṇu. Once a handsome, young, very intelligent cāṇḍāla, taking up the guise of a brāhmaṇa, came to his house deceptively (i.e. to deceive him).

The brāhmaṇa said :

19-23. O wise one, listen to my words. My auspicious wife is dead. What shall I do? Where shall I go? Kindly tell me today. What is the use of (other) gifts, (visits to) holy places, sacrifices or crores of vows for him who would marry (his daughter) to a brāhmaṇa?

Hearing these words, that Vīravikrama said to that brāhmaṇa: “O brāhmaṇa, listen to my words. I have a virgin daughter. If, O brāhmaṇa, you would desire, I shall give (her to you in marriage) according to the proper rite. Hold my right hand. I shall give her. (This shall) not (be) otherwise.” Hearing there words of (i.e. uttered by) him, he held his hand; and the cāṇḍāla being pleased, said these words.

The brāhmaṇa said :

24. Making (i.e. fixing) an auspicious moment, give me your daughter endowed with auspicious (characteristics). The sacred texts have decided that delay would cause many hurdles.

Vīravikrama said :

25. O brāhmaṇa, I shall give you my daughter tomorrow.

This will not be otherwise. A man offering his right hand should not do (as) a mean man (would do).

Sūta said :

26-32. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, having called the brāhmaṇa (named) Kṛṣṇaśarman, his priest, he told him all (about) the agreement. "How do you give your daughter to a brāhmaṇa, (when) you desire to give her to a śūdra? Do not give her to an unknown person who does not belong to a good family." O ascetic, thus his relatives like his father etc. spoke to him. (They said): "O dear Vīravikrama, listen to our words. Men of our caste do not give their daughter(s) to a man whose family, country, race, so also wealth and character and age are not known." O best brāhmaṇa, he (i.e. Vīravikrama) said: "I have offered my right hand. Now I shall not at all be able to change (my words) " Speaking thus to them, he proceeded to offer his daughter to that brāhmaṇa. Seeing that all the kinsmen were very much amazed. O sage, hearing his truthful words, (Viṣṇu) holding a conch, a disc and a mace, mounted upon Garuḍa, suddenly came there.

The lord said:

33-34. Blessed is your family; blessed is your way of life; blessed are your mother and father; blessed is your truthful speech; blessed is your right hand; blessed is your deed; blessed is your existence. (A man like you) does not exist in the three worlds. With such a deed, O good man, you will emancipate your family.

Sūta said:

35-42 When Śrīkṛṣṇa was talking like this, an aeroplane made of gold, having attendants of Viṣṇu (in it), and Garuḍa-bannered everywhere, came (there). The holder of a conch and a lotus (i.e. Viṣṇu) himself put all (the members of) his family with the cāṇḍāla and the priest into the chariot, O brāhmaṇa; and thus taking them all (with him) Viṣṇu went to his abode in Vaikuṇṭha. He remained there for a long time, enjoying rare pleasures. One who violates his words or his right hand (i.e. a promise), goes, to hell with his family. I speak the truth, the truth only. O brāh-

maṇa, his manes and deities should not accept the food and water of (i.e. offered by) him. O best brāhmaṇa, (king) Dharma leaves his house through fear and goes (elsewhere). The foolish man, who, giving (i.e. creating) hope, later disappoints (a person), would go taking along with him a crore of his own people (i.e. members of his family) to hell. (King) Dharma violates (i.e. destroys) his (prosperity) through a king, or fire or thieves, who violates (i.e. does not keep) his promise. He, having heard (i.e. who hears) this (khaṇḍa) subsequent to the Svarga (khaṇḍa), being liberated while alive in this world, would (after death) go to the excellent abode, named Kṛṣṇa, beyond heaven.

V PĀTĀLAKHAṆḌA

(Section on the Nether World)

CHAPTER ONE

Rāma Sees Nandigrāma from Puṣpaka

Salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa. Salutation to the family-deity. Salutation to the lotus-like feet of the preceptor.

1. After having saluted Nārāyaṇa and Nara, the best man, (so also) goddess Sarasvatī and Vyāsa, a man should recite Jaya.

The sages said :

2. O you glorious one, we have heard from you the entire charming Svargakhaṇḍa. O you long-lived one, tell us now the account of Rāma.

Sūta said :

3. Once the excellent sage Vātsyāyana asked the lord of serpents, the prop of the earth (i.e. Śeṣa to tell him) this very virtuous tale.

Śrī Vātsyāyana said :

4-8. O Śeṣa, (I have heard) from you all stories like the creation and dissolution of the world. So also (you have told me about) the settled rule about the terrestrial world, the celestial sphere, and about the cycle of the luminaries, so also about the products like the principles e.g. Mahat, and separate primary substances. O sinless one, you also told me the accounts of many kings. There is the wonderful account of the kings born in the solar race. In it is the story of the deeds performed by Rāma, which destroys many great sins. From you I have heard in brief the account of the horse sacrifice of (i.e. performed by) that hero Rāma. Now I desire (to hear) it in detail, which being heard or

remembered, is said to destroy great sins to give the desired objects and to give joy to the heart of the devotee.

Śeṣa said :

9. O best brāhmaṇa, you whose mind longs like this for the honey of the two (lotus-like) feet of the hero in Raghu's family, are blessed.

10-15. All sages say that the company of the good is excellent. Since the story of Rāma would destroy sins, you have favoured me by reminding me of Rāma again. I am a mere (insignificant) gnat in the ocean of the story of Rāvaṇa's enemy (i.e. Rāma) whose feet are adorned with the lights of gems in the series of the crowns of gods and demons, being deluded by which even gods like Brahmā do not know them (properly)? Still, I shall tell you (the story) according to my capacity, (as) birds resorting to (i.e. depending upon) their own speed go (i.e. fly) into the very extensive sky. The story of Raghu-nātha (i.e. Rāma) has the expanse of a hundred crore (verses). As men have minds, so do they speak. The chaste fame of Raghu-nātha will purify my mind as fire by its contact purifies gold.

Sūta said :

16-17. Thus speaking to the best sage, he with his eyes closed in meditation, perceived the auspicious, extraordinary account, through his intellect. With his voice indistinct, and his body horripilated due to great joy, he again told the spotless story of Daśaratha's son (i.e. Rāma).

Śeṣa said :

18-19. When (Rāvaṇa) the lord of Laṅkā who caused affliction to gods and demons, who snatched away the beauty of the moons in the form of the lotus-like faces of the host of the celestial nymphs, was killed, all gods—Indra and others—became happy. Being pleased they, bowing (before Rāma) like servants, praised him.

20-26. Having placed the righteous Bibhiṣaṇa (on the throne) in Laṅkā Rāma resorted to (got into) the Puṣpaka (aeroplane)

with Sītā. He was at that time accompanied by Sugrīva, Hanūmat, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. Bibhīṣaṇa too, pining away in separation, followed them with his ministers. He (i.e. Rāma) seeing Laṅkā with its ramparts and portals broken in many ways, (so also seeing) Aśokavana, the place of (the stay of) Sītā, (seeing the śimśapā trees having flowers and buds, crowded with the demonesses who were (now) dead through the fear of Hanūmat, fainted. Seeing all (that) in this way, Rāma, the best of the Raghus, hearing the loud sounds of the kettledrums of gods, pleasant to the ears, and being honoured by the dances of the celestial nymphs (i.e. by the celestial damsels with their dances) along with gods like Brahmā (who had got) into their own aeroplanes, showing Sītā on the way the holy places with hermitages, and the sages, their sons and their chaste wives, went to the city (of Ayodhyā).

27-29. Rāma showed her all the places where he, the intelligent one, had formerly stayed with Lakṣmaṇa. Thus showing her (all the places on the way) Rāma saw his own city (i.e. Ayodhyā), and also near it Nandigrāma where king Bharata, with many signs of the grief due to the separation from his brother (i.e. Rāma), lived doing righteous deeds.

30-36. He lay (i.e. lived) in a cave, he practised celibacy, had (grown) matted hair and (put on) bark garments. His body had become slim, he was afflicted with grief, and was repeatedly telling stories about Rāma. He did not eat even barley-food, did not again and again drink water. Looking at the rising sun, he used to say: "O you eye of the worlds, the lord of gods, remove my great sin. For my sake, even Rāmacandra, venerable to the world, went to the forest. Waited upon by Sītā of a delicate body, he went to the forest. Oh! that Jānakī, that Sītā, who was pained on finding a stalk in her bed of flowers, who, the chaste one, never received the heat of the sun, roams for my sake from forest to forest. That Sītā who was never seen even by hosts of kings with their eyes is indeed being seen by the mountaineers. Oh! that Sītā, who did not desire to eat even when fed with sweet food, today longs for wild fruits."

37-41. Thus this Bharata, the great king dear to Rāma, every morning, everyday says after waiting upon the sun. That king (i.e. Bharata) who was being spoken to by his ministers

who were wise, who knew the right course, who were well-versed in sacred texts, and who had the same sorrows and joys as he had (i.e. who shared his sorrows and joys) said to them: “O ministers, why do you speak to me who am luckless and a mean man? For me my elder brother Rāma has gone to the forest and is sinking. O good ministers, by again and again respectfully remembering the feet of Rāmacandra, I, the unfortunate one, am purifying the sins of my mother. Sumitrā who gave birth to a hero (like Lakṣmaṇa), and who is dear to her husband, is extremely blessed (as) her son (Lakṣmaṇa) is everyday waiting upon the feet of Rāma.”

42. Rāma saw that village, remaining in which, Bharata, affectionate towards his brother, was lamenting loudly.

CHAPTER TWO

Rāma Meets Bharata

Śeṣa said :

1-2. Then Rāma, with his heart being distressed by the eagerness to see him, repeatedly remembered his brother Bharata who was the foremost among the righteous persons; and removing the darkness with the moon-like lustre of his teeth that became visible, he said to the powerful Hanūmat, the son of Wind:

3-9. “O hero Hanūmat, hear my words which are impelled by my long-standing separation from my brother, and which are faltering and confused. O hero born from the body of Wind, go to that (my) brother whose body is emaciated due to separation from me and which he sustains forcibly (i.e. against his will). He puts on a bark-garment, he wears matted hair; being affected by separation from me, he would not even eat fruits. For him the wife of another person is like his mother, and gold is like a clod. My brother who knows the right way, would look upon his subjects as his own sons. Quickly sprinkle him whose body is burning with the flames of the fire of grief due to separation from me, with the shower of the water of the message of my arrival. Tell

him that Rāma has come with Sitā, is accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, and the lords of monkeys like Sugrīva and demons with Bibhiṣaṇa and that he is comfortably seated on a seat in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane), so that my younger brother quickly becomes happy due to my arrival."

10-13. Having heard these words of the intelligent Raghu-hera (i.e. Rāma), the obedient (Hanūmat) went to Nandigrāma, the abode of Bharata. Having gone to Nandigrāma, the intelligent one saw Bharata in the company of old ministers, afflicted with the separation from his brother (Rāma), and telling his old ministers the account of Rāmacandra; and full of the honey of the lotuses of his feet he saluted Bharata possessing the form of Dharma.

14-15. Seeing him who was fashioned with all portions of goodness only by the Creator, Bharata with the palms of his hands joined, quickly rose, and said: "Welcome to you; tell me about the safety of Rāma". The right hand of him who was speaking like this, throbbed. Grief went (away) from his heart, and his face was filled with tears of joy.

16-17. Seeing the king like that the lord of the monkeys spoke to him: "Know that Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa, has reached the vicinity of the town." He, whose body was sprinkled over with the nectar of the message of Rāma's arrival, had flood of joy. I do not know whether he had a thousand faces.

18. He said (to Hanūmat): "I do not have what I could give to you. As long as I live, I am the servant of Rāma carrying out his order."

19-22. Vasiṣṭha too, taking the materials of worship, and the very much delighted old ministers, went to Rāma along the path shown by Hanūmat. From a distance (they) saw the delightful Rāma who had come there seated on a seat in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) along with Sitā and Lakṣmaṇa. Rāma also saw Bharata walking (to him) and having matted hair and having put on bark-garment with a small piece of cloth worn round his privities. He also saw his ministers whose dresses were similar to that of his brother (Bharata) and who had matted hair, and whose forms were emaciated due to being afflicted by daily penance.

23-28. Seeing the king (i.e. Bharata) like that, Rāma too thought (to himself): 'Oh! this son of the intelligent Daśaratha,

the king of kings, having matted hair and dressed in bark-garments is coming on foot to me. I, even when I was in the forest, did not experience so much grief as this one had due to separation from me. Oh! see Bharata, my brother, my companion dearer (to me) than (my) life, having heard that I have come in the vicinity, comes, accompanied by his old, very much delighted ministers and Vasiṣṭha, to see me.' The king (i.e. Rāma) honoured by Bibhiṣaṇa, Hanūmat and Lakṣmaṇa, and with his mind afflicted due to separation (from Bharata), and again and again saying, 'O (my) brother, O my brother', quickly got down from the (aerial) car, viz. the Puṣpaka (come down) from the wide firmament.

29-31. The intelligent Bharata, saw Rāma who was accompanied by gods, and who was afflicted due to his separation from his brother (i.e. Bharata himself), getting down from the (aerial) car. Shedding tears of joy, he saluted him like a staff (i.e. prostrated himself before Rāma). The chief of Raghus (i.e. Rāma) also, seeing him falling on the ground like a staff (i.e. having prostrated himself), raised him, and full of joy and grief, held him by the arms (i.e. embraced him). The hero, fond of seizing the lotus-like feet of Rāmacandra, and repeatedly weeping, did not get up, though strongly lifted (by Rāma).

Bharata said :

32-33. O great hero, O treasure of compassion, O Rāma, through kindness favour me who am of a bad conduct, who am wicked and sinful. O Rāma, just that foot (those feet) of yours which felt the touch of the hand(s) of Sītā to be harsh, wandered on my account in the forest.

34. Speaking like this, he, the dejected one, with his face full of tears again and again embraced (Rāma), and with the palms of his hands joined and his face full of joy stood before (Rāma).

35-36a. Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma), the abode of compassion, having embraced that younger brother (of him), having saluted the great principal ministers and having taken their leave, occupied with (his) brother Bharata a seat in the Puṣpaka.

36b-40. Bharata saw the praiseworthy Sītā, his brother's wife. He looked upon the daughter of Janaka, a chaste wife, like

Anasūyā, (the wife) of Atri, or like Lopāmudrā (the wife) of (Agastya) born from a pitcher, and saluted her. (He said to her): “O mother, forgive (me) the sin, which I, the ignorant one, committed. Ladies like you, devoted to their husbands, do good to all.” The glorious Sītā also, respectfully looked at her brother-in-law, gave him blessings, and enquired after his health. All of them got into that aerial car in the wide firmament. In a moment (Rāma) saw his father’s city (drawing) near.

CHAPTER THREE

Rāma Enters Ayodhyā

Śeṣa said:

1. Rāma, the intelligent hero, who, for a long time, desired to see the capital was delighted on seeing it where his own people lived.

2. Bharata too sent to the city his friend, minister Sumukha, to prepare the city for the festivity.

Bharata said:

3-12. The people should quickly celebrate the festival of Rāma’s arrival. They should have gay pictures drawn in every house. The royal roads should be free from dust. They should be sprinkled over with liquid sandal. They should be furnished with abundant flowers. They should be crowded with delighted and rich people. All the big courtyards should be adorned with flags of various colours and painted. The fronts of the ridges of the thatched roofs should appear like the bow at the time of the arrival of the clouds (i.e. like the rainbow). The people should send forth agaru (sandal), seeing the smoke of which peacocks would dance sportively. They should paint with the minerals from mountains my elephants resembling mountains and well-controlled by the drivers. The horses having the speed of mind and painted should also look beautiful, seeing whose speed the heavenly horse gives up his pride. Beautiful virgins in thousands adorned with all ornaments and mounted

on elephants, should scatter pearls. The married brāhmaṇa-women with vessels in their hands containing dūrvā (grass) and turmeric (powder) should wave lights before Rāma, the great king. May Kauśalyā who is afflicted by the information about the union with her son, and who very much longs for seeing him, be delighted. The delighted people should make such arrangements giving beauty to the city on the arrival of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

13-21. Hearing these words from (i.e. uttered by) him, Sumukha who was best among the counsellors, went to the city to have in it triumphal archs erected for the festive occasion. That minister named Sumukha, having gone to the city (viz. Ayodhyā), informed the people of the great festival (to be celebrated) on the arrival of Rāma. The people who had formerly given up their enjoyments and pleasures due to separation from him, were (now) very much delighted on hearing that Rāma had come (back) to the city. Pure brāhmaṇas, rich in (the knowledge of) the Vedas, with darbhas in their hands, and covered with bright upper garments, went to the lord of the Raghus. So also many excellent kṣatriyas who were the bravest, who had held bows and arrows, who were brave in battles went to him. Similarly vaiśyas who were wealthy, whose hands were adorned with signet-rings, who had put on white garments went to the lord of men (i.e. Rāma). Śūdras who were devoted to brāhmaṇas, who practised their own course of conduct, who followed the code of conduct (as laid down) in the Vedas also went to the lord of the city. So also people who followed (various) vocations, and who were attached to their own duties went, taking their own things (i.e. presents), to king Śrī Rāma. Thus, people full of flood of delight, and (taking) with (them) many wonderful objects, approached by the order of the king (Bharata) the lord of men (i.e. Rāma).

Śeṣa said:

22-30. Raghunātha also, surrounded by all deities seated in their own cars, entered the city in which attractive objects were arranged. The monkeys, leaping and going along the aerial path, and with their bodies beautified followed (the king) to the

best city. Rāma accompanied by Sītā and surrounded by his attendants quickly got down from the Puṣpaka, and got into a vehicle drawn by men. Then he entered Ayodhyā, in which triumphal arches were erected for the festive occasion, which was crowded with joyful and rich people, and which was fully adorned with gay objects. He looked very much pleased with the musical instruments like lutes (being played upon) and kettle-drums and other musical instruments being played upon and was praised by Sūtas, Māgadhas and other bards. Hearing the auspicious words, "Victory to Rāghava, to Rāma; victory to the ornament of the solar race; victory to the son of Daśa-ratha; may the lord of the world be victorious" uttered by the citizens who were delighted, and who looked graceful on account of horripilation produced on seeing Rāma, he entered (i.e. went to) the excellent path which was adorned with places where many roads meet, which was sprinkled over with sandal (mixed with) water, and which was furnished with flowers and leaves. At that time certain women in the city, desiring to see the form of Raghunātha, (and therefore) resorting to the holes of the latticed windows said (these words):

The women of the city said:

31-34. Oh! the bhilla-girls who in the forests drank with their lotus-like eyes the lotus-like face of Rāma, were lucky. They are very prosperous due to their good luck. See the blessed lotus-like face of Rāma having lotus-like eyes. See the blessed face, having lotus-like eyes, of Śrī Rāmadeva, the abode of bravery, which (face) gods like the Creator also saw. Oh! we are (indeed) very lucky. See this face which has a charming smile, which shines with a crown, which is extremely charming, which possesses lips the beauty of which has surpassed that of the bandhūka (flower), and which has a high nose.

Thus spoke those women, observing him with glances resembling lotus-petals. The lord of all, of a weak body, but delighted, entered his mother's house, which had great love (in store for him).

CHAPTER FOUR

Rāma's Consecration

Vātsyāyana said:

1-5. O great lord of the serpents, O lord capable of sustaining the burden of the earth, listen to one doubt of mine; and please explain (i.e. remove) it. Since the departure of Rāma to the forest she (Kauśalyā) lives with body but with a vacant mind. She is afflicted by separation from him; her body is emaciated; she is extremely unhappy. How indeed was she happy when she heard from Sumukha, the minister, that Rāma had come (back)? What happened (to her)? What were the marks (of her feelings)? What did she say to him who had brought the message of Rāmacandra? Remove this doubt of mine. Do me a favour and tell me who am listening, about the rich virtues of Raghunātha.

Śeṣa said:

6-7. Well asked, O you glorious one, O you who are in the forefront of best brāhmaṇas. Listen (now) attentively to it when I am actually telling it. She, having repeatedly drunk the nectar fallen from the lotus-like mouth of him (i.e. Sumukha), of (i.e. telling about) the arrival of Rāma, she became afflicted with her body becoming steady.

8-13a. She said: "Is it a dream of (i.e. seen by) me, a fool? Or do the words cause confusion? How can I, luckless that I am, see Rāma again? Due to having practised much penance I had obtained this my child—my son; but due to some sin of (i.e. committed by) me, he became separated from me. O good minister, is Rāma accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa all right? Does he, moving in the forest, remember me, who am extremely pained?" Thus, she, who remembered Rāma, loudly wept. She fainted, and was not conscious of what belonged to her and what to others. Sumukha too, seeing (Rāma's) mother extremely unhappy fanned her with the ends of garments, and then she regained consciousness. Then he repeatedly spoke gentle and delightful words to the mother (of Rāma). He again made her happy by reminding her of the arrival of Raghunātha:

13b-19a. “O mother, know that Raghunātha with Lakṣmaṇa has come home. See Rāma with Sītā, and sprinkle them over with (i.e. give them) blessings.” I do not know (i.e. I have not seen) such joy which she experienced on hearing the true words uttered by Sumukha. With her hair standing on end, she got up and reached (i.e. went to) the courtyard. With her body perturbed by joy, and shedding tears, she looked for Rāma. Just then Rāma, the lord of kings, and of a good conduct, and seated in a vehicle drawn by men, reached first the house of his mother Kaikeyī. Kaikeyī too, bent due to the burden of the sense of shame, did not say anything to Rāma standing in front of her. She was very much worried. Rāma, the banner of the solar dynasty, seeing his mother who was ashamed, said, consoling (i.e. to console) her, (these words) mixed with (i.e. full of) politeness:

Śrī Rāma said:

19b-21a. O mother, having gone to the forest, I did everything (as I was ordered to do). O mother, what should I do now by your order? I have done nothing despicable. Then, how (is it that) you are not looking at me? Greeting this Bharata and me with blessings, look at me.

21b-24a. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, O sinless one, she, with her face hung down, slowly said: “Rāma, go to your (own) house.” And Rāma, the best among men, having heard (these) words of his mother, saluted her, and the treasure of compassion went to the house of Sumitrā. The large-hearted Sumitrā, seeing Rāma with her son (Lakṣmaṇa), said, with (i.e. giving him) blessings: “Live long, live long.”

24b-28. Rāmabhadra too having saluted the feet of his mother, and having, full of joy, embraced her, again said (these) words to her: “O you conceiving a gem (like Lakṣmaṇa), no (other) brother of me has removed my grief as this intelligent one (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) has done. Sītā who was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, was got back by me—O mother, know all that to be the working of Lakṣmaṇa.” Accepting with his head (i.e. by bowing down his head), the blessing given by Sumitrā, the wise one surrounded by the wise went to the house of his mother (i.e. Kauśalyā).

29-33. Hari (i.e. Rāma) seeing his mother delighted and longing to see him, quickly got down from the vehicle and seized her feet. His mother, eager to see him and with her mind confused, repeatedly embraced Rāma and was delighted. Horripilation due to joy appeared on her body and she faltered while speaking. Hot tears of joy trickled down up to her feet. Polite Rāma, seeing his mother bereft of the two large ear-rings and having her body without ornaments (worn) on the hands and feet and delighted to a certain degree on seeing him, having an emaciated frame, and experiencing grief, thought that it was not the time for grief and said to her:

Śrī Rāma said:

34-39. O mother, I have not waited upon your feet for a long time. So forgive me who am unlucky for my fault. Those sons who are not eager to serve their mother and father should be looked upon as great insects born from semen. O mother. What should I do? I went to the Daṇḍaka forest by the order of my father. There too, due to your favourable glance, I crossed the ocean of grief. Rāvaṇa kidnapped Sītā, and took her to Laṅkā. By your favour I got her (back) after killing that lord of demons. This is Sītā my devoted wife who has fallen at your feet. Show regard for her who is timid, and who has set her heart on your feet.

Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, she greeted her daughter-in-law who had fallen at her feet, with blessings and said to that devoted wife (of Rāma). (Kauśalyā said):

40-44. “O beautiful lady, O Sītā, enjoy for a long time with your husband. Give birth to two sons. O you purifying one, purify your own family. Women like you, who are devoted to their husbands, and who experience pleasure and pain with their husbands, become unhappy. There is no truth in the three worlds. O daughter of Videha (i.e. Janaka), you who followed the couple of the lotus-like feet of Rāma to the great forest, have purified your family. What wonder is there that those men in whose house there are chaste wives desiring what is dear to their husbands, are like a hurricane to crores of enemies?” Say-

ing so to Rāma's wife of curved eyes she remained quiet, with her hair standing on end due to great joy.

45-48. Then Rāmacandra's brother Bharata gave (back) to the intelligent Rāma, the great kingdom given to him by their father. The delighted ministers, invited astrologers, knowing sacred hymns, and, with great respect, asked them about an auspicious time; and being eager they consecrated Rāma on the great kingdom on an auspicious time on a good day united with an auspicious constellation. The great king, the lord of kings, stood on a beautiful (piece of) tiger-hide, after drawing on it (the picture of) the earth with its seven islands.

49-54. From that day only the hearts of the good men became joyful; the hearts of the wicked, tormenting others, became weary. Women due to their devotion to their husbands, were greatly attached to them. O sage, men did not even mentally commit any sin. Demons, gods, so also serpents, yakṣas, asuras, and great snakes remained on the right path. All they held Rāma's order with their heads (i.e. respectfully obeyed Rāma's order). People engaged in obliging others. They were happy as they followed their own course of conduct laid down for their caste. Auspicious moments of days and nights were passed in (getting) knowledge and diversions. Even great wind did not carry away even the small garments of those who remained on the roads. There was (absolutely) no talk about thieves. The kind Rāma, treasure of compassion, gave wealth to suppliants. With his brothers he always praised the preceptors and deities.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Coming of Sage Agasti

Śeṣa said:

1. Then the gods, with their minds delighted due to (Rāma's) killing the lord of demons called Rāvaṇa, humbly praised Rāma, consecrated (as the king).

Gods said:

2-10. Victory to you, O son of Daśaratha, O you who remove the sufferings of gods; victory to you who burnt the race of the demons; victory to you, O god, destroying the enemy whose hands were engaged in seizing the bevvies of excellent women. The eager poets describe your destroying the lord of demons. O lord of the worlds, at the time of the deluge you again easily swallow the group of the worlds. Victory to you who are free from the causes of birth, old age etc. O mighty one, emancipate (us). Victory to you who have taken birth in the ocean of the family of the righteous, O you ageless, immortal and the fixed one. By means of (reciting) the names of you, the greatest god, even those who have committed great sins are purified. What then if good, foremost brāhmaṇas have obtained the human existence with a good body? The pair of your feet, praised by Śiva and Brahmā gives abundant things that are desired. We mentally desire it which is well arranged in the heart with the marks like those of pure barley (grains) etc. O you having the loveliness that excels Madana's frame, if you do not grant fearlessness to the world, then how can, O you compassionate and purifying one, the hosts of gods be happy? You take birth on the earth whenever the demons trouble us, O lord, though you are unborn and immutable, though you are the greatest lord. You who are the self-adorned one and you who are praised by those who approve of virtues, quickly enter (i.e. go back to) your own place, after having filled the earth with your superhuman good deeds like nectar to the dead and destroying sins. May the beginningless one, the foremost one, who takes the form of a god, who has put on a necklace and a crown, who looks like Cupid, who has forcibly killed his enemies, whose lotus-like feet are served by Cupid's enemy (i.e. Śiva), be victorious.

11. Speaking like this, all the gods led by Brahmā and Indra and pleased with the destruction of (their) enemy, repeatedly saluted the chief of the Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

12. Being extremely pleased by the praise, the very glorious lord of the Raghus, seeing the gods with their necks bent down, said to them:

Śrī Rāma said:

13. O gods, choose from me some boon which is extremely difficult to obtain and which some eager god, demon or yakṣa has not obtained.

Gods said:

14-16a. O lord, from you we have obtained the best thing, since you have killed our enemy, viz. Rāvaṇa. Whenever a demon troubles us, you should in this way destroy (that) enemy.

Saying, 'All right', the hero Raghunandana (i.e. Rāma), spoke again.

Śrī Rāma said:

16b-20. O gods, carefully listen to my words. The man, who again and again recites in the morning and at night the wonderful hymn of me (i.e. in my honour) composed by you and couched with my virtues will never meet with an extremely terrible defeat from his enemy. He will not experience poverty and will not suffer from a disease or a defeat. By reciting (the hymn) devotion to the pair of my feet will be produced in the joyful hearts of men.

Speaking thus, the crest-jewel of kings (i.e. the best king) remained silent. All the gods who were delighted went to their respective worlds.

21-27. Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) also looked after his wise brothers like their father, and the lord of the world fondled the subjects like his own sons. When he was ruling, the people did not meet with an untimely death; in the houses there was no great discomfiture like a disease. The calamity of the season was not seen, so also there was no fear from enemies. The trees always bore fruits, and the earth yielded much grain. The life of people was blessed with sons, grandsons and attendants. Their depression was removed due to their wives' company. They were everyday eager to listen to the stories about the lotus-like feet of Rāma. They never employed their words in censuring others. Even artisans, apprehensive of a blow from the

hands of Rāma, never even mentally committed a sin. People, with their eyes becoming steady on seeing the face of Sītā's husband, were always full of compassion.

28-45. He (had) the kingdom to which there was no rival, which was prosperous and had (in it) powerful elephants (or horses). It was charming on account of delighted and thriving sages and with ornaments of gold. It was well-nourished by those who always did the pious things like performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity. It was always rich with crops, had good wealth and fields. Its regions were good; subjects were good; it was self-abiding; it had ample grass, and a large wealth of cows. It was all around adorned by rows of temples. In it were villages adorned with ample wealth and prosperity. The lands in it shone with artificial gardens having good flowers, with trees having very sweet fruits, and with lakes having good lotus-plants. In the country only the rivers were *sadambha* (i.e. containing good water); the people were not *sadambha* (i.e. were not proud). There were families of many castes, well-born but not poor. In it *vibhrama* (i.e. amorous movement) was (seen) in women, but *vibhrama* (i.e. an error) was never seen in (i.e. committed by) the learned. Only the rivers flowed in a crooked way (*kuṭilagāminyaḥ*) but the subjects were not wayward in sex. The nights (only) were dark in the dark fortnights; but men were not full of darkness (i.e. ignorance). Only women had *rajas* (i.e. menses), (but) people did not behave unrighteously. A man was neither *andha* (i.e. blind) due to wealth nor without rice (*āndhya*) in (i.e. while taking) his meal. Only a chariot took a wrong course and never a royal official. *Daṇḍa* (i.e. a handle) was to be seen in (i.e. attached to) an axe, a spade, a row of fans or an umbrella; but *daṇḍa* (i.e. punishment) was rarely due to a fault or disturbance. Except among the groups of those who played at dice, there was no repentance. Only the gamblers were seen with dice (*pāśa*) in their hands (and none else with nooses—*pāśa* in his hands). *Jāḍya* (i.e. frigidity) was seen in water only. The waists of women alone were weak. Only women were hard-hearted, and not men. There was the *kuṣṭha* (herb) only among medicines; but no *kuṣṭha* (i.e. leprosy) among men. A hole was seen in good gems; a pointed weapon was (seen only) in the hand of a

man fashioning images. Tremor was due (only) to good feelings, never due to the fear of someone. Fever was due to sexual passion; there was poverty (i.e. scarcity) of the wicked (only). There was no want of a thing for a lucky person due to his good deeds. Only elephants were wanton in a war, and waves in a lake. Loss of *dāna* (i.e. 1. ichor 2. gift) was (seen) only in the elephants. Only thorns were sharp. Going away from the *guṇa* (1. string 2. virtue) was (seen) only in arrows; a compact utterance with a peculiar arrangement of words was (seen) only in a book. Abandoning friendship was present only in the wicked, and not among the kinsmen. Fondling the loved subjects he looked after that country. Like Yama to a wicked person he established righteousness in the country. When the lord was thus righteously protecting the country—the earth, a thousand and eleven years passed.

46-50. He who perpetuated the Raghu-family, on hearing (words) of dishonour about Sītā, and his own censure from a mean washerman abandoned her. By one order of him, the king who was protecting the earth righteously, Sītā who was (up to that time) well-protected, was abandoned. When once the highly intelligent one was seated in his assembly, the great sage, the best sage born from a pitcher (i.e. sage Agasti) came (there). Taking a respectful offering he got up; and the great king accompanied by Vasiṣṭha and people, honoured him who had dried the ocean and who had arrived there with a welcome, and enquired after his health. Then the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) spoke to the sage who had seated comfortably and who had taken rest.

CHAPTER SIX

Agastya Begins Rāvaṇa's Story

Śeṣa said:

1. The intelligent Rāma, the lord of all worlds, thus said to the sage, the treasure of celibacy and penance and pleased with the welcome:

2-6. “O you illustrious one, O you born of a pitcher, O you treasure of penance, welcome to you. All of us, with the members of our family are purified (by your arrival). I hope, your respect for the Vedas and sacred texts continues. On the globe there is none that would obstruct your penance. O glorious one, Lopāmudrā is your virtuous wife due to whose conduct as a devoted wife everything becomes auspicious. O you best sage, O you glorious one, O you piety embodied, O you treasure of compassion, tell me what thing should I do for you who are greedless. Everything takes place due to your penance, and you can have many things through your own penance, and you can have many things through your own desire. Yet, O best sage, just favour me, and tell me (what I can do for you)’’.

Śeṣa said:

7. Thus addressed by the intelligent Rāma, the lord of people, the king of kings, he spoke to Rāma, the lord of the world with more polite words.

Agastya said:

8-10. O lord, O king of kings, O treasure of compassion, know that thinking that to see you is extremely difficult, I have come here. You killed the demon named Rāvaṇa who troubled the world. Luckily gods are happy today; luckily Bibhiṣaṇa has become the king. O Rāma, today on seeing you indeed my sin has gone (away). O best god, the vessel of my mind is full of joy.

11. Speaking thus, (Agastya) born from a pitcher, with his mind perturbed due to joy on seeing Rāma, quickly became quiet.

12-15. Rāma again asked that sage well-versed in knowledge: “You know everything everywhere about the past, present and future in the world. O sage, tell it all in great detail to me who am asking you. Who was that Rāvaṇa, who troubled the gods and whom I killed. What is that Kumbhakarna? What is his species? O great sage, is he a god, or a demon, or a friend, or a goblin? O you omniscient one, tell me all that. You know all that in detail. Therefore, favouring me, tell me all that.”

16-29. Hearing these words from him, that treasure of penance (viz. Agastya), born from a pitcher, began telling all that

was asked by the king (Rāma) of the Raghu (family). “O king, Brahmā brought forth the creation. His son was Pulastya. From him was born Viśravas, conversant with the Vedic lore. He had two wives, who were of a chaste conduct. The name of one was Mandākinī, and the other one was known as Kaikāsī. From the former (i.e. Mandākinī) Kubera, enjoyer of the pleasures of a regent of the quarters, was born; through Śiva’s favour, he took his residence in Laṅkā. Three great sons were born to (Kaikāsī) the daughter of Vidyunmālī: Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarna, and the righteous Bibhiṣaṇa. O very intelligent one, due to being born from the womb of a demoness and due to being born at the evening time, the mind of the two was steeped in unrighteousness. Endowed with brilliance, he (i.e. Kubera), once, having got into the Puṣpaka aeroplane made of gold and having (i.e. adorned by) groups of small bells, and being praised by his attendants having many jewelled ornaments, went to see his parents. The son (i.e. Kubera), having come to his parents, and having for a long time fallen at their feet and being beside himself with joy and with his hair standing on end due to horripilation, said: “Today is a good day for me. There is the rise of the fruit of my great luck, since I saw your feet, seeing which gives great religious merit.” Having praised them with such words of praise, he went to his own house. The parents also became delighted due to the son’s affection (for them). Seeing him (i.e. Kubera), the intelligent Rāvaṇa, said to his mother: “Who is this man who having fallen upon my father’s feet, has again gone (back)? Is he a god, or a yakṣa or an excellent man? He is the treasure of great luck. He is surrounded by his own attendants. Due to which penance has he obtained this aeroplane, which has the speed of the wind, and which is the best place of enjoyment having in it gardens and groves for sports etc.?”

Śeṣa said :

30-36. Hearing these words, his mother, displeased and overcome with anger, and with a slight change in her eyes said to her son: “O son, listen to my words full of great instruction. His birth, deeds etc. are superior due to his (good) thoughts and cleverness. He has taken birth (i.e. is born) from the womb of my co-wife, (and) has brightened the pure, great family of his

mother; but you, who are born from my womb, are an insect, are a sinner, and fill your own belly (only). Like a donkey who does not know (i.e. has no idea about) the load (on his back) nor its quality, you appear to be learned but enjoy lying and sitting; your existence is like one that is asleep, gone away, or fallen. By means of his penance he who pleased Śiva, has obtained residence in heaven, an aeroplane having the speed of the mind, and royal glory. His mother is very blessed, very lucky and very prosperous, whose son has obtained the position of the great due to his merits.”

37. Having heard these words angrily uttered by his unhappy mother, the most wicked one (Rāvaṇa), entertaining anger for himself and determined to (practise) penance, again said (these) words.

Rāvaṇa said :

38-43. O mother, listen to my words full of pride. You, who have three sons like us, are one who conceive gems. Who is that insect of that Kubera? What (i.e. how insignificant) is his small penance? What (i.e. how insignificant) is Laṅkā? What (i.e. how insignificant) is his kingdom having (but) a few servants? O mother, full of compassion, listen to my pledge taken through determination, and never taken (before) by any one, O very lucky Kai-kasī. If by practising difficult austerities pleasing Brahmā, and by always giving up food, water, sleep and sport, I do not bring under my control the entire world, then I would incur the sin due to harming the world of the manes.

Accompanied by Bibhīṣaṇa, Kumbhakarna too took the pledge with Rāvaṇa and saying the same went to a mountain-grove.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Elimination of Rāvaṇa by Viṣṇu

Agastya said :

1-6. Then the demon practised a severe penance for ten thousand years. Looking at the sun with his eyes, he remained with his feet upwards. Kumbhakarna also practised a very difficult penance. The righteous Bibhiṣaṇa also practised penance. Then the lord, the god of gods, the lord of beings, served by the crowns of the gods, demons, yakṣas and others, was pleased, and gave him a great kingdom, shining in the three worlds; he also made his body charming and waited upon by gods and demons. Then he always tormented Kubera having a religious mind. He took away his aeroplane, and forcibly (captured) the city of Laṅkā. He tormented the entire world; the gods also went to heaven. He killed brāhmaṇa families, and cut off the roots of the sages.

7-9. Then the gods who were grieved, came with Indra to Brahmā and the magnanimous ones prostrating themselves (before him) like staffs praised him. All the respectful gods praised (him) with proper words. Then, the lord, who was pleased, said: "What should I do?" Then in front of Brahmā the gods narrated the trouble from Rāvaṇa and their own defeat.

10-15. Thinking for a moment, Brahmā went to Kailāsa with the gods. The gods led by Indra and full of surprise remained by the side of that mountain and praised Śiva. (They said:) "Salutation to Bhava; salutation to you—Śarva; salutation to you—Nilagrīva; salutation you—the gross, the subtle, and the multi-formed one." Śiva, having heard the words uttered from the mouths of the gods, said to Nandin: "Bring the gods near me." In the mean while, gods invited by Nandin, entered the city and looked with wonder-struck eyes. Brahmā came forward and saw Śiva who did good to the world, who was served by crores of delighted attendants who were naked, deformed, crooked, dusty and hideous.

16-17. Remaining in the front the grandsire along with the gods saluted and said to the highest lord of gods: "See the condition of the residents of heaven. Take pity, O great god, O you

who are affectionate to those who seek your refuge. You (now) exert yourself to kill the wicked demon.”

18-20. He (i.e. Śiva) too hearing their words full of dejection and sorrow came with all gods to the place of Viṣṇu. Along with gods, serpents and kinnaras all the sages praised him: “O Mādhava, victory to you. O lord of gods, victory to you. O you, who remove the afflictions of your devotees, victory to you. Look (at us), O great god. Look at your servants.” In this way all gods led by Śiva loudly spoke.

21-28. Hearing what was said (by gods) Viṣṇu, the great lord of gods, seeing the grief of gods spoke as if pacifying their grief in a voice loud like (the thundering of) clouds, to the gods: “O gods led by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, you should listen to (my) words intent on your good. I know the fear caused to you by Rāvaṇa. Today, taking an incarnation I shall destroy that. The city of Ayodhyā, an ornament to the earth, is protected by kings born in the solar family and doing good acts like (making) great gifts and (performing) sacrifices. It shines with silver regions. Daśaratha, the mighty king, who conquered the whole world, who is endowed with wealth (but) who is childless, now rules over the kingdom (and lives) in it. He, endowed with great power performed with a desire to have a son the sacrifice according to the rite through revered R̥ṣyaśṛṅga solicited for (performing) the sacrifice. Then, O gods, he first prayed to me through penance. I was born in four ways having the names Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna on his three wives. I shall fully eliminate Rāvaṇa along with his army and horses (or elephants). You should also by your own portions taking the form of bears and monkeys move on the entire earth.”

29-36. Thus speaking in the heaven, he quickly ceased to speak. All the gods, having heard these great words, and with their hearts pleased, did what was told by the intelligent god of gods. They, taking the forms of bears and monkeys filled the earth with their portions. O great king, you yourself are that great god Viṣṇu, who destroys the misery of gods, and who has taken up a (human) form. O highly intelligent one, this Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna are (born) from your portion. So also is Rāvaṇa who troubles the gods created. Due to the continuity of former enmity he kidnapped Sītā, O king. You killed that demon born

in the stock of a brāhmaṇa demon. You overthrew that lord of demons, the son of Pulastya, who troubled the entire world. The whole earth has become happy. Today the brāhmaṇas have secured happiness and the ascetics have secured the power of (their) penance. All the holy places have (again) become auspicious, and all the sacrifices are well-established. O soul of the universe, O origin of the world, O best man, when you are the king, the entire world with gods, demons and men has become happy.

37. I have, according to my intellect (i.e. intellectual capacity) today told you everything—the birth and death (of Rāvaṇa)—as asked by you, O innocent one.

38. Hearing in this way the account about the family of the lord of demons, the great man of well-known prowess, the lord, the ruler, checking his tears trickling on his lotus-like face, fell on the ground in his assembly.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Agastya Advises Rāma to Perform a Horse-Sacrifice

Śeṣa said :

1-4. O best sage Vātsyāyana, well-versed in the Vedas, the story of the god of gods, the only protector of all righteous ways, destroys sins. Seeing Rāma (fallen) unconscious, Agastya, the treasure of penance, immediately wiped his tears slowly with his hand, and said: “O Rāma, revive quickly, why do you sink? You are the ancient Viṣṇu, the destroyer of the demons’ family. Without you the world—the past, present, future, the immovable and the movable—does not go on. (Then) why have you fallen unconscious here?”

5-6. Hearing the words uttered by him who was born from a pitcher (i.e. by Agastya), the great king (Rāma), with his lovely face full of tears trickling on it, got up, and with his frame bending due to sense of shame, and averse to doing wrong to a brāhmaṇa, said very piteous, distinct words in detail.

Śrī Rāma said:

7-15. Oh! see the ignorance of me who am a fool and wicked-minded, that I, very eager through passion, killed (Rāvaṇa) born in a brāhmaṇa-family. (Though) I had the true knowledge of the Vedas and (other) sacred texts, I, void of intelligence and of a bad mind killed a brāhmaṇa, (destroyed) a brāhmaṇa-family. A brāhmaṇa never got a reproach in (i.e. from a member of) the Ikṣvāku family. (But) I, doing such a deed (as killing a brāhmaṇa like Rāvaṇa) have greatly stained it. Those brāhmaṇas who deserve worship by means of presents, honours and food, have been killed by me with strokes of volleys of arrows. Which worlds shall I go to? Even the unbearable (hell called) Kumbhīpāka (will be secured by me). There is no such sacred place as is capable of purifying me. There is no sacrifice, no penance, no gift, or no vow etc. that would purify and emancipate me who have wronged a brāhmaṇa. Those men who have angered a brāhmaṇa-family, go to hell, and after having reached hell repeatedly experience misery. For those who have the true knowledge of the castes and the stages of life, Vedas are the roots of religious practices. The brāhmaṇa-family is the root of all the prominent branches of the Vedas. What world shall I who through insolence cut off that root, obtain (i.e. go to)? What should be done today by which good would take place in my case?

Śeṣa said :

16. Agastya said these words to the lord of kings, the best among the Raghus, who had taken a human form through his divine power and who was very much weeping.

Agastya said :

17-23. O very wise, very intelligent king, do not be dejected. No (sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa would be earned by you, desiring the destruction of the wicked. You are the ancient man; you are actually the lord beyond Prakṛti. You are the author (of the world); you take it away; you are its protector; you are actually qualityless (but) possess qualities due to your desire, since by (merely) uttering your name, all, viz. the drinker of spirituous liquor, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, one who steals gold and one

who commits a sin, are quickly purified. O you very intelligent one, this respectable lady Sītā is a great lore, merely by remembering whom those that become free (from the mundane existence) obtain beatitude. Rāvaṇa also was not a (real) demon. He was your servant in Vaikuṇṭha. O you killer of demons, he obtained demonhood due to the curse of sages. You have favoured that brāhmaṇa (viz. Rāvaṇa) and have not killed him. Thinking like this do not again grieve over (the death of Rāvaṇa).

Hearing these words from him, Rāma, the conqueror of his enemies' cities, spoke sweet words, uttering stammering sounds.

Śrī Rāma said :

24-26. Sin is said to be of two kinds, viz. deliberate and non-deliberate. Deliberate is that which is done with an intention. The non-deliberate is that committed unintentionally. The deliberate sin is exhausted only after experiencing (the fruit of that sinful) deed. The other one would perish through remorse. This is declared by the scriptural injunctions. The words of the good cannot be properly regarded as removing the grief of me who have intentionally committed the extremely censurable killing of a brāhmaṇa.

27-28. Tell me a vow, a gift, a sacrifice, a (visit to a) holy place, or some great worship like that, which would burn my sin, and by which my spotless fame will purify the people who are defiled by sinful conduct and whose lustre is taken away due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa.

Śeṣa said :

29-36. That treasure of penance (i.e. Agastya) spoke these words to Rāma whose feet were illumined by the gems on the heads of the gods and demons that saluted him and who had spoken thus: "O Rāma, O great hero, O you who does favour to the worlds, listen to words which I (shall now) speak for removing (the sin due to) killing a brāhmaṇa. He who would perform a horse sacrifice, overcomes all that sin. Therefore, O soul of the universe, you perform that auspicious horse-sacrifice. You who are wise, who are endowed with great glory, who are having great power, who are the lord of the earth should perform that horse-

sacrifice which removes the sin of (i.e. due to) killing a brāhmaṇa, and which was performed by the great king Dilīpa, your ancestor. Indra, the best among men, having performed a hundred sacrifices, secured, in Amarāvati, a position well waited upon by gods and demons. All these your ancestors—Manu and king Sagara, and king Marutta, so also (Yayāti) the son of Nahuṣa, performed (this) sacrifice and went to the (highest) place. Therefore, O lord of kings, perform (that sacrifice); you are fully capable (of performing it). Your brothers, the regents of quarters, are appreciative of it.”

37. Having heard what the sage said, that fortunate Rāma, the best of the Raghus, afraid of having killed a brāhmaṇa, very much deciding to perform it, and (with his glory) sung by those who were conversant with past events, asked (Agastya) about the manner (in which it was performed).

CHAPTER NINE

Instructions in Religious Practices

Śrī Rāma said:

1. What kind of horse should be (used) there (i.e. in that sacrifice)? What is the manner in which he is to be honoured? How can it be performed? Which enemies are to be conquered in (i.e. while performing) that sacrifice?

Agastya said:

2-11. A horse that is having the colour of the water of Gaṅgā, that is auspicious in body, that is dark in ears (i.e. that has dark ears), that is red in face (i.e. that has a red face), that is yellow in the tail (i.e. that has a yellow tail), that has good characteristics, that has the speed of the mind, that can move everywhere, that resembles Uccaiḥśravas, that has auspicious marks is said (to be used) in a horse-sacrifice. Having worshipped the horse on the full-moonday of

Vaiśākha, having written (and having put) a note marked with one's name and power on his forehead, one should let him loose, carefully guarded by guards. The powerful guards should go wherever the horse to be sacrificed goes. The guards should forcibly bring him back from him who, with force, binds him due to his own heroism and power. The sacrificer should remain (practising) and should observe celibacy. Till two years pass while the man is observing the vow, the poor, the blind, and the helpless should be satisfied by (giving) them wealth etc. O venerable (Rāma), abundant food should be given, and much wealth (also) should be given. The intelligent one gives whatever (a suppliant) asks for. O you destroyer of your enemies, the sacrifice of him who does acts like this, when completed, destroys all sins. Therefore, you are able to perform it, to protect it and to honour it. O king, having had auspicious fame, purify other people.

Śrī Rāma said:

12. O best brāhmaṇa, now see my stable; see whether there are horses like that (i.e. as described by you), having auspicious marks.

13-19. Hearing these words, Agastya, the mine of compassion, got up and desiring to see the auspicious horses fit for the sacrifice, went with Rāma to the stable and saw there very strong horses of lovely bodies, and having the speed of the mind. While seeing them he wondered to himself as to whether they were the descendants of the king of horses that had come (down) to the earth, or were solidified mass of the fame of Raghu kings, or whether it was a great mass of nectar (that had come out) of the ocean. On one side there was an excellent row of horses with crimson bodies. At one place there were horses with dark ears and shining like musk. At one place there were horses having a golden splendour. At other place there were horses of blue colour. At one place (there were horses) surrounded by particular spotted horses. Seeing all of them, the sage, with his mind full of eagerness went to another place to see the horses fit for the sacrifice. There he saw hundreds of them having that colour and tied

(within the stable). Seeing them, the sage, with his body delighted (i.e. having marks of delight), was amazed.

20-21. Seeing at one place horses with dark ears, with their bodies resembling milk, with yellow tails, red faces, having auspicious marks, fully spotless, resembling the streams of pure water, graced with the speed of the mind, bright like the heaps of spotless fame, the sage who dried the ocean and whose eyes and face were bright due to joy, spoke on seeing the beautiful horses to the lord of Sītā (i.e. spoke to Rāma).

Agastya said:

22-24. O best of the Raghus, the eyes of me who am seeing your many auspicious horses fit for the horse-sacrifice, are not today getting satisfaction. O illustrious Rāmacandra saluted by gods and demons, O great king, perform a big horse-sacrifice. O you prosperous one, performing all groups of sacrifices like (Indra) the lord of gods, drying like god Sun the ocean of your enemies, and having conquered the war in which the chief of the hosts of enemies is killed, make this earth full of pleasures and enjoyments.

25-30. He with all his senses fully delighted by the utterance of these words collected all excellent requisites for the (horse-) sacrifice. Accompanied by the sage, the great king came to the bank of Sarayū. There he ploughed a large (portion of) land with golden ploughs. Having plentifully scratched (i.e. ploughed) the land of the measure of four yojanas, the king constructed temporary halls for the sacrifice. He (got) prepared a basin with a womb and a girdle, decked with many gems and endowed with all charm. The best sage Vasiṣṭha, having a great penance (to his credit), got all that done according to the rules as laid down in the Vedic texts. That sage (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) sent (his) disciples to the hermitages of best sages. They (i.e. the disciples) told them that the best Raghu (i.e. Rāma) was ready (to perform a sacrifice).

31-35. Then all the sages, best among those who practised penance, were invited. They, being extremely eager to see the highest lord (i.e. Rāma) came (there). Nārada, (a sage) named Asita, Parvata, the sage Kapila, Jātūkarnya, Aṅgiras, Vyāsa,

Ārṣṭiṣeṇa, Atri, Āsuri, Hārīta, Yājñavalkya, Saṁvarta, and (the sage) named Śuka—these and other sages went to (attend) the excellent horse-sacrifice of Rāma. The king (the descendant of) Raghu, of a magnanimous mind, honoured all of them by rising and saluting them and by making respectful offerings and offering seats to them. He whose valour was generally known, gave them cows and gold. (He said to them): “Today it is my great luck that I have seen you.”

Śeṣa said:

36. O brāhmaṇa, when (the hall) was crowded on the arrival of excellent sages, there was discussion about the way of life well in conformity with the castes and the stages of life.

Vātsyāyana said:

37. What kind of discussion about the way of life took place there? What wonders (i.e. wonderful things) did they tell? What did the good (sages), through compassion for all people, say (there)?

Śeṣa said:

38. Rāma, the great son of Daśaratha, having seen the sages gathered there, asked them about all the ways of life proper for the castes and the stages of life.

39. They, on being asked by Rāma explained the very meritorious ways of life. I shall properly tell them to you. Listen to them.

The sages said:

40-47. A brāhmaṇa should always perform sacrifices, should engage in study etc. Having studied the Vedas and being free from passion he should not enter upon the householder's stage. A brāhmaṇa should always avoid serving low people. Even when he is in a calamity he should never live by following a dog's life. To approach his wife (i.e. to have intercourse with her) after the period of menstruation is the proper course for a brāhmaṇa; it is good for women. Or merely by remembering them he would desire a child. Approaching (their wives) by day by men is regarded as cutting short (the span of) life. An intelli-

gent man should avoid (intercourse on) a śrāddha-day and all the parvan days. If he would cohabit with his wife through infatuation on these days he falls from the highest (position). That householder who has intercourse with (only) his wife after the period of menstruation, and who is devoted to his wife (alone) should always be known as a celibate. The period of menstruation lasts for sixteen days. Out of them four are extremely censured. Out of them (intercourse on) the even days causes the birth of a son and (on) the odd ones causes the birth of a daughter. He, being pure, and avoiding inauspicious (period of the) moon, so also (the constellations like) Maghā and Mūla, should cohabit with his wife, especially on (a night when) a male constellation (is predominant). She would give birth to a pure son who would help accomplish the (four) goals of human life.

48-62. The (gift of a) couple of cows that is spoken of in the Ārṣa form of marriage¹ is good. Even a small dowry for a girl causes a sin to the purchaser of the girl. Trade, serving a king, not studying the Vedas, a bad (i.e. improper) marriage, omission of the essential ceremonies of the Hindu religion, are causes of the downfall of the family. A householder (obtains) merit by giving food, water, fruits, roots and by giving a cow (to a brāhmaṇa) according to the proper rite. He, from whose house a guest goes unhonoured and disappointed, loses the merit that he has collected since his birth. A householder should eat the residue of the food after having given it to his manes, the deities and human beings. He who cooks for himself and fills his own belly only, eats sin (only). Sin enters oil on the sixth and the eighth days of the month, (while) it always remains in flesh. He should avoid a razor (i.e. shaving) and (coitus with) his wife on the fourteenth day and the new-moon day. He should not enjoy his wife when she is in her menses, and should not eat with her. (Only) with one garment (on his body) he should not eat, nor should he eat (by sitting) on a high seat. An excellent man, desiring lustre, should not see his wife while she is eating. A man should not blow into fire by his mouth; he should not see (his) wife when she is naked. He should not heat

1. Ārṣa Vivāha; A form of marriage derived from the ṛṣis; one of the eight forms of marriage in which the father of the bride receives one or two pairs of cows from the bridegroom.

his foot in fire; he should not put an impure thing into fire. He should not harm beings; he should not eat at both the twilights. He should not see a cow giving a suck (to her calf); he should not point out the rainbow (to others) by day or at night; he should not eat the fresh butter that has come up from curd. He should not salute his religiously wedded wife, at night he should eat till he is fully satisfied (i.e. till his belly is full). He should not love (i.e. take interest in) the union of song, dance or instrumental music; he should wash his feet in (a vessel of) bell-metal. He should not wear a garment or shoes worn by another person. He should not eat from a broken pot; nor should he eat polluted food. He should not lie with wet feet; with his hands and mouth uncleaned after having eaten food he should not go anywhere. He should not eat while lying down; with his hands and mouth uncleaned after having eaten food, he should not touch his head. He should not praise a human being, nor should he condemn himself. He should not salute him who has risen (in life) nor should he talk about the defects of others. Having thus resorted to the householder's stage, he should go to (i.e. take to) the hermit's stage of life with his wife or when the wife is dead; and then he should detach himself (from the worldly existence).

63. The great Rāma, desiring the welfare of the world, listened to these and other practices narrated by the sages at that time.

CHAPTER TEN

Rāma Appoints Śatrughna as the Protector of the Horse

Śeṣa said:

1-2. While Rāma was thus listening to religious duties (from sages) the spring season in which beginning of very great rites is made, set in. Seeing that season (had set in), the intelligent Vasiṣṭha, born from the pitcher, said to the great king Rāma, what was proper.

Vasiṣṭha said:

3-8. O Rāmacandra of mighty arms, for you the time when the horse fully honoured is let loose for the sacrifice, has come. Make preparations for it. Invite the best brāhmaṇas. May the lord worship the brāhmaṇas properly. May he give gifts that have come up to his mind (i.e. desired by him) to the helpless, blind and the miserable according to the proper rite after having worshipped and honoured them. Initiated along with the golden (image of your) wife, sleeping on the ground, being restrained, and avoiding excellent enjoyments, keeping the deer's horn on the waist, wearing a girdle, deer-hide, and a staff, you should make preparations for the (horse-sacrifice) with (all) the (required) things.

Hearing these significant and apt words of Vasiṣṭha, the intelligent (Rāma) spoke to Lakṣmaṇa words rich with various meanings.

Śrī Rāma said:

9. O Lakṣmaṇa, listen to my words (instructions); and having listened to them, quickly carry them out. Carefully bring a horse proper for the rite of the horse-sacrifice.

Śeṣa said:

10. Having heard the words of the lord of Raghus, Lakṣmaṇa, the conqueror of (his) enemies, said these words, describing (the horse) variously, to the commander-in-chief of the army.

Lakṣmaṇa said:

11-15. O hero, listen to these very sweet words of (i.e. uttered by) me; and having heard them, quickly carry them out according to the order of Rāma whose feet are rubbed by the crowns decorating the heads of the kings. Keep ready the army whose divisions are active due to the strength of the strong wind (generated) by the destroyer (of the universe), and having good chariots, elephants, foot-soldiers and good horsemen. Keep ready horses whose speed is like that of the wind, and whose plantings of their feet (i.e. steps) are charming like the rows of

ripples, and which are mounted upon by good horsemen, holding many weapons and striking the enemy's army. Observe the elephants resembling mountains, which are (mounted upon) by the brave riders having darts and lances in their hands and having missiles, which exude profuse rut, which are intoxicated and are full of (i.e. have on them) all weapons and missiles. Let the groups of the charioteers take my chariots shining with extensive, large wealth, being yoked with horses having the speed of the wind, reminding (one) of the destruction of various foes, and with their topmost parts full with weapons and missiles. Let hundreds of foot-soldiers, having best weapons in their hands, exerting themselves in protecting the horse fit for the horse sacrifice, come to me.

16-30. Having heard these words of that magnanimous Lakṣmaṇa, the commander-in-chief Kālajit by name, made the (horse) ready. The horse adorned with ten stars, endowed with the charm of fine down, having faultless pearls round his neck, so also a gem round the extensive neck, having spotless beauty on the face, and blackish brightness on the ears, and with the mass of his reins held (by the commander-in-chief) with his hand, shone (there). The horse, with his face shining with (strips resembling) the digits (of the moon), adorned with bright gems, and beautified with necklaces of pearls, went out. At that time the lordly horse decorated with a white umbrella, adorned with a white chowrie, with his body surrounded (i.e. covered) by great loveliness, went out. Soldiers in front, in the midst, and in the rear, served him, as formerly gods waited upon Viṣṇu who deserved to be honoured. Then having called the entire army, very much crowded with hosts of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, he issued orders to it. Then the noise produced by the army that had collected (there), was heard. Then in that excellent city there was (heard) the sound of the kettle-drums. Due to the great agreeable and sharp sound of the heroes the peaks of mountains trembled and palaces shook. O king, there was a big sound of the perplexed horses. The earth as it were, moved, when it sounded by the impact of the wheels of chariots. The earth was, all around, blocked up with the herds of elephants that were moving (along it). Dust

moved there, and it screened the people (there). The great army full of men, being impelled by the commander-in-chief named Kālajit, moved out, covering the sun with its umbrellas. The best foot-soldiers, causing the battle-flurry, and ready for Rāma's (horse-)sacrifice, joyfully set out. All those (soldiers) having fragrant unguent of musk applied to their bodies, with their heads adorned with pure garlands of flowers, with their bodies adorned with the decorations of crowns and bracelets, and impelled by the king, set out. In this way, the excellent soldiers, holding bows, holding nooses and holding swords, and of loud steps, went to the great king. Thus the horse, marked for the sacrifice, scratching the ground with his hoofs, jumping in the sky (i.e. in the air), slowly reached the (sacrificial) hall.

31-42a. With his mind highly pleased on seeing the horse that had come (there), Rāma moved Vasiṣṭha to perform the (necessary) rite. Vasiṣṭha called Rāma along with (the image of) his wife made of gold, and made him perform the rite that would remove (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Rāma, the conqueror of his enemies' cities, practising the vow of celibacy, and holding a deer-horn got done that rite (through the brāhmaṇas). For the performance of the sacrifice he commenced (constructing) a basis furnished with a hall. The intelligent sage Vasiṣṭha, the old preceptor of Rāma's family, who was conversant with the Vedic concepts, became the preceptor there (i.e. at that sacrifice). Agastya, the treasure of penance, acting as the Brahmā-priest, performed the duties of that priest. The sage Vālmiki was the Adhvaryu-priest, and (the sage) Kaṇva (acted as) the doorkeeper. There were eight gates (to the hall) which were auspicious with ornamental arches. O brāhmaṇa, at each gate two brāhmaṇas, knowing the sacred hymns (were placed). At the eastern gate (were posted) the two best sages named Devala and Asita. At the southern gate (stood) the two great treasures of penance, viz. Kaśyapa and Atri. At the western gate (were) the two best (sages) Jātūkarnya and Jābāli. At the northern gate (remained) the two ascetics—the two sages—Dvita and Ekata. O brāhmaṇa, having thus made the arrangement at the gates, Vasiṣṭha, born from a pitcher, started worshipping the best horse. Women whose husbands were alive,

who were adorned with (beautiful) garments and ornaments, started worshipping the best horse with turmeric, sacred rice grains, sandal etc., O brāhmaṇa. Then after having worshipped him, they waved lights before him and offered incense of agarū. Then by the order of the brāhmaṇa (viz. Vasiṣṭha), the courtezans offered him wishes for prosperity.

42b-54. After having worshipped him like this, he tied a note, bright and fashioned of gold purified with fire, on his spotless forehead to which sandal was applied, which was very fragrant with saffron etc., and which was all beautiful. There (i.e. in the note) he wrote the bright valour and power of Daśaratha's son (Rāma): "The magnanimous Rāma, the crest-jewel of all heroes, the remover of the pride of the heroes of their power, and the descendant of Raghu, is the son of him who was the banner of the solar family, who was a great archer and a teacher initiating (pupils) in archery, and whom all gods along with demons saluted with (i.e. by bowing down) their heads having gems (on them). Rāma's mother is the one born from the womb of the wife of the king of Kośala. Rāma, his (i.e. Daśaratha's) son, who was the gem born from her womb, who is fearful to his enemies, who is well instructed by the brāhmaṇa (Vasiṣṭha), is performing a horse-sacrifice to remove the sin due to his having killed the best brāhmaṇa named Rāvaṇa. (For that sacrifice) he has let loose this excellent horse, best among horses and well-protected by the moats (in the form) of great army surrounding him. The protector of the horse is Rāma's brother, Śatrughna, who had killed (the demon named) Lavaṇa, and who is accompanied by the multitude of the army (consisting of) elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers. Those kings who, through the pride of their strength, have the jealous anger (as): 'We are great archers, we are brave, we are mighty', should capture with force the horse adorned with jewelled necklaces, having the speed of the mind, going at will, (capable of) moving everywhere, and very bright. From them Rāma's brother Śatrughna will easily free him with points of arrows (i.e. pointed arrows) whetted on grindstones and discharged from his bow." The greatest sage wrote such and other things (in the note) and then let loose the horse with his glory shining due to the power of the arms of Rāma, the treasure of

beauty, being extremely swift and having the speed of the wind, and having a special property of moving in the nether world and on the earth.

55-74. Rāma, the best among the wielders of weapons ordered Śatrughna: “Go after the horse moving freely for protecting him. O Śatrughna go along the path of the horse. May good fortune attend upon you. O you who torment your enemies, may your arms conquer the enemies. O brave one, those warriors who fight with you, should be warded off by you. On this great earth, you, united with your hosts of virtues, protect the horse. You should not kill those who are asleep, who have fled, who have lost their garments, who are very much frightened, who are polite, who have done good deeds, by doing which (i.e. when you do like this) they will approve of (your) deed. O Śatrughna, you who desire (to have) religious merit, should not kill those who are without (i.e. who have lost their) chariots, who are afflicted with fear, and who say (to you): ‘We belong to you.’ He who would kill him who is humble, who is mad, who is asleep, who is frustrated, who is affected by fear, and who says: ‘I belong to you’, goes to a mean position. You who are full of all virtues, should not long for others’ wealth, or for other man’s wife; do not show interest in a mean person. O you conqueror in a battle, do not first strike the old (i.e. do not strike the old before they strike you). Being endowed with compassion, do not violate (the rule of) worshipping the venerable. Salute a cow and a brāhmaṇa, and a devotee of Viṣṇu possessing righteousness. Wherever you go after saluting (these), you will obtain success. Viṣṇu is the lord of all, is the witness (observing everything), and possesses a body that occupies everything. O you of mighty arms, O you descendant of Raghu, they who belong to him (i.e. Viṣṇu), who move in his form, who remember Viṣṇu remaining in the hearts of all, should be regarded as having a form similar to that of Viṣṇu. Those devotees of Viṣṇu for whom there is none that belongs to them, none that is a stranger, and for whom the enemy is like a friend, purify a sinner in a moment. They, to whom the Bhāgavata (Purāṇa) is dear, to whom the brāhmaṇas are dear, are sent here (i.e. to this world) from Vaikuṇṭha for purifying the world. Even that cāṇḍāla in whose mouth there is

Viṣṇu's name, in whose heart there is the ancient Viṣṇu, and in whose belly there is the offering of eatables presented to Viṣṇu, is dear to Viṣṇu. Salute them that are here, to whom the Vedas are dear and not the happiness due to the worldly existence, and who are devoted to their own way of life. There is no difference between Śiva and Viṣṇu; so also between Śiva (or Viṣṇu) and Brahmā. I carry (on my body) the dust particles of their feet, which are pure and which destroy sins. Those men, for whom Pārvatī, Gaṅgā, Mahālakṣmī, do not exist separately, should, all of them, be looked upon as having come here (i.e. to this world) from heaven. He who, in order to please Viṣṇu, protects him who has sought his refuge, and gives respect and makes presents according to his capacity, should be known as the best devotee of Viṣṇu. He who is devoted to the pair of feet of him (the utterance of) whose name quickly burns the heaps of great sins, is the devotee of Viṣṇu. By saluting those whose senses are controlled, whose mind also thinks of Viṣṇu (only), a man should purify (himself) from birth to death. Abandoning another man's wife like a sword, be the ground of the ornament of victory and welfare. Thus following my command, you will obtain the highest position and a praiseworthy good contact (with the highest Lord)."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Aśvamedha Horse Is Let Loose

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Having thus ordered (Śatrughna), the glorious Rāma, the tormentor of his enemies, looked at the heroes and spoke to them with (i.e. using) good words: "Protecting from the rear my brother Śatrughna, protecting the horse, and obeying his orders, who would vanquish, with his multitudes of missiles, all the heroes that would come (to fight) the chief one (i.e. Śatrughna), let him spreading his very great fame on the earth take up the sword of (i.e. offered by) me."

4-9. When Rāma spoke like this, Puṣkala, the son of Bharata, took that sword from the lotus-like hand of the king of the Raghu-family. “O lord, O master, being ready, holding all weapons and missiles and a bow and arrows, I shall go, guarding everyday, Śatrughna’s rear. Today the entire earth will be conquered due to your valour. O very intelligent Rāmacandra, these (soldiers) are (just) a means. By your grace I am capable of warding off the entire (army of) gods, demons and human beings, (if it) approaches (us) to fight (with us). The lord will know everything on seeing my valour. To protect Śatrughna from the rear, here I go.” Praising Bharata’s son, who was speaking like this, and approving of (his words), the lord Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) praised all the chief heroes among the monkeys, led by (Hanūmat) born from the Wind.

10-13. (He said): “O great hero Hanūmat, carefully listen to my words. Due to your favour I obtained this kingdom free from trouble. To bring about my union with Sītā, you crossed the ocean. O monkey, O lord of monkeys, I know all your adventures. Being, by my command, the guardian of my army, (please) go. You should protect Śatrughna, my brother, as (you protected) me. O you very intelligent one, you have to enlighten my brother Śatrughna whenever he has confusion of mind.”

14-18. Hearing the great (i.e. important) words of the intelligent Rāmacandra, he accepted them with (i.e. by bowing) his head, and saluted him. Then the great king (i.e. Rāma) instructed Jāmbavanta, the lord of the monkeys, and the most lustrous among them, to serve Raghunātha (i.e. Śatrughna). (He said:) “(All of) you like Aṅgada, Gavaya, Mainda, so also the monkey Dadhimukha, Sugriva—the king of the monkeys, the two monkeys viz. Śatavali and Akṣika, (so also) Nīla, Nala, having the mind’s speed and a master born from the body of a monkey, should be ready. All of you, being adorned with elephants, good horses, with armours as ornaments made of gold, with helmets, should go quickly.”

Śeṣa said:

19. Then having called the good minister Sumantra, Rāma, shining with strength and power said to him: “O chief of the

ministers, say, which men, capable of protecting the horse should be employed now?"

20-33. Hearing the words spoken by him (i.e. Rāma), he, the killer of the enemy's heroes said: "O Raghunātha, listen to (the names of) the nine powerful kings, who have assembled here, who are archers, who are very learned, who are proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and who (therefore,) are capable of protecting the horse. (They are:) Pratāpāgrya, Nīlaratna, so also king Lakṣmīnidhi, Riputāpa, Ugrahaya, and king Śastra-vid also. This Nīlaratna is a distinguished person; Mahāvīra, Rathāgraṇī (are also there). He, the fearless one, would alone protect a lakh (of soldiers) and would fight with a lakh of soldiers. Let him go with (an army consisting of) ten akṣauhiṇīs furnished with armours, and with my arms raised (to bless him). This Pratāpāgrya is one who destroyed the pride of his enemy. Best among those who know (the employment of) all missiles, he discharges the arrows with (both) the right and the left hands. Let this Daṇḍabhṛt, who is young and who is ready to destroy the enemy, and who holds a bow, go with (the army consisting of) twenty akṣauhiṇīs for the protection of the horse. In the same way, let this best king Lakṣmīnidhi who, having propitiated Indra, studied (the employment of) missiles, go (with Śatrughna). He knows the employment and discharge of the missiles like Brahmāstra, Pāśupatyāstra, Garuḍa, and the one called Nāga, (so also) Mayūra, Nakula, Raudra, Vaiṣṇava, the one called Megha, Vajra, the one named Parvata, so also the one called Vāyavya. Let him, the crown (i.e. the best) of the brave, a hurricane to all the enemies, go with (soldiers numbering) one lakh from the army. Today let also this Riputāpa go, who is the foremost among archers, skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and a wild fire to the bamboos in the form of the enemies. Let him go with the army consisting of four divisions. Let these mighty kings hold on their heads (i.e. obey) the order of Śatrughna. This great king Ugrāśva also knows (the use of) weapons. Let all of them, quite ready, go as the protectors of your horse."

34-36. Having heard these words of the minister, he was delighted and ordered those soldiers mentioned by Sumantra. They, desiring to wage war for a long time, and maddened after it, were glad on receiving Raghunātha's (i.e. Rāma's) order.

Ready with armours etc., and with the movements of the weapons and missiles, they, impelled by Sītā's husband, went in the company of Śatrughna.

Śeṣa said:

37-46. Then, as told by the sage (Vasiṣṭha), Rāma honoured all the preceptors and sages (by giving them) presents as told (by Vasiṣṭha). To the preceptor Rāma gave an elephant sixty years old, a horse having the mind's speed and adorned with golden necklaces, a golden chariot which was adorned with gems and jewels, to which four horses were yoked, and which was furnished with all necessary equipment. (He also gave him) a lakh of gems, and pearls measuring a hundred tulās (each of which is equal to 100 palas), a thousand tulās of bright lustre of corals, a very rich village crowded with many kinds of people, producing various kinds of crops, having many temples. In the same way he gave (presents) to the Brahmā-priest and to the Adhvaryu-priest. The best of the Raghus, having given profuse gifts to the priests, saluted them. Being honoured, they (said) with various words and blessings: "O Rāmacandra, the descendant of Raghu, O great king, live long." The great one (i.e. Rāma) gave the gifts of maidens, of land, of elephants, so also of horses, of gold, of sesamum with pearls, of food, water, and the excellent gift of fearlessness, so also all the gifts of gems, to brāhmaṇas. Give, (again and again) give wealth; do not say 'No' to anyone. One should give food, one should give food endowed with all pleasures.

47-49. Thus the sacrifice, accompanied by presents, full of the brāhmaṇas and with all auspicious rites, of the intelligent Rāma, proceeded. Then the younger brother of Rāma (viz. Śatrughna) went to his mother, saluted her (and said to her): "O auspicious one, give me leave; I am going just for the protection of the horse. With your grace, I, having conquered the group of the enemies, shall come (back) endowed with charm and accompanied by great kings and the best horse (let loose for the sacrifice)."

The mother said:

50-54. O (my) son, O great hero, go; may your journey be happy. O you of a good mind, having conquered all the hosts of

your enemies come (back). Take care of Puṣkala, the best among those who know the course of conduct, the mighty son of your brother, (and) still a child, with (i.e. indulging in) sport. O son, if you come (back), with Puṣkala, and endowed with good fortune, I shall be glad. Otherwise I shall be unhappy.

He said to his mother who was speaking like this: “Remembering the pair of your feet, I shall have good fortune. O auspicious one, having taken care of Puṣkala like my own body, and doing (things) befitting my name, I shall come back happily.”

55-58. Speaking thus, the hero went to see the great Rāma dressed for the sacrifice and seated with the best sages in the sacrificial hall. The intelligent hero endowed with all grace, said: “O Rāma, give me leave to protect the horse.” Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) too hearing those words, said: “God bless you. Do not kill a child, a woman, a mad person or one without a weapon.” Then Janaka’s son and Sītā’s brother Lakṣmīnidhi, having smiled and having slightly moved his eyes said to Rāma:

Lakṣmīnidhi said:

59-64. O mighty-armed Rāmacandra, devoted to all righteous ways, instruct Śatrughna in such a way that he would be extraordinary. Doing a deed which is befitting his family, and doing what his elder brother had done, he would go to the highest place endowed with lustre and power. O great king, you said: ‘One should not belittle a brāhmaṇa;’ (but) your father had killed a brāhmaṇa, greatly devoted to his father. You also performed a deed very much abhorred in the world, (since) you had certainly killed a woman who should not have been killed. (And) O great king, the great valourous deed, viz. cutting off the ears of the demoness (Śūrpaṇakhā), which was done by his elder brother (Lakṣmaṇa) was not done by any one else. By your instruction Śatrughna will do the same thing. If, O lord, he would do like that, it would be unbecoming to the family.

65-71. To him, who was speaking like this, Rāma skilled in all kinds of speech, smiled, and spoke with a voice deep like that of a cloud: “May the tranquil meditating saints hear, who look equally upon pleasure and pain and who know such things as how to cross fully this (ocean of) mundane existence which is difficult

to cross. Those who are brave, who are great archers, who are skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles (alone) know the calling of war, and not (people) like you. Those who torment others and those who go astray, should be killed by kings who desire the good of all the people." Hearing these words spoken by the subduer of enemies (i.e. by Rāma) all those members of the assembly smiled. (Then Vasiṣṭha) born from the pitcher, let loose the horse that was worshipped and well adorned. Uttering this hymn, and touching the horse with the tip of his hand, Vasiṣṭha, born from a pitcher, let loose the horse, with a desire for victory: "O horse, move sportively over the entire earth. Since you are let loose for the (horse-)sacrifice, come back quickly."

72-75. The horse, that was let loose, and that was surrounded by all warriors skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, went with the speed of wind towards the eastern direction. The entire army shaking the earth moved on. Even Śeṣa held the earth with his hood slightly bent. The quarters were all around bright. The earth was full of beauty. Breezes blew gently from behind Śatrughna. The right arm of Śatrughna who was ready for the march, throbbed indicating (something) auspicious and leading to victory.

76-83. Puṣkala (the son of Bharata) entered his charming house which was rich with white balconies, and which had a jewelled quadrangular open shed in the middle of its courtyard. There he saw his wife who was greatly devoted to her husband, who was delighted when he was partially seen and who was eager to see her husband. She was chewing piper-betal (mixed) with camphor with her mouth resembling a lotus. Her very beautiful nose was like a sharp blade (of a sword). There were fine bracelets (worn) on her arms resembling lotus-stalks. Her excellent breasts were like the kapittha fruits. Her round hips were charming due to the knot of the wearing garment. Her very delicate feet had (worn) anklets. She saw her good husband. Having embraced his dear wife, speaking in a faltering tone, and with her body filled with the embrace (pressing) her breasts, he said: "O auspicious lady, by Rāma's order I having a chariot and looking after the sacrificial horse, am going guarding the rear of Śatrughna. You should serve my mothers by gently rubbing their feet etc., eating (the food) left over by them and showing great regard for doing

(things told) by them. All the auspicious ladies, devoted to their husbands, like Lopāmudrā, should not be insulted by you, O timid one. They are adorned by the strength of their own penance.”

CHAPTER TWELVE

Ahicchatrā City, King Sumada and Kāma

Śeṣa said :

1-14. She, smiling a little and looking at him with great love, spoke in a faltering voice to her husband who had spoken thus: “O lord, may you be victorious everywhere in battles (i.e. in every battle). You should obey Śatrughna’s order in such a way that the horse would be protected. Always remember (this) your servant, always following your foot (steps). O lord, my mind never goes away from you to any other (person). O dear one, you should never think of me in a great battle. When I am (lurking) in your heart, victory in the battle is doubtful. O you lotus-eyed one, you should act in such a way that Urmilā and others will not laugh at me and clap their hands on seeing me (and say:) ‘This is the wife of the great coward, running away in (i.e. from) the battle. When the cowards fight, where can there be an opportunity for the brave? O you of mighty arms, act, while protecting Rāma’s horse, in such a way that the wives of my brothers-in-law will not loudly laugh (at me). You are everywhere a warrior first. The ones who are behind you, and the mighty enemies should be made deaf with the twang of your bow (-string). The enemy’s army should be speedily confused with fear due to the dread of the sword in your raised hand. By conquering your enemies you should adorn this great family. O lord, O you of mighty arms, go; may you have good fortune here (i.e. in your undertaking). Quickly take this bow which is adorned with a great string (and with a great virtue), and hearing the roar of which the host of the enemies becomes greatly frightened. O hero, tie up these two quivers which are full with tips of arrows

(i.e. pointed arrows) capable of killing crores of enemies, so that happiness will take place. Put this armour on your body which is handsome like thunder-bolt and so is strong enough to remove darkness. O dear one, put on your crest (i.e. head) this beautiful helmet. Put on these two bright ear-rings decorated with jewels and gems.”

15. Looking at the hero's daughter (i.e. brave lady) who spoke spotless words in this way, and looking at her body with his lotus-like eyes, he, the conqueror of enemies, capable of fighting, and extremely wise one, who had become extremely joyful, said:

Puṣkala said :

16-18. O dear one, I shall do all that you tell me. O Kāntimatī, you will have the longed-for fame as the wife of a hero.”

Saying so the mighty one took all (the things like) the excellent armour and helmet, the bow, the two quivers and the sword given by (his wife) Kāntimatī. Having put on all those (things), the great hero endowed with great charm, and skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, looked extremely handsome.

19-23a. That chaste wife Kāntimatī repeatedly waved lights in front of him who was endowed with the beauty of the missiles and weapons, adorned with a garland of (i.e. fit for) a hero and smeared with saffron, aguru (sandal), musk, sandal etc. and adorned up to his knees with garlands of various flowers. Having repeatedly waved lights before him and with tears trickling from her unsteady eyes, she embraced her husband. Having closely embraced her for a long time, he comforted her: “O Kāntimatī, wife of a hero, do not experience (grief due to) separation from me. O you beautiful and chaste lady, here I am near you.”

23b-24. Speaking thus to his wife, he got into the excellent chariot. That lady (Kāntimatī), greatly devoted to her husband, looked with eyes, void of winking, at her best husband, who was going (away from her).

25-28. He (then) went to see his father and his mother beside herself with love. Going to the father and mother, he joyfully saluted them with his head (bent down). The mother, having embraced her son, put him on her lap; (and) shedding tears profusely, said to him: “May it be well with you!” He said to his

father Bharata: "The great Rāma is performing the (horse-) sacrifice. The magnanimous Lakṣmaṇa and you have to take care of him." Commanded with joyful words by his mother and father, he went to Śatrughna's army adorned with great heroes.

29-31. The best horse (let loose) for the great sacrifice of (Rāma), the ornament of (the) Raghu (-family), surrounded by the brave warriors occupying chariots, foot-soldiers, good horses and horsemen gladly moved (ahead). Endowed with all charm, he went to the Pāñcāla country, the Kuru country, Uttara-kuru, Daśārṇa and Śrī Viśāla countries. Everywhere hearing about the entire glory of Rāma, which brought about the protection of his devotees by killing the demon Rāvaṇa (he went ahead).

32-35a. Rāma who also commenced the rite like the horse-sacrifice, spread his fame in the world and protected the people from fear. The great excellent Śatrughna gave them necklaces, various gems, great wealth and dwellings. Rāma's excellent minister, bright and proficient in all branches of knowledge, Sumati by name, followed Śatrughna. The great hero went with him to many villages and countries.

35b-38. Due to Rāma's valour, nobody snatched the horse. Many lords of countries who were very mighty and brave, who were accompanied by elephants, horses, chariots, foot-soldiers—(i.e. the army with) four divisions—took with them much wealth along with pearls and rubies, and again and again saluted Śatrughna who had come for the protection of the earth. (They said to Śatrughna:) "O descendant of Raghu, all this—this kingdom, this wealth, along with my sons, beasts and relatives—belongs to Rāmacandra, and not to me."

39. Having heard these (words) uttered by them, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's warriors, having made them recognize his command there, went with them along the path.

40-52. O brāhmaṇa, in this way gradually Śatrughna along with the horse reached Ahicchatrā city which was crowded with various people, which was full of brāhmaṇas and the twice-born (i.e. kṣatriyas and vaiśyas), which was decorated with different gems, which was adorned with golden and crystal mansions and town-gates, where, in all mansions, were seen ladies who had lotus-like faces, who excelled Rambhā (in beauty), and who were endowed with grace; where the heroes, graceful with good con-

duct, enjoying all pleasures like the followers of Kubera, with bows in their hands, proficient in taking aim with an arrow, delighted (their) king named Sumada. The lord (i.e. Śatrughna), saw, from a distance, the city like this. In its vicinity was a park, endowed with loveliness. Śatrughna, the killer of his enemy's soldiers, saw (that park) which appeared beautiful with punnāga, nāgacampa, tilaka, devadāru, aśoka, pātala, cūta (i.e. mango), mandāra, kovidāraka, ānra, jambu, kadamba, priyāla, and panasa (trees); so also with śāla, tāla, tamāla, mallikā, jāti, yūthi, nīpa, kadamba, bakula, campaka, madana and other trees. The horse entered that (park) adorned with tamāla, tāla and other (trees). The hero (i.e. Śatrughna), whose lotus-like feet were served by archers, just went after him. There he saw a wonderfully constructed temple, which was adorned with sapphires, lapis lazuli and emeralds, which was fit to be enjoyed by gods, which resembled the peak of the Kailāsa (mountain), which was adorned with golden pillars, and which was the best among temples. Having seen that excellent temple, Rāma's brother asked Sumati, his minister, the best among speakers:

Śatrughna said :

53. O best minister, tell (me), what this is; of what deity it is the abode; which deity is worshipped here; and for what purpose the deity has stayed here, O sinless one.

54-59. Having heard this, the omniscient minister said: "O hero, listen attentively to the full and proper (account). Know this to be the great seat, giving happiness to all, of Kāmākṣā, by seeing whom, O lord of beings, everything is secured, (and) by praising and saluting whom gods and demons have obtained all (their) glory. She is the giver of (the four goods of human life, viz.) Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa; she is kind to her devotees. She, who was formerly implored by Sumada, the king of Ahicchātrā, and who removes the misery of her devotees, lives here and does everything (for her devotees). O Śatrughna, O you crest-jewel of all heroes, salute her. Having saluted her, you will quickly obtain the purity which is difficult to be got by gods and demons." Having heard those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies, the best among men, ask-

ed (him) the entire account of men, asked (him) the entire account of Bhavānī.

Śatrughna said :

60-61. Who is (this) king Sumada? Which penance did he practise due to which the mother of all the worlds, that dwells here, is pleased? O great minister, tell me all that which is full of diverse things. O you very intelligent one, since you know it correctly, therefore tell it to me.

Sumati said :

62-70. (There is) the pure mountain Hemakūṭa which is adorned by all gods. There is a pure, holy place, very much frequented by hosts of sages. Sumada whose mother, father and subjects were killed by all his feudatory kings, his enemies, went to that (mountain) for (practising) penance. With his sight fixed on the tip of his nose, and remembering mentally the mother of the worlds, he, (standing) on one foot, meditated for three years. Eating dry leaves for three years, he practised very severe penance, very difficult to practise. For three years he plunged himself (i.e. remained) in water in the cold season. In summer he practised (the vow of) the five fires; and in rainy season he remained looking up to the clouds. The wise one, restraining the breath in his heart and remembering Bhavānī, did not look at anything (else) for three years. When the twelfth year passed, Indra, seeing his great penance, very much contemplated in his mind, and through fear, vied with him. He (then) ordered Cupid surrounded by his followers, properly accompanied by celestial nymphs, and eager for the victory of Brahmā, Indra etc.: "O Cupid, O friend, O you infatuating one, go and do what is agreeable to me. Act in such a way that there would be an obstacle in the penance of (i.e. being practised by) Sumada."

71. Hearing these important words of Indra, the lord (i.e. Kāma) himself, who was very proud of conquering everything, spoke, O descendant of Raghu:

Kāma said :

72-74. O lord, who is this Sumada? And how little is his penance? I disturb the penance of (even) Brahmā and others;

then what need I say of him? Formerly the Moon, completely disturbed by the power of my arrows, went to Tārā.¹ You too went to Ahalyā, and Viśvāmitra to Menakā. O lord of gods, when I, (your) servant, am (here), do not be worried. This I go to Sumada. O respectable one, look after the gods.

75-86. Having said so, god Cupid, accompanied by his friend Spring and groups of celestial nymphs went to Hemakūṭa mountain. There Spring quickly made all trees full of flowers and fruits and noisy with cuckoos and rows of bees. Very cool breezes, resorting to (i.e. coming from) the southern quarter, and full of (the fragrance of) the flowers of cloves (growing on) the bank of the Kṛtāmala river, were blowing. When the forest was like this, the celestial nymph named Rambhā, surrounded by her friends, came near Sumada. She who was proficient in playing upon many musical instruments like tabor, drum, and adorned with a (sweet) voice like that of a kinnara, started singing. Then on hearing her music, on seeing (that) charming Spring, and (on hearing) the charming notes of cuckoos, the wise king turned his eyes. Then seeing the king awakened (i.e. who had opened his eyes), Cupid, having flowers as his weapons, hastened, and, O innocent one, quickly made ready his bow from behind him. One celestial nymph with bud-like eyes shampooed the king's feet. Another nymph cast glances at him. Another one made (coquettish) gestures. Thus crowded by the celestial nymphs and with his mind afflicted by the passion of love, the intelligent one, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of those who have restrained their senses, thought: 'These are the excellent celestial nymphs, all sent by Indra, and creating an obstacle in my penance; they will do exactly (as they are ordered by Indra).' Thinking like this, he who was practising excellent penance, said to those excellent females: "Who are you? Where do you stay? What do you desire? A great miracle has taken place that you are seen. You who are difficult to be obtained by penance, have come (here) due to my penance."

1. Tārā--Name of the wife of Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods. She was on one occasion carried off by Soma (the Moon) who refused to deliver her up to her husband when demanded. A fierce contest then ensued and Brahmā had at last to compel Soma to restore her to her husband. Tārā gave birth to a son named Budha who became the ancestor of the Lunar race of kings.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Śatrughna Enters Ahicchatrā City

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Hearing these words of Sumada, the treasure of penance, the army of Cupid, i.e. the celestial nymphs like Rambhā, joyfully said to him: “O dear one, all of us, beautiful damsels, have come to you due to your austerities. Enjoy the wealth of our youth, and give up the fruit of your penance. This is the pleasing Ghṛtācī, having a body like campaka, and charming due to the fragrance of camphor. You may enjoy the nectar from her mouth. O illustrious one, O dear one, quickly enjoy her who has charming gestures, whose body is attractive, whose breasts are compact and large, who has come (to you) as a result of your severe penance; and give up all your unhappiness. Firmly embrace me who am adorned with priceless ornaments, whose breasts are graced with the garland of mandara flowers, and who am expert in thinking about many tales about sexual union. Drink the nectar coming out from my mouth; enjoy, having reached the peak of Sumeru resorted to by means of great religious merit, pleasures—the fruit of your good penance. Let Tilottamā adorned with youth and beauty, hold on your head two good chowries—removing heat—like two streams of Gaṅgā with a constant flow, O most handsome one. O you, listen to the charming account of Cupid; drink the nectar longed for by the hosts of gods etc.; O lord, having, along with excellent damsels, reached the garden called Nandana, amuse yourself (there).”

9-10. Hearing these words spoken by them, the very intelligent king thought: ‘Wherefrom have they come? By means of my penance I have created these celestial damsels. (But) this has become an impediment. What should I do now?’ The very intelligent king Sumada who was thus anxious, thinking in his mind (i.e. to himself), spoke to the celestial damsels:

11-14. “You remain in my mind in the form of the mother of the world. That whom I think of is also said to be of your form. The pleasures in heaven, which you described, are worthless and uncertain. My mistress, waited upon by me with devotion, will give me a boon. Due to her grace Brahmā reached Satyaloka

and became great. She who puts an end to the miseries of her devotees, will give me everything. What is (the use of) Nandana? What is (the use of) the mountain well-adorned with gold? What is the use of nectar which is obtained with very little religious merit and which has given unhappiness to demons?"

15-16. Hearing these words of the king, Cupid struck him with various arrows, but could do nothing to him. The beautiful (celestial) damsels were unable to disturb his mind through glances, sounds of their anklets, embraces and through looking at him.

17. Having gone, as they had come, to Indra, they said: "The king is firm-minded." Hearing that, Indra was frightened (thinking that) his undertaking was fruitless.

18-22. Then (goddess) Ambikā, having seen the king who had conquered his senses, settled at her lotus-like feet, was extremely pleased and appeared before him. She, the beautiful one, was seated on the back of a lion; the excellent one had held (in her hands) nooses and goads; the mother, purifying those who purify the world, had a bow and arrows (in her hands). The intelligent one (i.e. king Sumada), having seen the mother lustrous like crores of suns, and holding a bow, arrows and hooks, was delighted. Having many times saluted by (bending down) his head the mother obtained through devotion, smiling, and repeatedly touching his body with her hand, the very intelligent king, with the functions of his mind full of devotion and with his body adorned with horripilation, praised her with a faltering voice:

23-30. "O goddess, O great goddess, victory to you, who alone are waited upon by the hosts of devotees, and O innocent one, you whose pair of feet is worshipped by the lords of gods like Brahmā, Rudra. O mother, this (world consisting of) the mobile and the immobile, is put in motion by a portion of you. All that does not exist without you. O auspicious mother, I salute you. The earth is settled by you through the strength of your prop. (So) it, adorned with mountains, rivers, gardens, quarter-elephants, does not shake. (Due to you) the sun, heating the earth with his sharp rays, shines in the sky; through your power he takes the water existing on the earth, and releases it (in the form of rain). Let the fire remaining within and without

(you) cause happiness to the worlds due to your power, O great goddess, saluted by gods and demons. You are learning, you are the wonderful, divine power of Viṣṇu, who alone protects the world. O you fascinating one, through your own power you create this (world) and look after it. All gods obtain perfection from you and go to (i.e. secure) happiness. O you who bless (your devotees) with your grace, O you who are saluted (by them), O you, to whom your devotees are dear, look after me, protect me, O mother, who am your servant, and who am devoted to your feet, O you the ancestor of the great Puruṣa.”

Śeṣa said:

31-33. The mother of the world, who was thus pleased, said to that devotee Sumada of an emaciated body: “Ask for an excellent boon.” Hearing these words king Sumada who was extremely delighted, asked for his own kingdom which was (formerly) snatched away (from him) and the troublesome wicked persons in which were killed, and for inviolable devotion to the pair of feet of the great goddess, the devotion that would (cause) emancipation at the end of life and would help to cross the ocean of the mundane existence.

Kāmākṣā said:

34-44. O Sumada, get (back) your kingdom in which everywhere the troublesome persons were killed. Be one whose pair of the lotus-like feet is resorted to by gems of (i.e. excellent) women. O you called Sumada, may you not be defeated by your enemies. When Rāma, of great glory, will, after having killed Rāvaṇa, perform the horse-sacrifice, adorned with all requisites, and when his brother Śatrughna, the great hero and the killer of the enemies' soldiers will come here looking after the horse and surrounded by brave men, you will present to him your entire prosperous kingdom and wealth etc., will look after the horse, and will move everywhere on the earth along with your own warriors and pre-eminent archers, O you, very intelligent one. Then having saluted Rāma served by Brahmā, Indra and Śiva, you will obtain release difficult to be obtained by meditating saints having restraint as their means. I shall stay here till Rāma's

horse comes here. After that, having emancipated you, I shall go to the highest position.

Saying so, the goddess, served by gods and demons, disappeared. Sumada too, having killed his enemies, became the king in Ahicchatrā. This king, though capable and possessing army and horses (or elephants), will not snatch your horse, (as) he is well instructed by (the goddess), the wonderful power (of the lord). O you omniscient one, having heard that the best sacrificial horse has come near the city, and (that) you also (have approached the city), the king named Sumada will now give everything to you, the very intelligent one, whose feet are served by great kings, due to the valour of the great king Rāmacandra.

Śeṣa said:

45-48. The intelligent, mighty and very glorious (Śatrughna), having heard this account of Sumada, said: 'Good, good' and was delighted. The lord of Ahicchatrā, surrounded by all his attendants and waited upon by many kṣatriyas, was happily seated in his assembly. Brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas, and wealthy and prosperous vaiśyas waited upon king Sumada endowed with charm. The just and excellent brāhmaṇas blessed the king, the only protector of all the people, with Vedic learning and diversion.

49-51. At this time, someone came (there) and said to the king: "O you lord, I do not know whose horse, with a note (on his head) is (i.e. has come) near (the city)." Hearing that, he quickly sent a superior servant (i.e. officer): "Ascertain as to who the king is whose horse (has come) near my city." The servant having gone there and having ascertained from the beginning, reported it to the king, waited upon by great kṣatriyas.

52-54. The wise king who was everyday thinking about Rāma's horse, having heard (that he had come) ordered all people: "All my people who possess wealth and grains, should put up ornamental arches on their houses in the city. Let thousands of beautiful maidens, adorned with all ornaments, and mounted upon elephants, go forth (to great) Śatrughna."

55-57. Having ordered all like this the king himself surrounded by his sons, grandsons and queen went (to receive Śatru-

ghna). Śatrughna, accompanied by many very great ministers, good warriors, saw the brave king named Sumada.

58-61. Then the great king, having come (there) joyfully saluted Śatrughna who was accompanied by elephants, foot-soldiers, the tormentors of enemies, and accompanied by horsemen, and horses that were adorned with brave soldiers and who was accompanied by heroes. (He said to Śatrughna:) "I am blessed, I am satisfied, my body is honoured. Quickly accept this kingdom, adorned with great kings, and well filled (i.e. furnished) with great wealth like large rubies and pearls. O lord, I have been waiting for a long time for the arrival of the horse. Everything that Kāmākṣā had told before, has now come about just as (she had told). See my city, and make the men (i.e. its citizens) blessed. O you younger brother of Rāma, O you very intelligent one, purify our entire family."

62-67. Saying so, he mounted (Śatrughna) on an elephant very bright like the moon, also (put up) Puṣkala (on the elephant), and he himself also mounted (upon the elephant). At that time, the sound of musical instruments like the kettle-drums, impelled by the great king Sumada, pervaded (the atmosphere). Maidens, employed by the lord (i.e. Sumada), having come to the great lord of kings viz. Śatrughna whose feet were waited upon by Indra and others, felicitated him with the heaps of pearls which were (held by them) in their hands. Having slowly come into the city, he who was joyfully glorified by people, reached the house that was decorated with ornamental arches etc. King Śatrughna, accompanied by the gem of the horse, graced by heroes, and led by king (Sumada) reached the house. Having honoured Rāma's younger brother with materials of worship etc. (Sumada) offered everything to the intelligent Rāmacandra.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Cyavana Episode

Śeṣa said :

1. Then, the king, the best among men, longing to listen to the excellent account of Rāma, spoke to Śatrughna who was pleased with the reception.

Sumada said :

2-5. I hope Rāma who is the crest-jewel of the entire world, who has descended (on the earth) to protect his devotees, and who has favoured me, is happy. The people who with the cups of their eyes constantly drink the lotus in the form of Rāma's face and are delighted, are blessed in the city (of Ayodhyā). O you best among men, O you very intelligent one, my entire wealth and all my family, land etc. and my possessions are blessed. Formerly, Kāmākṣā, tender with kindness, showed favour to me. (She told me:) "With your family you will see the lotus-like face of Rāma."

6. When that hero, the best king Sumada spoke this, he told him all the exalted virtues of the lord of Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

7-11. Having stayed there for three nights, (Śatrughna) the younger brother of the lord of Raghus, and the highly intelligent one, decided to proceed further with the king. Then knowing that, Sumada, with the approval of the great king Śatrughna and of Puṣkala, quickly consecrated his son on the kingdom (i.e. consecrated his son as the king). The highly intelligent one gave garments, many jewels and various kinds of riches to the servants of Śatrughna. With his highly wise ministers, foot-soldiers, horses, elephants, good horses and crores of chariots he (i.e. Śatrughna) started to go (i.e. proceed). Śatrughna, having the valour of Raghunātha, then went smiling along the way with that Sumada, the holder of a bow (i.e. the archer).

12-15. The best horse after having reached the bank of Payoṣṇī went (further). All the warriors, the protectors of the horse, went after him. (Śatrughna) saw various hermitages of sages doing excellent penance. Everywhere he heard the excellent qualities of Raghunātha (being narrated by the sages). (The sages said:)

“Here goes the intelligent horse protected by Viṣṇu, so also repeatedly protected by monkeys devoted to Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma), followed by excellent horses.” The great lord (i.e. Śatrughna) hearing everywhere these words of (i.e. uttered by) the sages with feelings saturated with devotion (for Rāma), was pleased.

16-22. And he saw a holy hermitage crowded with people and (other) beings, removing by the sounds of Veda the entire inauspicious things (i.e. sins) of people that heard (the sounds of the Veda), purifying the entire atmosphere by means of the smoke of the perpetual domestic fire, and looking charming due to the sacrificial posts (put up) for the many sacrifices of (i.e. performed by) the excellent sages. There in that hermitage cows fit to be looked after, were looked after by a lion; in it the rats did not dig a hole through the fear of a cat; snakes constantly played with peacocks and mongooses. There (i.e. in the hermitage) elephants and lions, having become friends, always stay. The black antelopes (living) there showed interest in eating the rice growing wild, and being protected by groups of sages were not afraid of death. The cows there had udders like pitchers, and their bodies were like that of Nandinī (the daughter of the divine cow, Surabhi). They purified the earth with the dust raised by their feet (i.e. hoofs). Seeing the sages having sacred fuel fit for the religious rites in their lotus-like hands (Śatrughna said to) the all knowing minister of Rāma, viz. Sumati:

Śatrughna said :

23-25. O Sumati, of which sage is the place that appears before (us), that is resorted to by beings having no enmity (for one another), and is crowded with hosts of sages? I shall hear the account of the sages, and by means of their accounts and descriptions etc. I shall render my body pure.

Having heard this statement of the magnanimous Śatrughna, the minister of the intelligent Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) told him:

Sumati said :

26-29. Know this to be Cyavana's hermitage adorned by great ascetics, crowded with beings free from enmity and full of the wives of the sages; and he who is the great sage (viz. Cyavana)

obtained a portion of the oblation of the two physicians of gods (i.e. the Aśvins). He broke (down) the pride of Indra in the sacrifice of the Self-born (Brahmā). Nobody obtains the prowess of the great sage, rich with the power of penance and having the image of the Vedas.

(Śatrughna) Rāma's younger brother, having heard the things about the eminent Cyavana, asked everything including the breaking of Indra's pride (i.e. Indra's humiliation) etc.

Śatrughna said :

30. When did he receive the portion of the oblation of the two wonder-workers (i.e. the two Aśvins) in the rows of gods? What did the lord of gods do at the sacrifice performed by Brahmā?

Sumati said :

31-34. There was a famous sage named Bhṛgu in the family of Brahmā. Once in the evening he had gone (out) to collect sacred fuel. At that time a very strong demon, Damana (by name), came there and uttered these very fearful words: "Where is that so-called sage? Where is that innocent lady?" He, full of anger, repeatedly uttered these words. At that time, Fire, realising that danger was imminent from the demon, showed him the praiseworthy, pregnant wife of him (i.e. of Bhṛgu).

35-36. The demon snatched her who was crying like an osprey: "O Bhṛgu, protect me, O (my) lord, protect me; O (my) husband, O treasure of penance, protect me." The wicked one took her who was speaking like this and who was afflicted, and went out. He admonished that chaste (wife) of Bhṛgu with the strokes of (i.e. with abusive) words.

37-39. Then from her uterus the foetus of blazing eyes, afflicted with great fear, and as it were the fire born of (her) body, fell (out). He said: "O you of a wicked mind, do not go; be reduced to ashes quickly. Having touched the chaste lady, you will not obtain bliss." He, who was thus addressed, fell down with his body reduced to ashes. The mother, who was agitated, took the child and went to the hermitage (of her husband).

40-41. Bhṛgu, knowing all that was done by Fire, was full of

anger, and cursed (him): “O you who gave a suggestion to the wicked enemy, be one who consumes everything.” Then Fire who was (thus) cursed, was afflicted with grief and seized his feet. (He said to Bhṛgu:) “O lord, ocean of compassion, O you highly intelligent one, (please) favour me. I told a lie through fear, and not through malice against (my) preceptor (i.e. you). Therefore, O you crest-jewel of piety, be kind to me.”

42. Then (Bhṛgu) favoured him. (He said:) “You will consume everything, (yet will be) pure.” Thus the ascetic, wet with (i.e. soft due to) compassion, spoke to him.

43-45. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Bhṛgu) who was very auspicious, who was pure, having darbhas in his hands, performed, according to the rule, the ceremony performed at the birth of a child, of the son that had fallen from the uterus. All the sages called him ‘Cyavana’ on account of his having fallen (from the uterus). Gradually he grew like the moon of the first night (of the month, waxing) in the bright half of (the month).

46-48. Surrounded by all his disciples who were endowed with the power of penance, he went to Revā, the only purifier of the world, to practise penance. The great one, having gone there, practised penance for a myriad of years. On his shoulders grew the kimśuka (trees) adorned with anthills. The eager deer, having come (to him) scratched (their bodies) against his body. Enveloped (i.e. engaged) in irresistible penance, he was aware of nothing.

49-56. Sometime lord Manu got ready for a pilgrimage. He, surrounded by a great army, went to Revā. There, having bathed in the great river, having gratified the manes and the deities, he gave gifts to brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu. His beautiful daughter (adorned) with ornaments of heated gold and accompanied by (her) friends, moved here and there in the forest. There she saw an anthill adorned with a great tree. She (also) saw some lustre, free from twinkling and winking (i.e. steadfast). Having gone there, she pierced it with small sticks. Seeing blood flowing (from it), the king’s daughter was sad and extremely unhappy. Covered with the sin, she told about it neither to her mother, nor to her father. She, afflicted with fear, grieved to herself. O king, the earth quacked, and a meteor fell from the sky. All the directions became smoky, and the sun was surrounded by a halo. Then the

king's horses perished, and many elephants died. Wealth, along with gems, perished; and there was feud among (the king's men) themselves.

57-59. Seeing that, the king (i.e. Manu) was afraid, and was slightly dejected. He asked his men. (He said :) "Somebody has wronged the sage?" Successively having come to know that act of his daughter, (and) being extremely unhappy, he went there with his army and horses. Having seen the treasure of penance endowed with great penance, he praised and pleased him (and said): "O best sage, be kind to me."

60-65. The best sage, having great penance, being pleased with him, said (to him): "Know that all that mischief is done by your daughter. O great king, your daughter burst (my) eyes. Profuse blood flew (out). (Though) aware of it, she did not say (anything) to you. Therefore, O great king, you should give her to me (i.e. in marriage) according to the proper rite. Then the calamity will cease. There is no doubt about it." Hearing that the king was grieved and gave his daughter, endowed with youth, beauty and good character, to the blind (sage). When the king gave the lotus-eyed daughter (in marriage to the sage), all the evil things caused by the sage's wrath, subsided. The king, grieved and full of compassion, having given his daughter to the sage, the treasure of penance, again went (back) to his city.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Cyavana's Penance and Enjoyments

Sumati said :

1-7. Then the sage went to his hermitage with Manu's daughter, his wife, endowed with yoga (abstraction), and with all sins destroyed was happy. That daughter of Manu, served, like her family-deity giving desired objects, her excellent husband who was blind, whose prowess was lost due to old age, and was excellent due to having intelligence like Viṣṇu. She who knew (his) internal thoughts, served her dear husband who was a trea-

sure of penance, and the charming one became very much delighted like Śacī (i.e. Indrāṇī) diligent in serving Indra. The beautiful, slim princess, endowed with all (good) characteristics, and subsisting on fruits, roots and water, served his feet. She was always eagerly engaged in obeying his words (i.e. orders) and in serving him, and engaged in the welfare of all beings she spent her time. Having given up (i.e. free from) desires, religious hypocrisy, hatred, greed, sin and pride, and always careful and diligent, she pleased Cyavana. O great king, having, in this way, served him for a thousand years with words and physical acts, she entertained a desire.

8-9. Once the two physicians of gods (i.e. the two Aśvins) came to the sage's hermitage. Having well honoured them with a good reception, she worshipped them. The two handsome (Aśvins), with their minds pleased due to the worship, respectful offering, and water for washing the feet, offered by the daughter of Śaryāti, affectionately said to the beautiful lady: "Ask for a boon".

10-16a. The princess (Sukanyā), the best among the intelligent, seeing the two physicians of gods pleased, made up her mind to ask for a boon. Knowing the intention of her husband, the princess said (to them): "O gods, if you are pleased then give (back) the sight of my husband." Having heard these charming words of Sukanyā, and having observed her chastity, the best among the physicians said: "If your husband will give us a portion of (the oblations offered to) gods, then we shall now make his eyes endowed with a clear sight." Cyavana too said "yes" (i.e. agreed to) giving a portion to the granters of the boon. Then the Aśvins, being delighted, said to (him), the best among those who practise penance: "Go down into this pond fashioned by siddhas." Thus told by the Aśvins, he who was seized by old age, and (on whose body) the veins had stretched, got into the pond; the Aśvins also got down into it.

16b-20. Three men, very handsome and dear to women, came up (from the pond). They had golden necklaces and ear-rings (on their bodies). Their forms were similar and they had put on excellent garments. Not (being able) to recognize her husband, the chaste lady surrendered herself to the Aśvins. Pointing out her husband to her, and being pleased with her chastity, they took

leave of the sage and went to heaven in an aeroplane. They had a hope of a portion being kept for them when a sacrifice was performed. After a long time, he, oppressed with passion of love, tenderly spoke, with words faltering due to love, to her who was lean and emaciated due to practising a vow.

21-24. “O beautiful young lady, I am today pleased with the great service done with exclusive devotion in your heart by you giving me respect. You did not look upon as praiseworthy (i.e. you did not care for) your body—that is very much loved by human beings—in wasting (i.e. when you wasted) it for my sake in serving me. Look, I shall give you all those favours which have been won by me, engaged in my own duty, and which are free from fear and grief, and which are agreeable due to your serving me at every step, from the Lord by means of my concentration, knowledge and abstract meditation. Then what about other objects created and falling from the stretched out eyebrow of the Lord of wide strides? You are endowed with supernatural powers; enjoy riches obtained by your righteousness, divine and difficult to be obtained by men due to displeasure of kings.” Having looked at him, who was speaking like this, proficient in the lore of the entire wonderful power of women, she understood it; and with her face smiling and glittering due to her looking (at him) with a little bashfulness, she spoke in words perturbed due to respect and love.

Sukanyā said :

25-26. O best brāhmaṇa, O my lord, O mighty one, I know this is indeed achieved in the case of you, the lord of infallible wonderful power; I told you about the right time: Let there be coition with you, the great one; for chaste women a child is an excellence. Tell (me) in this case in accordance with the teaching (of the sacred texts), the act due to which you with a desire to enjoy me have been extremely emaciated. That would be accomplished. O you, being determined be kind to me, the bold one. Tell me what is proper about the abode of the lord.

Sumati said :

27-36. Desiring (to do what was) dear to his beloved, Cya-vana resorted to abstract meditation; O king, then only he fashi-

oned an aeroplane going at the will (of the occupant). It yielded all desires; it was charming; it was endowed with all gems; it had the collection of all objects; it was furnished with jewelled pillars; it was endowed with divine beds; it was comfortable in all seasons; it was adorned with variegated pieces of silken cloth and banners; so also with garlands and variegated wreaths and with sweetly humming bees; it was bright with various kinds of garments of silk and fine garments; it was beautiful with mats put separately in each one of the residences one above the other, and also with beds, fans etc. It was adorned at various places with craft-works done there. It was furnished with a slab of great emeralds and altars of corals. It shone with the threshold of corals at the doors. It had adamant door-panels. It was resorted to by (i.e. it had) golden pitchers on the sapphire-tops. It was furnished with variegated canopies with necklaces hanging from walls fashioned with bright best rubies. It had the cooing (sound) of the groups of swans and pigeons, who having climbed up (the walls) again and again found them to be artificial. It had been properly furnished with sporting places, causing wonder to one-self.

37-54. He, who knew the hearts of all beings, said to her who was thus looking at the abode with a heart that was not very much pleased: "O timid one, after having dived into this pond, get into this aeroplane." She, whose eyes were like lotuses, who had worn a dusty garment, whose hair was tied into a braid, whose body was covered with dust and mud, whose breasts were variegated, gladly entered that auspicious pond of water. In the lake lived one hundred and ten damsels in a mansion. All of them were young. They, having the fragrance of lotuses, saw her. Seeing her, the damsels got up, and with the palms of their hands joined said: "We are your servants, order us what we should do." O you who respect (others), they having bathed that high-minded lady with a costly bath, gave her new, spotless silken garments, and excellent, bright and costly ornaments. They gave her food possessing all excellences and drink like nectar and spirituous liquor. Then (she saw) in a mirror herself with a wreath and with a spotless garment. The maidens performed an expiatory rite averting an evil with great reverence for her. Her form was adorned with a costly necklace,

and ornament for the neck; her form had an ornament on her breasts, bracelets and golden anklets that were jingling; she was adorned with a golden girdle, (decked) with many jewels, below her loins. Her brows were charming; her teeth were fine; her eyes with white loving glances, vied with the calyx of a lotus. Due to dark hair her face was bright. When she remembered her dear husband who was liked by the sages, she was there with the damsels where the lord of sages remained. (Seeing) herself in front of her husband and surrounded by a thousand damsels, and having heard about his knowledge of deep meditation, she was apprehensive. Then he, the devoted one and the killer of his enemies, put her who had taken a pure (i.e. a purifying) bath, who was freshly shining, who had her own (i.e. original, charming) form, whose charming breasts were covered, who was surrounded by a thousand vidyādhari, and who had put on excellent garments, into the aeroplane. In that aeroplane, he, the very handsome one, with his greatness undiminished, accompanied by his dear wife, and with his body served by the vidyādhari, shone like the moon in the sky, surrounded by stars, and with the multitudes of white lotuses blooming. He, the defender of those women and resembling Kubera, and praised by siddhas, enjoyed for a long time, in the troughs on the lord of the family-mountains, the place of the enjoyment of the eight guardians of quarters, charming with wind (i.e. the breezes), the friend of Cupid, and having charming sounds due to the falling into them of the celestial river. Pleased with the lady (i.e. Sukanyā) he enjoyed at (different places like) Vaiśrambhaka, the celestial garden Nandana, Puṣpabhadra, Mānasa and Caitrarathya.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Horse Goes to Cyavana's Hermitage

Sumati said:

1-4. Thus sporting with her everywhere on the earth, he did not notice the years counted in hundreds that rolled by. Then

the brāhmaṇa, being aware of the lapse of his time, and realising that his excellent dear wife was full of (i.e. fully satisfied with) her desires (being satisfied), returned to his best hermitage which was situated on the bank of Payoṣṇī and which was crowded with foeless beings and people and resorted to by beasts. He, of an excellent penance, lived there with his disciples, endowed with (the knowledge of) the Vedas; and with his pair of feet being served (by his disciples etc.) everyday, he practised a great (i.e. severe) penance.

5-8. Then, sometime Śaryāti desired to perform a sacrifice in honour of deities. At that time he sent his servants to fetch Cyavana. Being invited by them, he, of a great penance went there along with Sukanyā, his religiously wedded wife, and greatly devoted to (proper) conduct. (The king) of a great fame, saw the best sage—a man with sun-like lustre—by the side of the sage's wife i.e. of his daughter. The king who did not give her blessings and whose mind was not very much pleased, said to his daughter who had saluted her father (i.e. him).

9-10. “What is this that you have desired to do? You who have abandoned your husband stricken by old age and are resorting to this paramour who is a wayfarer, have deceived the sage saluted by the world. How has your mind wrongly gone down (like this)? This is a family-bane to the child born in the family of the good. Since you, being shameless, are having a paramour, you are degrading the family of your father and of your husband to the lowest position.”

11-14a. She, smiling a bright smile, said to her father who was speaking like this: “O father, this is your son-in-law, the son of Bṛgu.” She told her father everything about (Cyavana's) acquisition of youth and handsome form. The father, being amazed and very much pleased, embraced his daughter. A Soma sacrifice was got performed by the wise one, and he took a cup of Soma. Cyavana, endowed with power, made the Aśvins, who did not (up to then) drink Soma, have a cup of Soma.

14b-22a. Indra, (seeing) the two deities, allowed to sit in the line (of those who were served Soma), (though they were) not fit to be in the line, by Cyavana, took his thunderbolt to kill the best brāhmaṇa (viz. Cyavana). The intelligent sage, seeing Indra, holding his bolt and ready to kill him, gave out a

'hum' sound, and stupefied the arm of Indra. All men saw there Indra, whose arm was stupefied and who like a snake controlled by a charm, was breathing with anger. Indra whose arm was stupefied, praised the sage, the treasure of penance, and giving with a fearless heart a portion (of Soma) to the Aśvins, told (him): "O lord, give an oblation to the Aśvins; O Sir, I shall not prevent it; pardon me, a great sin I have committed." Thus addressed, the sage, the treasure of kindness, quickly gave up his anger. O best of men, at that time Indra's arm became free. Seeing this, all men, with their minds full of curiosity, praised the brāhmaṇa's power, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods etc. Then the great king gave much wealth to brāhmaṇas. He, the tormentor of his enemies, had the bath of purification at the end of the sacrifice.

22b-24a. Since I was asked by you to tell the great rise of Cyavana, endowed with penance and deep meditation, I have told you all about it. Having saluted this (Cyavana), an embodiment of penance, and having received (from him) blessings for victory, send him, along with his wife to the charming sacrifice of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

24b-30a. When he was talking like this, the horse, imprinting the earth with the marks of his hoofs, due to his wind-like speed, reached the hermitage. He, eating with his mouth the dūrvā-shoots, moved into the great hermitage. When the sages had, after fetching darbhas, gone to the river to bathe, Śatrughna, the tormentor of enemies and liked by heroes, reached the extremely beautiful hermitage of Cyavana. The brave one (i.e. Śatrughna), having gone into the hermitage, saw Cyavana, being the (very) embodiment of penance, near Sukanyā; and announcing his own name, saluted his feet: "I am Śatrughna, the brother of Rāma and the protector of the (sacrificial) horse. For the appeasement of great sins, I am saluting both of you."

30b-39. Hearing these words, the best of the sages said: "O Śatrughna, O best among the heroes, may you attain prosperity. You who are protecting the (horse of the) sacrifice, will attain great fame. O brāhmaṇas, note the wonder; even

that Rāma, by remembering whose name men having committed great sins and having had sexual intercourse with others' wives, destroy their sins and the free souls engaged in remembering whose name attain salvation, is performing the (horse-) sacrifice. Due to the touch of the dust rising from his lotus-like feet, the better-half of Gautama became at once one having an enamouring form. She (i.e. Ahalyā, Gautama's wife), full of love, by meditating upon that form of Rāma burnt all the heaps of her sins and became beautiful. By seeing his charming form in the battle (even) demons reached his changeless form. Those ascetics who are devoted to meditation, on meditating upon him have gone, being fully free from the fear of the mundane existence, to the highest position. Blessed I am that today I shall see Rāma's charming face, the corners of the eyes of whom resemble the cloud-water, which has a fine nose, beautiful eye-brows and which is well high. That is (really) the tongue that respectfully utters Rāma's name. The one other than this is like the tongue of a serpent.

40-46. Today I have obtained the merit of my penance; today my desires are fulfilled because I shall see Rāmacandra's face difficult (to be seen even) by Brahmā etc. I shall purify my body with the dust of his feet; I shall purify my tongue by means of very wonderful talk (with him)." With tears flowing and his words faltering he said "Go", when love for Rāma had increased by remembering Rāma's feet. In front of the sages, he, with his eyes full of tears said: "O Śrī Rāmacandra, O best among the Raghus, O you embodiment of righteousness, O you who take pity on your devotees, emancipate me from the worldly existence." Firm in his meditation he did not feel alien there, when he talked like this before the sages. Śatrughna said to the sage: "O lord, make very pure our best sacrifice by the dust of your feet. It is the great fortune of the lord of Raghus, that he, of mighty arms dwells in your heart". Thus addressed, and very much honoured by all people Cyavana, with his attendants and surrounded by all fires, and floating in the deep pool of joy, went there (near Śatrughna).

47. Seeing that devotee of Rāma, coming there on foot, Hanūmān, full of modesty, said these words to Śatrughna:

48. "O lord, if you tell me, I shall carry this very great and

extremely handsome devotee of Rāma, the best sage to your city.”

49. Hearing these important words of the warrior-monkey, Śatrughna, ordered Hanūmat: “Go, take the sage (to the city).”

50. Hanūmān put the sage on his back, and, (moving) like Wind going everywhere, took the sage along with his family.

51-54. Seeing the sage, who had arrived (at Ayodhyā), Rāma, the best among the intelligent, being pleased and agitated through affection, offered him respectful offering and water for washing his feet etc. (Rāma said:) “Now I am blessed due to having seen you, the best sage. This sacrifice of me, which is equipped with all requisites has been purified.” Hearing these words, the best sage Cyavana, extremely delighted, and with his body horripilated due to love, said: “O lord, O great king, the worshipping of fire by you, the knower of Veda, and the protector of the path of dharma, is but proper.”

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Arrival of a Brāhmaṇa Ascetic

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Having seen the power of the penance of Cyavana, which was inconceivable, Śatrughna praised the brāhmaṇic penance which alone was adored in the world. (He said to himself:) ‘Oh! see the perfection of abstract meditation in the best brāhmaṇa who just in a moment fashioned the aeroplane difficult to have. What a great disparity is there between the complete attainment of pleasure on the part of the sages of pure hearts and the desire for enjoyment on the part of human beings without the power of penance!’

4-7. Saying thus to himself, Śatrughna stayed in Cyavana’s hermitage for a while, drank water and enjoyed comfort. The great horse, having the speed of wind, having drunk the water of (the river) Payoṣṇī having auspicious water, went along the way. Seeing the horse’s exit, the soldiers went after him; some

with elephants, some with foot-soldiers, some with chariots and some with horses. Accompanied by the best minister Sumati, Śatrughna followed him in a chariot drawn by a horse.

8-14. The horse that was moving on, reached the city called Ratnātaṭa belonging to a king called Vimala and crowded with happy and rich people. Having heard from his servant that the excellent horse of Rāma along with all soldiers had reached the vicinity of the city, he, along with seventy elephants having the moon's colour, myriads of horses, and a thousand chariots bright like gold, went forth to (greet) Śatrughna. Having saluted Śatrughna, and all great warriors that had come there, and having offered him riches, treasure and wealth and his entire kingdom to him, he stood before him and said: "What (should) I do?" The great king too with his arms closely embraced him who had bowed down to his feet and having entrusted his kingdom to his son and surrounded by many archers, went with him. Having heard Rāma's name, pleasing to the ears, all of them saluted the horse and offered him riches and great wealth.

15-20. With great joy Śatrughna honoured the king; and then, along with his army went after the horse. When he was thus going, he saw on his way an excellent mountain, which was adorned with crystal, golden and silver tablelands, which resounded with water-streams, the land of which had various minerals, which was adorned with good minerals like red chalk and colour of lac, where siddha-damsels having no fear from anywhere sported with siddhas, where gandharvas, celestial nymphs and nāgas were sporting with pleasure. Seeing the mountain served by cool breezes (that had been) in contact with the ripples of Gaṅgā, and charmingly graced with the sound of lutes, swans and parrots, Śatrughna, with his mind full of amazement on having seen it, said this (i.e. these words) to Sumati:

21-22. "What is this best among the great mountains? It astonishes my mind. This wonderful (mountain) having excellent tablelands of abundant silver, shines on my way. What deities dwell here? Is it the sporting ground of gods that excites my mind with the heaps of riches?"

23-37a. Hearing these words, Sumati who had set his heart on the lotus-like feet of Rāma, the abode of virtues which will be mentioned, then said: "O king, this is the mountain (called)

Nīla, which shines in front (of us) with great beautiful peaks and crystal tops on all sides. Those mean men, those sinful men, engaged in adultery, who do not realise the hosts of virtues of Viṣṇu, do not see this mountain. So also those men who having controversies and doubt in their minds, do not care for the way of conduct well settled by the good arising from the śrutis and the smṛtis, those who sell indigo, and those who sell lac do not see this (mountain). A brāhmaṇa who drinks spirituous liquor and sells ghee etc., so also he who would not give (in marriage) his daughter endowed with beauty to a man of good character and belonging to good family (do not see this mountain). (Similarly) a man who censures his wife coming from a good family and having a good character, who himself eats sweet (dishes, but) does not give them to his kinsmen (does not see this mountain). (In the same way) a man who discriminates in (i.e. while serving) food meant for brāhmaṇas, and the wicked one who does not offer mixture of rice and peas or rice boiled in milk to a suppliant (do not see this mountain). Those who torment guests (already) tormented by the sun's heat etc. (do not see this mountain). O great king, those who enjoy in the atmosphere and who are traitors, so also those who are averse to Raghunātha do not see (this mountain). This beautiful, auspicious, best mountain, adorned by Puruṣottama purifies all of us by its sight. Here lives Puruṣottama whose feet are honoured by the crowns of gods, who deserves to be seen by the auspicious ones, who grants religious merit, whom the śrutis saying 'Not this, not this' (i.e. this is not Brahman, that is not Brahman . . .) do not know, the dust of whose feet is sought after by gods like Indra and is extremely difficult to be secured, whom the wise know by means of the perfect statements of the Upaniṣads—that Puruṣottama along with Śrī lives on this Nīla-mountain. O king, having climbed it, having worshipped it with merit etc., and having eaten the offering of eatables presented to it, one becomes four-handed.

37b-48a. In this regard also they mention this ancient account. O great king, listen to it which is full of all wonder: What happened to king Ratnagrīva along with his family? (How) he obtained four hands etc. difficult to be got (even) by gods and demōns? O great king, there was a city named Kāñcī,

well known in the worlds. It was rich with great people and their attendants, and (had in it) army and horses (or elephants). In it lived best brāhmaṇas who were very much engaged in the six duties,¹ who were devoted to the welfare of all beings, and who hankered after devotion to Rāma. The kṣatriyas were fighters, and never fled away in a battle. They were averse to others' wives and to plotting maliciously against others. The vaiśyas conducted themselves well with lending money, agriculture and trade. They always took delight in (i.e. were greatly devoted to) the feet of Raghunātha. The śūdras passed their nights and days in serving brāhmaṇas etc. With the tips of their tongues they always uttered (the word) 'Rāma, Rāma'. No common man committed a sin (even) mentally. Charity, pity, restraint and truth always prevailed there. No sinless person even uttered words harming others. People did not show greed for the wealth of others, nor did they commit any sin. In this way, O great king, the subjects were looked after by Ratnagrīva. The king, free from greed, accepted only one sixth part² (of the income of each person), and nothing else (i.e. more). In this way, the king who righteously protected his subjects and enjoyed all pleasures, passed many years.

48b-58a. Once he said this (i.e. these words) to Viśālākṣī, his chaste and religiously wedded wife: "O Viśālākṣī, sons able to protect the subjects have been born (to us). I have many attendants free from distress. My elephants resemble mountains, and my horses are (swift) like the wind. I always have chariots yoked with great horses. Due to the grace of great Viṣṇu I have nothing wanting, but (still) there is one desire in my mind. O you extremely beautiful one, I have not as yet visited a great holy place capable of putting a stop to a stay in the womb (i.e. to birth) and adorned by Viṣṇu. I have become old with my body having wrinkles and grey hair. With reverence I shall resort to a charming holy place. That man who only fills his belly (i.e. eats to live) during his life and does not worship Viṣṇu, is said to be a bull. Therefore, O auspicious dear one,

1. Śaṭkarma—The six duties enjoined on a brāhmaṇa : 1. Reading (especially the Vedas), 2. Instructing, 3. Sacrifice. 4. Conducting a sacrifice, 5. Giving, 6. Receiving (gifts).

2. Śaṣṭhānśa—Cf. Manusmṛti, 7. 131ff.

with my family I shall go on a pilgrimage after having entrusted the entire responsibility of the kingdom to my son." Having resolved like this in the evening he, meditating upon Viṣṇu at night, saw a dream (and saw in it) a brāhmaṇa—an excellent ascetic. The great king, having got up in the morning and having offered the morning prayers etc., happily sat in the assembly with his ministers.

58b-65a. Just then he saw a brāhmaṇa ascetic of an emaciated body, wearing matted hair, bark-garments and a small piece of cloth worn over the privities and holding a staff in his hands, and with his body rendered auspicious due to visits to many holy places. The king of mighty arms, on seeing him, saluted him with (i.e. by bowing) his head. The king, with his mind pleased, offered him a respectful oblation and water for washing his feet. He asked (i.e. said to) the celebrated brāhmaṇa who had rested and was seated comfortably: "O lord, my bodily sin has today gone (away) due to having seen you. Great men go to the houses of the helpless ones through regard for them, to protect them. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, now tell me, an old man, as to which god would bring about the end of (living in) the womb (i.e. the end of birth and death), and which holy place would be capable of (doing so). (People like) you move everywhere, are the greatest, are devoted to concentration and meditation and have become spotless and meritorious due to having plunged (i.e. bathed) in all the sacred places. O you, who well know (about) all the holy places, favour me and tell me in detail, who am listening and having faith."

The brāhmaṇa said:

65b-82. O best king, I shall tell you what you asked me about visits to holy places. By the favour of which deity would womb i.e. birth be kept off? That Śrī Rāmacandra who destroys the mundane existence, should be resorted to. He, the lord alone, called Puruṣottama, should be worshipped. I have seen many (holy) cities destroying all sins. Ayodhyā, Sarayū, Tāpī, so also the excellent Haridvāra, Avanti, Vimalā, Kāñcī and Revā going (i.e. flowing) into the ocean; so also Gokarṇa, (the holy place) called Hāṭaka, destroying crores of murders; so also the great mountain called Mallika, giver of salvation to those men

who see it and where on the bodies the water would become dark or pure. I have seen this holy place which removes sin. I have seen Dvāravatī, which is resorted to by gods and demons, where flows the auspicious Gomatī, having Brahmanic water, where sleep is called absorption of the mind and death is said to be final liberation, and living where Kali would never be powerful. Where (i.e. there) the stones are marked with discs, and men also hold discs; beasts, insects, birds etc.—all have discs on their bodies; where the three-strided one (i.e. Viṣṇu), the only guardian of the worlds, would live (i.e. lives). Due to my great religious merit I saw that city. I saw Vārāṇasī which is made his abode by Viśvanātha and where they teach the hymn that emancipates (a person) and is called Brahman, having died where insects, moths, bees, beafts and others, and (even) gods, abandoning the pleasure due to the contact with their (i.e. as a result of their) deeds and overcoming grief go to Kailāsa. (Then there) is the holy place called Maṇikarṇi, in which the river flowing to the north cuts off the bondage of the mundane existence even of the sinners. All (of them) having matted hair, ear-rings, and adorned with serpents and excellent ones wearing the hide of an elephant live with their grief perished. There (the god) called Kālabhairava controls Yama. Lord Yama holding the (chastising) rod, does not talk about human beings. Kāśī, marked by (the presence of) Viśveśvara, was seen by me. O king, I also saw many holy places; but that great wonder which I saw on the mountain called Nila, in the presence of Viṣṇu, was seen at no other place.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

A Miraculous Happening

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-10. O king, listen to the account (of the events) that took place on the mountain Nila, believing which men go to the eternal Brahman. I who was wandering, went to that mountain

called Nīla, the courtyard of which is repeatedly washed by the water of the ocean. There, on the top of the mountain, I saw bhīllas, holding bows, having four arms and with their fatigue removed by eating roots and fruits. Then immediately a great doubt arose in my mind: 'How (is it that) these men are having four arms and they are holding bows and arrows? Their forms appear to be (like those) who have conquered their souls and live in Vaikuṇṭha. How have they obtained what is difficult to be obtained even by Brahmā and others?' They, with their hands shining with conches, discs, maces, śārṅga (bows) and lotuses, and with their bodies covered with sylvan garlands, and resembling the devotees of Viṣṇu were near (me). With my mind full of doubt I asked them at that time, O king, (I said:) "Who are you? How have you obtained this condition of having four hands?" Then they laughed much and said to me: "This brāhmaṇa does not know the wonderful importance of piṇḍa." Hearing this, I said (to them): "What is piṇḍa? To whom is it given? Tell it to me, O you most religious ones, having bodies with four hands." Then having heard my words, the magnanimous ones told me the entire account of the acquisition of four hands etc.

The kirātas said:

11-17. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the account: A child from amongst us everyday sported, eating jambu fruits etc. Once while playing and being surrounded by children on all sides he climbed up a beautiful peak of the mountain (Nīla). (The boy said:) "There I saw a wonderful temple of a deity. It was decked with the gems like emeralds and had golden walls. Like the sun it tore off (i.e. dispelled) the line (i.e. mass) of darkness with its lustre. Seeing it I was amazed (and thought): 'What is this? Whose abode is this? Going (into it) I shall find out whether the abode belonged to the great ones.' Thinking like this, I, due to my great luck, went inside the house. There I saw the lord of gods, saluted by gods and demons, and shining with crowns, necklaces, armlets and neck ornaments etc., so also having extremely pure and charming ear-rings, and lotus-like feet with bees intoxicated with the fragrance of tulasī (-blossoms).

18-24. (I saw the lord) the rich image (of the lord) whose

feet were served by a conch, a disc, a mace, a bow, a lotus which were embodied, and who was well served by Nārada and others. (There) some sang, danced and laughed; they pleased the great, very wonderful lord who alone was saluted by the entire world.” O sage, my child seeing Viṣṇu, went there. O king, gods, after having majestically offered worship with incense etc., having made an offering of eatables for the dear (lord) of Śrī, so also having waved the lights, went, expecting his grace through great respect for him, to their own abodes. Due to the great luck (of the boy,) he got a particle of boiled rice that had fallen there, and that was difficult to be got by Brahmadeva and other gods and men. The child ate it; then he saw the image; and the very handsome child had four arms. Then we repeatedly looked at the boy who had come home, who had got four arms and who had held a conch, a disc etc.

25-30. We asked him: “What is this wonder that has taken place?” Then the boy told us all the great wonder: “I had gone to the eastern peak (of the mountain). There I saw the lord of gods. There I found the charming particle of boiled rice from the offering made to the deity. Just due to eating it, I have now become four-armed, and am amazed.” Having heard those words of the boy, we, who were at once amazed, also saw the god, very difficult to be obtained. We ate there food etc. full of all tastes. Then due to the lord’s grace we became four-armed. O best among the Kurus, go and have a sight of the lord. O brāhmaṇa, eating the particle of boiled rice (from the offering) you (will) be four-armed. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you about the wonder, about which you had asked me.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Ratnagrīva Goes on a Pilgrimage to Puruṣottama

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-5. Having heard the highly amazing words of the bhīllas and thinking that it was a great wonder, I was delighted. Having

bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, with my body rendered auspicious, I climbed up the peak, variegated with gems and rubies. O great king, there I saw the god saluted by gods and others. I had become blessed by saluting him and by having eaten the food (from the offering). Due to having seen the lord Viṣṇu, I obtained the four-armed condition, marked with a conch, a disc etc. (and) did not enter a womb again (i.e. did not have rebirth). O king, you too quickly go to the mountain called Nila, and make yourself blessed and free from the agony of remaining in the womb (i.e. being born).

6. Having heard these words of the intelligent best brāhmaṇa, he, with his body delighted, asked the sage, the manner in which the pilgrimage (was to be undertaken).

The king said:

7-8. O good one, O best brāhmaṇa, O sinless one, you have nicely described to me the greatness of the lord which destroys the sins of those who listen to it. Tell me the mode of the pilgrimage, along with (i.e. as told in) the scriptures. By which mode would men obtain the entire fruit?

The brāhmaṇa said:

9-16. O king listen, I shall tell you the auspicious mode of pilgrimage by means of which the god saluted by gods and demons, is obtained. Even if one's body is wrinkled (and) grey or one is endowed with youth, one should, realising death to be insurmountable, submit oneself to Hari. One should put one's heart into narration about him, listening about him, saluting and worshipping him, and not anywhere else like woman etc. Realising that everything is perishable and momentary and very painful, a man who somehow greatly worships Viṣṇu who is beyond birth and death, to whom devotion is dear, and who is infallible, (even) through anger, desire of carnal gratification, fear, hatred or greed, does not experience unhappiness. That Viṣṇu is reached through the sinless contact with the good. That which the good, with their attachment ceased and free from desire and greed, say, keeps one away from the worldly existence. Due to their grace men become free from unhappiness. At the holy places is found

a good man highly devoted to Rāmacandra, whose sight is the fire burning the heaps of men's sins.

17-18a. Therefore, a man, afraid of the mundane existence, should always visit the holy places, having holy water and adorned with the rows of good people. The holy places, properly visited, destroy sins.

18b-20. O best king, listen to the mode (of visiting them). First a man should create in himself detachment from his wife and (other) members of his family. Knowing (all) that to be unreal, he should mentally recollect Viṣṇu. Having gone from there to a distance of a krośa uttering (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma', he should, knowing the (proper) way, having bathed at the holy places, get himself shaved.

21-23. The sins of men visiting holy places, go (with them) resorting to their hair. Therefore, one should get shaved. Then a man, free from greed and having put on the dress proper for a holy place, should hold a staff, a knotless garment, a pitcher and a piece of deer-skin. A special fruit is obtained by those men who go there according to the proper mode. Therefore, with all efforts a man should go through the rite of pilgrimage.

24-30. He whose hands, feet, and mind are well controlled, and who has knowledge, penance and fame, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) the holy places. The very lucky man, saying with his tongue 'O Hari, O Kṛṣṇa, O Hari, O Kṛṣṇa, O you to whom your devotees are dear, O you lord of senses, O you fit to be resorted to, O revered one, O Viṣṇu, protect me from the many (births in) the worldly life,' and mentally recollecting Hari, should visit a holy place on foot. A man going in a vehicle would obtain equal fruit. A man (going to a holy place) with his shoes on would obtain one fourth fruit, and the fruit obtained by killing a cow by going in a vehicle (to which) bulls (are yoked). A usurer obtains one third of the fruit, and a man gets one eighth by serving (i.e. one who serves others gets one eighth part of the religious merit). A man going to a holy place reluctantly would obtain half the fruit. A man should visit holy places properly. His sins perish, especially by observing the (proper) rites. There he should salute the good men by resorting to their feet etc. By that devotion to Hari, Puruṣottama, is secured.

31-33. Thus I have told you in brief and not in detail, the

mode of visiting the holy places. Resorting to this mode go to Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu). Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu) being pleased (with you), O great king, will give (i.e. bring about) devotion to (i.e. in) you, so that in a moment there will be the end of the mundane existence. O best man, having heard the mode of visiting holy places, which destroys all sins, a man is freed from all severe sins.

Sumati said:

34-35. The great one, having heard these words, and with his mind agitated through curiosity to see that holy place, saluted his feet, and ordered his minister, an excellent counsellor. Desiring to visit the sacred place, he decided to take all persons with him. (He said to the minister:)

36-38. "O minister, at my behest, advise all the citizens: 'The best men, who live in my city, who obey my orders, should move with me out of my city to please (Viṣṇu) by seeing the lotus-like feet of (that) Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu); but those sinful men, of irreligious intentions, who, violating my words (i.e. my order) stay (back) in their houses, should be punished with Yama's (i.e. capital) punishment.

39-42a. What is the use of that host of sons or those relatives of bad conduct who have not seen with their eyes Puruṣottama who gives religious merit? The birth of them whose sons and grandsons have not sought the shelter of Viṣṇu, is like that of a herd of pigs eating excretion. O multitudes of my subjects, quickly salute that god who by merely his name (being uttered) is capable of purifying all.'" Such charming words strung together with the virtue of the lord (were uttered by him).

42b-45. His chief minister Uttama, having the true name (i.e. true to his name), was much delighted. Having put (the announcer) on an excellent elephant he proclaimed by means (of the sound) of the drum: "Since it is ordered by the king desiring to go on a pilgrimage, all people should quickly go with the king to the great mountain. They should see there (the lord) having the name Puruṣottama and destroying sins. They should make (i.e. look upon) the entire ocean of the worldly existence (just as) a small puddle."

46-54. The minister, whose fatigue was removed by medita-

tion upon the feet of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) made such a wonderful proclamation as ordered by the king. Hearing it, all the subjects swimming in the fluid of joy, decided to emancipate themselves by seeing Puruṣottama. Brāhmaṇas, well-dressed and accompanied by their disciples, and giving a blessing rich with boons to the king, then moved out. Brave kṣatriyas holding bows, vaiśyas graceful due to sale of objects, śūdras with their bodies delighted due to crossing the worldly existence, washermen, lovely shoe-makers, kirātas, wall-builders, those who lived on a needle (i.e. tailors), those who dealt in tām̐būla, those who kept musical instruments, those who subsisted on dyeing, the sellers of oil and the sellers of garments, bards, panegyrists, heralds full of delight and narrating old accounts moved out by the king's order. Those who knew the sweet taste of food, those who amused (others) with words causing laughter, magicians, vidyādhara, those who were proficient in intelligence, praising the great king went out of the city.

55-60. The king too, having finished the rites like the morning prayer, brought (there) the brāhmaṇa, the best ascetic and extremely pure. By his order the king went out of the city. The king, followed by people, shone like the moon with stars. He went over just a krośa, and getting himself shaved, held a staff and a water-pot, and wore an auspicious (deer-)hide. He had put on an auspicious dress and was engrossed in meditation on Viṣṇu. He, of a great glory, had his mind free from passion and anger. At that time the musicians repeatedly beat large kettle-drums, large military drums, and played upon other musical instruments, (blew) conches, and (played upon) lutes. People saying, 'O lord of gods, O you who remove grief, O you who are known as Puruṣottama, show me your body', went out (of the city).

CHAPTER TWENTY

*The Importance of Gaṇḍakī**Sumati said:*

1-11. Then, when the king, accompanied by all people proceeded (to Nīlagiri), he, the great king, heard on the way the narration of Kṛṣṇa, of Govinda, sung by distinguished singers, the devotees of Viṣṇu: “Victory to you, O Mādhava, O you Puruṣottama, who are fit to protect.” On his way he visited many holy places and saw their greatness. From the ascetic brāhmaṇa he heard about their greatness. The king, with his mind amused with diverse accounts of Viṣṇu, made the singers sing about Viṣṇu on every path (that he took). The great, intelligent king whose senses were restrained, gave gifts to the helpless, blind, poor, lame persons, as desired by them. Very much devoted to the meditation on Viṣṇu, he, making himself auspicious and free from passion by means of visiting many holy places, went (on the pilgrimage) with his own people. The king while going saw ahead the river which destroys sins, which contained stones marked with discs, which was pure like the sages’ minds, which was adorned with many rows of the hosts of many sages, which looked beautiful with the cooings of birds like the cranes. Having seen it, he asked the ascetic, the best brāhmaṇa who knew piety and who was full of the special knowledge of the significance of many holy places: “O lord, what is this auspicious river, resorted to by hosts of sages and making my heart full of joy?” Hearing these words of the intelligent king of kings, the learned (brāhmaṇa) commenced narrating the excellent significance of the holy places.

The brāhmaṇa said:

12-22. O king, this is river Gaṇḍakī which is resorted to by gods and demons, which is overflowing with holy water, and which destroys heaps of sins. She would burn mental sin by means of her sight (i.e. when she is seen), would burn the sin committed by means of deeds by to her touch, and would burn the heap of sins committed through words by means of her water being drunk. Formerly the lord of the beings (i.e. Brahmā),

seeing all the beings to be sinful, produced this (river), the destroyer of many sins from the drops on his cheeks. Those men who, even though they have committed sins, touch this river having holy water and beautiful ripples, do not obtain a womb (i.e. are not reborn). The stones found in this river and adorned with the marks of disc, are actually great forms of the lord himself. A man who would everyday worship the stone with a disc (on it), would never enter the womb of a mother (i.e. would never be reborn). An intelligent man who would (like to) worship the excellent śālagrāma stone, must be of good conduct, and free from religious hypocrisy and greed. A man averse to the wife of someone else and to the wealth of others, should carefully worship the śālagrāma with the disc (on it). The disc born (i.e. found) in Dvārāvātī and the stone born (i.e. found) in Gaṇḍakī, destroy in a moment men's sins earned during a hundred existences. Even if a man would have committed a thousand sins, he would be purified by drinking the water of (i.e. flowing from) a śālagrāma. A brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra householder, who is on the path of the Vedas (i.e. behaves according to the Vedic injunctions), would obtain salvation on worshipping a śālagrāma.

23-27. A woman should never worship a śālagrāma. If a woman who is a widow or whose husband is alive, who desires her well-being in heaven, touches through ignorance a śālagrāma, she would, even though she is endowed with good character and virtues, be deprived of her collection of religious merit and would quickly go to hell. The best brāhmaṇas say that flowers dropped from the hands of women on śālagrāma stones are more (powerful) than the fall of Indra's thunderbolt. The sandal offered to the lord by a woman would be like poison, a flower offered by her would be like Indra's thunderbolt, and offering of eatables made by a woman to the lord would resemble the deadly poison. Therefore, a woman should, by all means, avoid touching the (śālagrāma) stone. She who touches it, goes to (and lives in) the hell as long as fourteen Indras (rule).

28-38. Even a man of a sinful conduct or having (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder goes to the highest position on drinking the water of (i.e. flowing from) a śālagrāma stone. Tulasī, sandal, water, a conch, a bell, a disc, a (śālagrāma) stone, a

copper-pot and Viṣṇu's names are the nectar from (Viṣṇu's) feet. The tranquil sages, proficient in all sacred works, say that the nectar from (Viṣṇu's) feet (obtained) through these nine, burns the heaps of sins. O king, all the wonderful religious merit obtained by bathing at all places and by performing all (kinds of) sacrifices is present in each drop (of Gaṇḍakī). Within (a radius of) a yojana a crore of sacred places exist, where the śālagrāma stone is worshipped by best men. Even śālagrāma stones should be worshipped; not the double ones among the even ones. The uneven ones also should be worshipped; but not the triple among the uneven ones. (A śālagrāma with) a disc is (found) in Dvārāvati, so also in Gaṇḍakī. Gaṅgā flows into the ocean where the two meet. The dry ones make man bereft of (long) life, prosperity and power. Therefore the glossy and of a charming form give prosperity. A man who desires a (long) life, so also a man longing for wealth (who) worships (them), obtains all (bliss) in the next world and in this world. O king, it is (only in the case) of a lucky person that he has Viṣṇu's auspicious name in his mouth, and the śālagrāma stone near him in his heart. (Even) at the time of the departing of the soul, he who has a sight of the śālagrāma stone even while relaxing, undoubtedly gets salvation.

39-44. Formerly the lord told the intelligent Ambariṣa: "Brāhmaṇas, those who have renounced the worldly ties and smooth śālagrāma stones—these three are my forms taken by (the lord) that appear to destroy the sins of the sinners on the globe. Those sinners who (even) once censure the śālagrāma stone, are cooked in the Kumbhipāka (hell) till deluge. The mother, the father, the groups of relatives of that foolish man who prohibits a man on the point of worshipping (a śālagrāma stone), rot in hell. He who tells (others), 'Offer the dearest worship to śālagrāma,' being blessed, quickly takes his ancestors to Vaikuṇṭha." In this case only the sages free from attachment and lust and anger tell an ancient (piece of) history:

45-54. Formerly in a country, void of piety, called Kikāṭa, lived a man called Śabara, belonging to the pulkasa caste. He was always bent on killing beings; he again and again held his bow. He forcibly took away the life of those who desired to go on a pilgrimage. He killed many animals; he was always interes-

ted in others' wealth. He was always full of attachment etc. and of lust and anger. He who killed animals ceaselessly, roamed in a fearful forest. He was free in (i.e. he freely drew) the bow-string to which an arrow, to the tip of which poison was applied, was fixed. That hunter, dangerous to every being, and of a cruel mind, was once roaming. He did not realize that death had approached him. Yama's dark, fearful messengers, having red hair, long nails and long fangs, with nooses and mallets in their hands, holding iron chains and causing confusion, arrived (there). (They said to one another:) "(You may) fasten this sinner causing fear to every being. He never assisted any being even mentally (i.e. He never even thought of helping any being). He is always attached to others' wives, wealth, and is always given to cheating others." One said: "Therefore I shall draw out his big tongue." One said: "I shall take out his eyes" One said: "I shall cut off the hands of this sinner." Another said: "I shall cut off the ears of this wicked one."

55-61. Saying so, and gnawing their teeth, the furious messengers with weapons (in their hands) stood by the wicked one. Then one messenger took the form of a serpent and bit (him) on the foot. As soon as he was bitten, he was dead. Then those servants of Yama tied him with an iron chain, and angrily hit him with whips and struck him with mallets. (They said to him:) "O vicious one, O scoundrel, you never acted well even mentally. So we shall throw you in the Raurava hell. Fearful crows will angrily eat up your skin and flesh. (Right) from your birth you have not served Viṣṇu. You well maintained your wife and sons by cheating them. You never remembered Viṣṇu who removes sins. Therefore, by Yama's order we beating you very much shall take you (and put you on) an iron pike (or put you into) Kumbhipāka and Raurava."

62-64a. When, after speaking thus, they desired to take him, a man, devoted to the feet of great Viṣṇu came there. That noble follower of Viṣṇu then saw the groups of the wicked (messengers of Yama) holding malicious weapons like nooses, mallets and staffs. They were ready to take (away) the pulkaṣa after having bound him with iron chains.

64b-70. They said (to one another): "Bind him, bind him, destroy him, tear him, break him, break him." Then that kind man,

very much devoted to Viṣṇu, having seen him, made his heart extremely compassionate towards him. (He thought to himself): 'Let this very wicked one not suffer affliction in my presence. Today only I shall free him from Yama's messengers.' Thinking thus and being full of pity for him the best sage took a śālagrāma stone and went near him. Putting the water (flowing) from his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) feet and mixed with Tulasī-leaf, he put it into his mouth and muttered the epithets of Rāma into his ear. That devotee of Viṣṇu put the Tulasī(-leaf) on his head and the (śālagrāma) stone of great Viṣṇu on his chest, and said: "Let Yama's messengers, very much given to torture, go. Let the touch of the śālagrāma stone burn the great sin."

71-78. When he spoke like this, the very wonderful attendants of Viṣṇu came to the proximity of him whose sin had gone (away) by the touch of the (śālagrāma) stone. They who had put on yellow garments, who were adorned with conches, discs, maces and lotuses, came (there) and freed him from the unassailable iron chain. Having freed that pulkasa man who had committed great sins, he said: "Why have you bound this Viṣṇu's devotee who has a respectable body? Whose orders do you who act unrighteously obey? Release this devotee of Viṣṇu. Why have you held him up?" Hearing these words, the servants of Yama said: "By Yama's order we are ready to take (away) this sinner. He has not, even mentally, helped any being. This one, having a vicious body, committing great sins like killing animals, has plundered many people going on a pilgrimage. He is always interested in others' wives, and has done the largest number of sins. Therefore, we have come to take (away) this sinful pulkasa. Why have you got him released through warriors that have suddenly arrived?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

79-86a. A touch of the śālagrāma stone burns (just) in a moment all that sin due to killing a brāhmaṇa and due to the murder of a crore of beings. As a particle of fire burns cotton, in the same way the name of Rāma, even if casually heard, burns sins. He, on whose head there is a Tulasī (-leaf), on whose chest there is the charming (śālagrāma) stone, and who has Rāma's name either in his mouth or ear, is released just then only.

Therefore, formerly he had held Tulasī(-leaf) on his head ; he was made to hear Rāma's name, and he well held the (śālagrāma) stone on his head. By that the heap of his sins was burnt, and his body has become auspicious. He will go to the highest position which is very difficult to be obtained by sinners. Having for a myriad years enjoyed all charming pleasures there, he obtains birth in Bhārata, and having worshipped the lord of the world, he will obtain the highest place difficult to be obtained by gods and demons. The importance of the (śālagrāma) stone of (i.e. representing) Viṣṇu is not known. When seen, touched or worshipped, it removes all sins in a moment.

86b-92a. Saying so all the attendants of Viṣṇu ceased (speaking) gladly. Those servants of Yama told that wonderful (account) to the king. The devotee of Viṣṇu, solely devoted to Raghunātha, became delighted. He, being free from Yama's noose, will go to the highest position. At that time a beautiful, very wonderful aeroplane, decorated with a number of bells, came (there) from the world of gods. Having got into it, he went to heaven resorted to by very auspicious (souls). Having enjoyed many pleasures (there) he went to (i.e. was born on) the earth. Having obtained a birth in a good brāhmaṇa family in Kāśī, and having worshipped the lord of worlds he went to the highest position. He, due to the company of the good, touched the śālagrāma stone, got free from great affliction, and went to the highest place.

92b-93. O king, I have narrated to you the important account of Gaṇḍakī. Having listened to it, a man is freed from sins and obtains pleasures and salvation.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Puruṣottama Appears to the King in the Guise of an Ascetic

Sumati said :

1-3. The best king having heard this matchless importance of Gaṇḍakī looked upon himself as blessed. Having bathed and having gratified all his (dead) ancestors, the great one was delighted. Having, according to the words of the brāhmaṇa, worshipped the śālagrāma, the best king took there twentyfour śālagrāma (stones) and with affection worshipped them with such means of worship as sandal etc.

4-5. Then the king, having given gifts there, especially to the poor and the blind, started to go to the temple of Viṣṇu. Thus, in due order, he reached the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. Having brought it within the range of his sight (i.e. having seen it), he joyfully asked the brāhmaṇa:

6. “O lord, tell me, how far is the great mountain called Nīla which is the abode of Viṣṇu and which is saluted by gods and demons.”

7-10. Having, at that time, heard the important words of (i.e. uttered by) king Ratnagrīva, he (i.e. the brāhmaṇa), full of amazement, respectfully said to the king: “O king, this is the region of the mountain Nīla which is adored. Why is it giving great religious merit not seen by you (i.e. why can you not see it)?” Again and again he said: “This is the region of the Nīla mountain. How is this (i.e. how can this), the place of the residence of Viṣṇu, not seen, (not be seen) by you? Here I had bathed properly. Here I had seen the bhīllas. Along this way only I had climbed up the mountain.”

11-16. Hearing these words of him, the king was mentally afflicted. Making his mind eager to see the Nīla-mountain, the king said (to him): “Tell us the means by which I shall see Viṣṇu, and I shall see the Nīla (mountain).” Then hearing the words of king Ratnagrīva, the ascetic brāhmaṇa, amazed by the king, said (these) words: “O king, having bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean we should remain here as long as the Nīla (mountain) is not seen. The (praise of) the great god called Puruṣottama, and destroyer of sins, will be sung. He who has the

name 'Bhaktavatsala' (i.e. affectionate to his devotees) will quickly do favour. He, the crest-jewel of gods will not abandon (his) devotees. Many devotees have been protected by him. Therefore, O you very intelligent one, sing (the praise of) him."

17-19. Hearing these words, the king with his mind afflicted, bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean and observed a fast. "When Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu) will show favour by appearing (before me) I shall worship him and take food; otherwise I shall (follow) the vow of non-eating." Having made such a vow, he sang (songs praising) the multitude of virtues of Hari on the bank of the (confluence of) Gaṅgā and the ocean; and observed a fast.

The king said :

20-24. Victory to you who show compassion to the helpless; victory to you who remove misery, and who are called auspicious. Victory to you who destroy the suffering of your devotees; victory to you who have taken up a lovely form and who destroy the wicked. Seeing Ambariṣa afflicted and with all his auspicious things destroyed due to the curse of a brāhmaṇa, you holding the Sudarśana disc in your hand protected him by living in his belly. He (i.e. Prahlāda) who was harassed by his father, the king of demons, was at once protected by you—when his father was seeing it having the form of Nṛsimha, by dropping spears, nooses, water and fire. Seeing the excellent lord of elephants whose foot had fallen into (i.e. was caught in) the mouth of an alligator and which was extremely afflicted, you, with your good heart wet with (i.e. full of) pity, mounted on Garuḍa. Then you abandoned (i.e. got down from) the bird (i.e. Garuḍa), took (your Sudarśana) disc; you whose speed causes a series of tremors in the sky are (i.e. were) sung (i.e. praised) by him (i.e. the elephant) with his life (i.e. sincerely). You liberated him from the alligator and instantly destroyed him (i.e. the alligator).

25-28. O lord, wherever your worshipper is oppressed, you take up a bodily form and protect your (worshipper) by means of your acts removing sins. O you who protect the helpless, O you whose feet are rubbed by the diamonds on the heads of the gods, O you to whom the devotees are dear, O you who burn crores of sins, O lord, grant me your vision. If this sinful person

has come to your mind (i.e. if you think about him) then, show (yourself to him). We are yours O you who are worshipped by gods and demons, your destroying the stream of sins is not forgotten by us. Those who utter your pure name, cross the entire ocean of sins. If I have remembered you, then, let me reach you, O you who remove all sins.

Sumati said:

29-31. Thus the king, singing the merits (of the lord) at night and by day also, did not have rest or comfort even for a moment. Singing (the lord's virtues), going (to his image), invoking (him), standing (by his image), he day and night said this: "O lord of grace, O Puruṣottama, show me your body." Thus the king passed five days on the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. Then the lord of the senses, the ocean of favour, thought through compassion:

32. 'This king has become free from sins due to singing my (virtues). Let him see my greatness honoured by gods and demons.'

33-34. Then the mighty lord, thinking like this, and with his mind full of compassion, put on the apparel of an ascetic, went near the king. O great king, having gone there after putting on the apparel of an ascetic, he reached him through compassion for the devotee and the ascetic saw him.

35-42. The best king, saying, 'Salutation to Viṣṇu', saluted him. With his mind devoted to Viṣṇu, he worshipped him with respectful offerings, water for washing his feet and with a seat; (and) said: "Matchless is my luck that I have seen you. Hereafter Viṣṇu will appear before me." Hearing these words of him, the ascetic said to him: "O king, listen to what I say. By means of my knowledge, I know the past, the future, and the present. Therefore, I (shall) say something. Listen with a concentrated mind. Tomorrow, at noon, Viṣṇu difficult to be seen even by Brahmā, will appear to you. With five kinsmen of you you will reach the highest place. (Those who will reach the highest place are:) you, (your) minister, your wife, the ascetic brāhmaṇa and the good weaver named Karamba (living) in your city. With these five you will go (to Viṣṇu), saluted by Brahmā and lord of gods and honoured by gods, on this best mountain Nīla." Speaking

thus the ascetic disappeared, and was not seen anywhere. Hearing those (words of the ascetic) the king became glad and amazed.

The king said :

43. O lord, who is that ascetic that came and talked to me? He is not seen again. Where has he, giving delight to my mind, gone?

The ascetic said :

44-48. O king, due to great love for you, he, named Puruṣottama, the destroyer of all sins, with his heart attracted (by you) came (to you). Tomorrow at noon there will be (i.e. appear) a big mountain before you. Climbing it up and seeing Viṣṇu, you will be blessed.

With the torment in his heart destroyed by the flood of the nectar of these words, he obtained such (great) joy as even Brahmā did not know. At that time large kettle-drums were sounded. Lutes were played upon. Musical instruments were played upon. There was then great joy in the mind of the king of kings. Singing (the virtues of) Hari, stopping for a moment, laughing, chattering, talking, saluting, he obtained very great joy destroying all affliction.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Nīla Mountain

Sumati said :

1-5. Then having passed the entire day with (i.e. in) the recollection and narration (of the glory of) Viṣṇu, at night he slept on the bank of Gaṅgā, giving a large fruit. In a dream he saw himself having four arms and holding a conch, a disc, a mace, and a bow, dancing in front of Viṣṇu with gods like Śiva with their pleasing bodies, with missiles like a disc, a mace, a conch and a lotus etc., (so also) with the excellent attendants of Viṣṇu having good bodies. Having seen (Viṣṇu) the lord of Śrī, the

talk of the world, giving whatever is desired by the (devotees') mind, and called **Puruṣottama**, he was amazed and obtained very wonderful joy. The very intelligent one looked upon himself as worthy of his grace. In this way the best king saw the dream. When he got up in the morning he narrated the dream that he had seen to the **brāhmaṇa**.

6-7a. Having heard it the intelligent **brāhmaṇa**, who was amazed, told (the king): "O king, that **Hari** (i.e. **Viṣṇu**), called **Puruṣottama**, will give you (a body resembling) his own body marked with a conch, disc etc."

7b-10. Hearing this, **Ratnagrīva**, of a magnanimous mind, caused to give gifts to the poor as was thought fit by his mind. Having bathed at the confluence of **Gaṅgā** and the ocean, having gratified his ancestors (with oblations), he, singing the multitude of the virtues of **Viṣṇu**, waited to have his vision. Then in the noon, large kettle-drums, high-sounding, were beaten by the strokes of the hands of gods in the sky. All of a sudden a shower of flowers fell on the head of the king.

11-13a. "O best king, you are fortunate; see (the mountain) **Nila** which is within the range of your sight." When the king heard these words uttered by the god, that great mountain, called **Nila** which was wonderful and had greater brilliance than that of a crore suns, came within the range of the sight of the king.

13b-16a. On all sides it was shining with silver and golden peaks. 'Is it fire that is burning? Is it another sun? Is it the mass of lightning, which has suddenly obtained a steady lustre?' (Such were the reactions of those who saw it.) The ascetic **brāhmaṇa** having seen the very beautiful peak of the mountain told the king: "This is the auspicious great mountain." Hearing it the best king saluted (the mountain) by (bowing) his head.

16b-18. (He said:) "I am lucky, I am contented (that) (the mountain) **Nila** has come within the range of my sight." O best man, the minister, the king's wife, the weaver **Karamba** also became glad on seeing **Nila**. Hearing the big sounds of the large kettle-drums made by gods, the five went up the mountain at the triumphant time.

19-27. On the highest peak, adorned with variegated trees, he saw a matchless temple built in gold. Coming there always **Brahmā** worships **Viṣṇu**. Seeing an excellent, pure temple of

Viṣṇu at the place where he made an offering of eatables giving pleasure to Viṣṇu, he, surrounded by the five followers, entered it. Seeing there (the lord) charming with four arms, waited upon by the fierce and very fierce Jaya and Vijaya etc. and shining on the golden throne variegated with big gems, the king with his wife and accompanied by his servants, saluted him. The great king having saluted the best god and the highest soul, bathed him to the accompaniment of hymns proper for the bath and mentioned in the Vedas. The king with a pleased mind offered him an oblation and water for washing his feet. Then the king besmeared the lord's image with sandal, and offered two good garments. He offered (to the image) incense, waved a light and offered to the lord's image an offering of eatables fully sweet and charming. Having saluted him, he praised him by a number of hymns according to his intellect, in which a number of his virtues were strung by the ascetic brāhmaṇa.

The king said :

28-36. Puruṣa is actually one. The lord is beyond Prakṛti. He is different from effect and cause, and is worshipped by the principles like Mahat. Brahmā clever in creation was born from the lotus in your navel. Similarly, Rudra, the destroyer, was born from your eye. Ordered by you, he does all the activities about the world. The world, immovable, has come up from you, the ancient one. Having entered the power of consciousness you make him aware. O lord of the world, you do not have a birth (i.e. origin), nor do you have an end. O mighty one, growth, decay and change do not at all exist in you. Yet, for protecting your devotees and for establishing dharma, you do the acts like birth, having befitting excellences. Taking the form of a fish, you killed demon Śaṅkha. O Brahman, O ancestor of the great Puruṣa, you protected the Vedas well. Śeṣa does not know your greatness, nor does the great goddess Sarasvatī know it; then what about people like me of bad thoughts, O great Viṣṇu? (Even) this great goddess Vāk (i.e. Sarasvatī) does not mentally obtain you (i.e. is unable to conceive you). Then, O lord, how shall I be able to praise you?

Having praised him like this, he repeatedly saluted him by

(bowing) his head. His voice was faltering and his body was horripilated due to joy.

37. Viṣṇu, whose mind was pleased by means of this eulogy, said (these) significant words to the king :

The lord said :

38-40. O king of great intelligence, I am highly delighted by your praise. O great king, know me to be beyond Prakṛti. Quickly eat the charming offering of eatables. (Then) having obtained four arms, you will go to the highest position. I shall also make my appearance, giving enjoyments and salvation, to that man who will praise with the gem of eulogy (with which you praised me).

41-47. Having heard these words uttered by the lord, the king, along with his four dependents, ate the offering of eatables (made to the lord). Then an aeroplane, which was adorned with a mass of bells, which was waited upon by celestial nymphs, and which was full of all pleasures, came (there). The pious king, seeing (Viṣṇu) named Puruṣottama, saluted his feet (as) he was made the recipient of his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) favour. When he (i.e. the lord) was observing, he, with his wife, getting into the aeroplane, went to the wonderful Vaikuṇṭha in heaven. The king's excellent minister, very much devoted to piety, knowing all modes of behaviour, and waited upon by a bevy of women, went with (the king) by the aeroplane. The ascetic brāhmaṇa who had bathed at all the holy places obtained four arms and went with gods going in an aeroplane. O great king, Karamba too obtained the vision (of the lord) due to his merit (collected) through singing and reached the abode of the god, difficult to be reached (even) by all gods.

48-52. All (the five) having four arms, and holding conches, discs, maces and lotuses went to the very wonderful world of Viṣṇu. All of them had the splendour of clouds, were pure, had shining lotuses in their hands. With their bodies adorned with necklaces, armlets and bracelets, they went to the heaven. Seeing the rows of their aeroplanes, the people and the subjects made the sound of large kettle-drums in such a way that it may be perceived (i.e. heard) by ears. Then there was a brāhmaṇa, who loved

the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. He, with his heart distressed by separation from them, went (after them), and became four-armed. The people, seeing that wonder, praised that great prosperity, and, having bathed in the water at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, went (back) to the city.

53-60. (They exclaimed:) “Oh, the (great) fortune of king Ratnagrīva, of a good mind! With this body (of him, i.e. without casting his body), he went to the highest place of Viṣṇu.” O king, this Nīla mountain is honoured by Viṣṇu (himself). On seeing it (men) certainly go to Vaikuṇṭha, the highest destination. He who listens to this greatness of Nīla, is (indeed) fortunate. (He and) he who narrates it to people, both would go to the highest place. Having heard this a bad dream perishes just by remembering (it); and in the end Viṣṇu grants him (help to) cross the mundane existence. He who stays at the Nīla (mountain) is Rāma, Viṣṇu (himself). Sītā is actually the great Lakṣmī, the cause of causes. He whose name is prescribed in (i.e. as) the expiation for the murder of a brāhmaṇa, will, after performing the horse-sacrifice, purify the worlds. Now your horse has reached the vicinity of the Nīla mountain. O you highly intelligent one, salute god Viṣṇu; thereby we shall be sinless and shall go to the highest position. By his favour many have crossed this ocean of worldly existence.

61-63. When he was talking like this, the horse, striking against the earth with the speed of the wind, reached the Nīla mountain. Then the king also, going after him, reached and bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. He sang (the praise of) Viṣṇu. That destroyer of the enemies, having praised and saluted the lord of gods, saluted by gods and demons, regarded himself as having become blessed.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Damana Fights with Pratāpāgrya

Śeṣa said:

1-4. The horse, having a chowrie (on his head), having the speed of mind, surrounded by a line of the heroes, bearing a note on his forehead, protected by the great hero Śatrughna, by king Lakṣmīnidhi, by Puṣkala, Ugravāha and Pratāpāgrya went to the city Cakrāṅkā protected by Subāhu. O lord, he was protected and followed by many crores of warriors. At that time his great (i.e. Subāhu's) son, Damana, who had gone ahunting, saw the horse with a note on his forehead and besmeared with sandal etc.

5-7. Seeing (the horse), he said to his servant: "Whose horse is seen by me? Why has he got a note on his head, so also a beautiful chowrie?" Hearing these words of the king, the servant then went from there to the place where the well-decorated horse with a note on his forehead stood. Having seized him, decorated with a jewelled necklace, by his hair (i.e. his mane) he took him in front of the king of the supporter of the Subāhu family.

8-12. He read the note having beautiful letters: "There was king Daśaratha, the powerful lord of Ayodhyā. Rāmabhadra, the crest-jewel of all the brave men, is his son. There is no other person having valour like his son. There is no other person having valour like him in archery on the earth. He has released his horse besmeared with sandal etc. Righteous Śatrughna, killer of the warriors of his enemy, is protecting him. Those (who think) 'We are brave warriors; we have bows in our hands' should forcibly seize the horse adorned with a jewelled necklace. Śatrughna, the crest-jewel of all heroes will free him. Otherwise let the archers bow down at his feet."

13-18. Knowing the import, the king's son said: "Rāma alone is an archer. We are not considered to be kṣatriyas! What is this great pride on the earth when my father is living on the earth? Let him obtain the fruit of his pride through the arrows discharged by me. Today let my sharp arrows really render Lakṣmaṇa like a blooming kiṁśuka tree with his body

covered with wounds; and let my arrows split the temples of his elephants. Let them see the hundreds of horses covered with streams of blood. Let the groups of (the female attendants of Durgā called) Yoginīs drink the blood from the heads of men. Let the female jackals be pleased with eating the dead bodies of my enemies. Let his good (i.e. brave) warriors observe the great power of me, discharging crores of arrows released from my bow."

19-20. Having spoken like this, that prominent son of the king, named Damana, sent him to his own city, and said to his general: "To ward off the host of enemies keep ready for me a limited army, O you very intelligent one." When the fierce one made the army ready and stood facing the battle, (just) then the followers of the horse came (there).

21-28. They who were repeatedly confounded, asked one another: "Where is the great king's horse, marked with a note on his forehead?" Just then, the hero Pratāpāgrya saw in front of him the army that was ready and that was resounding with the sounds (made) by the heroes. At that time some people said: "O king, (your) horse is taken (away) by this one (i.e. by Damana). Otherwise, how would he, followed by the army of heroes stand facing (you)?" Hearing these (words), Pratāpāgrya sent his servant (to Damana). Having gone there, he asked (him): "Where is the horse of king Rāma? Who has taken it? Where has he taken it? Does the fool not know Rāma, having made an offering to whom gods led by Indra have well bowed (before him). The large army of that righteous king, being angry, will fully destroy (him) if he does not salute him." Hearing (these words) spoken (by the servant), the mighty and wicked son of the king reproached with a mass of words.

29-32. (He said:) "I have brought the sacrificial horse adorned with such marks as the note etc. Those who are brave may free him by conquering me now with force." The servant, having heard those words, was full of anger, and he, laughing, went (back). He told the king as narrated properly (above). Hearing it, the very mighty Pratāpāgrya, with his eyes red due to anger, went to fight with the king's son, followed by great heroes. The mighty one went in a chariot made of gold, shining

with four horses, having a good (i.e. strong) pole to which the yoke was fixed, and filled with all (kinds of) missiles.

33-36. Accompanied by a great army, he made the twang of his bow. Again and again he laughed loudly, causing tears to be shed through anger. The horse-riders, elephant-riders, with their hands glittering with swords followed that Pratāpāgrya whose eyes were full of tears due to anger. The elephants, the foot-soldiers in crores, ready for the fight, desired for a long time the fight waged by the hero. Then having come to know that the enemy's army was ready, the king's son, the best among the heroes, and surrounded by a huge army, advanced.

37-45. The young (prince), having taken a sword and a bow, sportively went to fight as a lion (approaches) a herd of elephants. Then the warriors, skilled in the act of fighting, being very angry, and desiring to kill one another, said: "Cut (him) off; break (him)". The foot-soldiers (fought) with the group of foot-soldiers; the elephant-riders (fought) with the warriors (on elephants); those who had got into chariots (fought) with those who were in chariots; the horse-riders (fought) with those who were seated on horses. The elephants were cut off, and were divided into two. The horses also were split up into two. The earth was filled with many human heads. Then that very mighty Pratāpāgrya who was very angry, having seen the prince ready to destroy his army, said to his charioteer: "Take the horses (i.e. the chariot) to that place where that great warrior, that prince, is engaged in the destruction of my army." Then the brave prince whose feet were bowed by the jewels of the heads of the heroes, confronted Pratāpāgrya. Pratāpāgrya's charioteer took his horses to that place where the hero Damana, the crest-jewel of all the brave, stood. Standing in the chariot nourished (i.e. adorned) with gold, and holding a bow he went to the prince ready to fight, and challenged him:

46-50. "O prince, O child, you have tied up the best horse. You do not know the great king (Rāma) who is served by all best heroes, whose wonderful valour even the lord of the demons (i.e. Rāvaṇa) could not bear. Having taken his horse, you went to your house. Know me, your enemy, of the form of death, who have come to your city. O child, leave the horse, and play a child's game.—Whose son are you? Wherefrom do you come?

How have you—a short-sighted one—seized the horse? O child, pity for you has arisen in me.” Having heard this, Damana, of a large heart, smiled, and, looking down upon the power of Pratāpāgrya, said to him:

Damana said:

51-52. I tied the horse forcibly, and took him to my city. O you very powerful one, I shall not give (back the horse). With life (i.e. if you live) fight (with me). About what you told me that I am a child and I should go and play, (I say), O great king, see my play in the battle.

Śeṣa said:

53-60. Speaking like this he took up his bow with the string. He, born from one having strong arms, discharged a hundred arrows on the chest of Pratāpāgrya. Having fixed a hundred arrows on his bow, the valourous one blew a conch. Due to that sound of the conch, the timid were frightened. He struck at his chest with a hundred arrows. Dexterous Pratāpāgrya cut off the good (i.e. sharp) arrows. Seeing the arrows cut off, and getting angry, the powerful son of the king discharged sharp arrows having heron feathers (attached to them). Curved arrows, bearing their names, and beautiful with sharp edge and falling (down), were seen in the sky and on the ground. The arrows sticking to his arms and chest produced many fire-particles and burnt the army. It was a great (tragedy). The very angry Pratāpāgrya, saying ‘Wait, wait’, struck him on the head with arrows, ten in number. Those arrows stuck into the forehead of the prince. O sage, they shone there like ten branches of a tree.

61-67. The high-minded one was not afflicted by being struck by the arrows, like a seven-year old elephant struck by sticks. Having fixed three hundred auspicious arrows with their feathered parts decked with gold, and resembling the fire of Śiva, on his bow he discharged them. Those arrows pierced the chest of Pratāpāgrya and being besmeared with blood, he went down like those who are averse to the devotion of Rāma. Pratāpāgrya got very much angry, and discharging thousands of arrows quickly, deprived Subāhu’s son of his chariot that

moment (only). With four (arrows) he killed his four horses; with two (arrows) cut down his flag. With one (arrow) he caused to fall down on the ground the charioteer's head from his body. Again with four (arrows) he struck the king's son. At that moment only he cut off with one (arrow) the bow along with its string. The large-minded one got into another chariot adorned with gems of horses and taking a bow in his hand he made it ready.

68-80. He said to Pratāpāgrya: "O good hero, you have shown a wonderful valour. Now see the superiority of my bow." Saying so, Damana took ten arrows; and with four (arrows) killed the four horses. With four he cut the chariot with its wheels into (pieces of the size of) sesamum (seeds). With one he pierced his chest, and with one he (pierced) his charioteer. Blowing his conch he roared and with the sound of the conch he honoured his deed (saying): "Well (done), O hero, O you of great power." Thus seeing the valour, Pratāpāgrya, with anger got into another chariot and went to fight with the prince. (He) said (to him:) "O hero, see my wonderful valour." Saying so he quickly discharged a volley of arrows with whetted joints. Everywhere, on (the bodies of) elephants and horses arrows were seen. Going into the space they occupied every place like the highest Brahman. The brave and great one, delighting his own hosts and making his enemies very much dejected, and (even) lose their life, quickly covering the prince with crores of sharp arrows, roared. The mighty and very powerful prince, seeing himself completely covered with masses of sharp arrows, got angry and he of an endless valour took up weapons; and he shaking the bow on his arms, and with his eyes red due to anger, discharging arrows, tearing the enemies, cut off all the missiles and weapons (of his enemy). Having destroyed that mass of weapons, the prince said to him: "O respectable one, if you are (really) brave, pardon me for this one stroke. O brave one, listen to my solemn declaration made by me through pride: "Let me have that sin, drowning me into the ocean of hell, of those arrogant ones, clever in disputation, who censure the Veda, if with this (one) stroke I would not knock you down from your chariot."

81-88. Speaking like this, he drew out from the quiver an excellent sharp arrow resembling death, full of a series of flames, and placed it on his bow. That arrow resembling in effulgence the destructive fire at the end of the world, and aimed at the chest (of Pratāpāgrya), was discharged by the excellent (son of the) king. It speedily reached him. Pratāpāgrya, seeing the arrow on the point of knocking him down fixed sharp arrows on his bow to cut off that arrow. That arrow cutting off all the arrows in the middle reached Pratāpāgrya's heart endowed with courage. The arrow stuck his chest and entered his heart. The king (thus) struck fell down on the ground. His charioteer, seeing him in a swoon and unconscious and fallen from the driving box on the ground, took him and carried him away from the battle (-field). There was a very loud wailing, the army was baffled and went where (their chief) named Śatrughna, surrounded by crores of brave men, stood. The king's son (i.e. Damana) having obtained victory after vanquishing Pratāpāgrya, waited for king Śatrughna.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Puṣkala Defeats Damana

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Śatrughna who was overpowered with anger, was grinding his teeth, shaking his hands, repeatedly licking his lip with his tongue, again and again asked them: "Who has taken (away) my horse? Who has vanquished Pratāpāgrya, the crest-jewel of all the heroes?" Then the servants said: "Damana, Subāhu's son, and the killer of his enemies, conquered Pratāpāgrya and has taken away the horse."

4-10. Hearing this, viz. that his enemy Damana had taken (away) the horse, he speedily came to (the spot) where the battle had taken place. There Śatrughna saw (his) elephants that were (once) haughty due to rut, with their cheeks torn and merging in the water (i.e. pool) of blood. That very angry, brave Śatru-

ghna saw his horses wounded and dead along with their riders. That killer of the enemies seeing his men, chariots and elephants completely vanquished was extremely angry as the ocean at the time of final deluge (is agitated). Seeing before him that pre-eminent Damana who had, after belittling his army, taken away the horse and had vanquished Pratāpāgrya, the king, with his eyes full of anger, said to his warriors: "Who is here (among the warriors) that would conquer Damana, wielding all (kinds of) weapons and missiles, and who, being fearless, will vanquish with a missile the brave prince skilled in fighting?"

11-17. Hearing these words, (Bharata's son) Puṣkala, the killer of (his) enemies, ready to conquer Damana, said these words: "O lord where is this Damanaka, and where is your unlimited army? (i.e. what a great disparity is there between the two?) Due to your valour I shall conquer (him); O highly intelligent one, here I go. When I the servant, remain (here) to fight (with the enemy), who will take (away) the horse? This valour of Raghunātha will do every act. O lord, listen to my solemn declaration which will give you joy. In the battle I shall conquer Damana skilled in fight. If I would not conquer Damana, let me incur that sin incurred by those who are deprived of the tasting of the honey from the lotuses in the form of the feet of Rāmacandra. I would have that sin which that son who (first) looking upon his mother's feet as a holy place (later) goes against her, if I do not conquer Damana. Today let the king's son (i.e. Damana), with his huge chest pierced by my arrow, adorn the earth by his lying (there) in the battle."

Śeṣa said:

18-24. Having heard this solemn declaration of Puṣkala, (Śatrughna) perpetuating the family of Raghu, was glad at heart; and the brilliant one ordered (him) to fight. Being ordered (by Śatrughna), he (i.e. Puṣkala) surrounded by a large army went there where the prince Damana, born in the family of the brave, stood. Knowing him to have come to the battlefield, the best among the heroes, surrounded by his army, went forth to him. The two seated in their chariots and looking graceful in them, encountered each other (and looked as if) Indra and a demon had come to the battlefield to fight. Puṣkala said to that very

mighty prince: "O prince Damana, know me to be the mighty son of Bharata, and to have come to fight (with you) with (i.e. after having made) a solemn declaration; and O best one, know me to be known by the name Puṣkala and having the sweet vow of always serving the feet of Raghunātha. O you very intelligent one, I shall conquer you by means of a multitude of weapons. Be ready (to fight with) me."

25-28. Having heard these words, Damana, the killer of enemies, an orator, fearless and one whose valour was noticed, laughed and replied: "Know me to be Damana, Subāhu's son, with my sin removed due to my devotion to my father, and to have taken (away) the horse of king Śatrughna. Victory is brought about by destiny. He whom destiny adorns, will have it. Observe my might in the battle." Speaking in this way, he fixed an arrow on his bow, stretched it up to his ear, and discharged sharp arrows that took away his enemies' life.

29-31. The arrows, getting darkish, covered the sky where the brilliance of the sun's rays was put off by the shadow of the arrows. The line of arrows that had stuck to the wall-like temples of the elephants adorned (them) like variegated colours of minerals. Men, horses, elephants and chariots, struck by the volley of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the king, were seen to have fallen there.

32-39. Puṣkala, the killer of the enemies, having seen his valour and having seen the battlefield covered with the shadow of arrows fixed an arrow accompanied with hymns sacred to Agni on his bow. Having sipped water according to the proper rite, he discharged the arrow. Then there on the battlefield fire appeared. Touching the sky with its flames it rose like the fire at the time of the deluge. Then his army was tormented and was frightened on the battlefield. Being oppressed by the flames of fire, it took to heels. The (crescent) moon-like umbrellas of the archers were burnt and appeared to have the lustre of silver. The enemies' horses, burnt at their (i.e. with their) manes (burnt), ran away. The chariots also, along with good drivers' seats, were burnt. Camels, carrying gems like rubies, and troubled by series of flames as in a crematory, ran (away). At some places elephants died; at some place riders of horses perished; at places footsoldiers with their bodies burnt by fire perished.

40-45. All the arrows discharged by the prince perished. They were reduced to ashes by the arrows (discharged with the accompaniment) of (hymns sacred to) fire. Then, Damana, knowing the use of all missiles, with his mind full of anger, took the missile called Varuṇa, when his army was (thus) burnt. He discharged the missile (to the accompaniment) of (hymns sacred to) Varuṇa to pacify the fire. It submerged all his army full of chariots and horses. The chariots of the enemies were seen to be submerged in the water. Elephants also were inundated. His own (elephants) had become calm. The fire that was discharged through the 'fire-missile' had died. His own army, oppressed by the flames of fire, became peaceful. The enemies trembled and made sounds by drawing in breath due to the cold water, and struck by shower of hail and troubled by wind.

46-52. Then seeing his own army troubled by flood of water, and shaken, agitated, fled and removed by the Varuṇa (missile), Bharata's son Puṣkala, with his eyes red due to great anger, fixed a great arrow, the 'wind-missile' on his bow. Then there was great (i.e. strong) wind propelled by the wind-missile. It speedily, destroyed the dense army that was present there. The serpents shaken by the wind struck one another. The horses also along with their riders struck one another. Men shaken up by the wind, had their hair loose, were lustreless, and were seen to be falling like vampires that had come to the earth. The prince, seeing that his army was overpowered by wind on all sides, fixed the 'mountain-missile' on his bow. Then mountains fell on the heads of those who were fighting. They covered the wind; and it did not stir anywhere.

53-60. Puṣkala fixed (the arrow) called Vajra on his bow. Those (enemies) cut off by Vajra in a moment became reduced to the size of sesamum-seeds. (That missile called) Vajra reducing mountains to particles, and with its shafts accompanied by a hymn, heavily fell, with a loud sound on the chest of the prince. He the strong hero, with his mind confounded and struck on the chest and heavily wounded was pained and was very much dejected. The prudent charioteer, seeing the prince dejected in mind, took him away from there to a distance of a krośa. Then the prince's warriors fled and ran away. Having gone to the city, they told (people there) about the prince being in a state of

dejection of mind. The righteous Puṣkala having thus secured victory in the battle and remembering the words of Rāma was not able to (i.e. did not) strike again. Then there was the loud sound of the large kettledrums. There was a huge cry of victory. Charming words like 'Well (done), Well (done)' proceeded there. Seeing Puṣkala victorious that Śatrughna was glad. Surrounded by ministers like Sumati, he praised (Puṣkala).

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Subāhu Gets Ready with His Army in the Krauñca Array

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Then, seeing his warriors with their bodies covered with streams of blood, the king was not happy. He grieved; and asked them about the movements of his son (Damana): "Tell me his entire act. How did he take away the excellent horse? Tell me also how much army (the enemy has)? How many heroes came there to fight? How did my hero Damana, intent on fighting with the enemy's army, fight and someone, having conquered this invincible hero, destroyed him."

4-17. Having heard these words of the king, those servants of him, wearing garments wet with blood (oozing) from their bodies, said: "O king, having seen the horse adorned with marks like the note etc. I got it seized through pride and belittling the best of Raghus. Then the follower (i.e. the protector) of the horse, surrounded by a small army, came (there). And a fierce and thrilling fight took place with him. When your son, having, made him swoon with his own arrows, stood there, Śatrughna, surrounded by his large army came there. Then a great battle accompanied by (i.e. in which) weapons and missiles (were used), ensued. Your very mighty son became victorious many times. O king, now, having discharged a missile, the son of Śatrughna's brother has made your brave son swoon in the battle." Hearing these words, (the king) full of anger and grief had his body

covered (with bravery) like the ocean on the parvan-day. With his lips throbbing due to anger, (gnawing) his teeth with his teeth, licking his lips with his tongue, and emaciated due to grief, he said to his general: "Keep my army ready in the vicinity (of Śatrughna's army). I shall fight with Rāma's brave soldiers who have harmed my son. Today I shall, with sharp arrows, overthrow him who has troubled my son, (even) if the great lord will protect him. The general, having heard these words spoken by the king of mighty arms, did like that (i.e. as he was ordered), and himself became ready. He reported to the king that the army which consisted of four divisions, and resembled the army of Death, had killed crores of wicked people. Having heard the words of his general, Subāhu, the killer of his enemies, went out to that place where Śatrughna who had troubled his son, stayed. (He went there) with elephants intoxicated by rut, with horses having the speed of mind, with chariots full of all weapons and missiles and conquering the enemy.

18-26. At that time, due to the great weight of the army, the earth quaked. As the army was moving on, there was a great hustle and bustle. Seeing the king to have moved out in a chariot with its parts made of gold, Śatrughna's army, (capable of) striking all enemies, became ready. His brother Suketu, skilled in mace-fight, and full of (i.e. endowed with) all weapons and missiles quickly came there by a chariot. The king's son, Citrāṅga, skilled in all (types of) battle, quickly went in his own chariot to the furious army of Śatrughna. His younger brother known as Vicitra, skilled in various (modes of) fight and afflicted by his brother's grief, went in his golden chariot. Other brave warriors, skilled in the use of all weapons and missiles, being ordered by the king, went to the battle full of warriors. King Subāhu angrily came to the battlefield. He (there) saw his son in a swoon (due to being) hit by an arrow. Seeing his unconscious son named Damana lying in the driving box, the king again and again became grieved and fanned him with twigs. The brave hero, knowing (the use of) great missiles, sprinkled with water and touched by the king with a delicate hand, slowly regained consciousness.

27-30. He got up (and said:) "Where is my bow? Where has Puṣkala, after having got ready (to fight) and being hurt

by my arrow, gone after having left the battle?" Hearing these words uttered by his son Subāhu was extremely glad and embraced his own son. Damana with his body wounded by rows of missiles, on seeing his father, bowed his neck (i.e. head) and devoutly fell at his feet. The king skilled in (various) acts of fight put back his son into the chariot, and said to the general:

31-35. "Arrange the military array called Krauñca, invincible to the enemy, entering which I shall conquer the army of king Śatrughna." Hearing those words of king Subāhu, his general arranged the special type of military array called Krauñca, which the very mighty groups of enemy, holding hosts of weapons did not enter all of a sudden. At its mouth (i.e. entrance) Suketu stood; at the throat (a hero) called Citrāṅga remained; at the two sides stood two princes, and at the tail the king (himself) stood. In between his huge army looked splendid with its four divisions. Having made the Krauñca array, the general informed the king of having arranged it. The king, having seen his army that was ready (for the action), and the well-formed Krauñca-array, decided to fight with the warriors present in Śatrughna's army.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

A Fierce Fight Between Lakṣmīnidhi and Suketu

Śeṣa said:

1-2. Seeing that army like a cloud of a fearful size, and surrounded by many elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, Śatrughna spoke thus to Sumati in serious words. Waited upon by learned men knowing many words and ideas.

Śatrughna said:

3-6. O Sumati, whose city has reached my best horse? I see this army resembling the ripples of an ocean. Whose army is this which is endowed with four divisions, is very joyful, and appears before (me) standing with eagerness to fight? Properly

tell all this to me who am asking you, knowing which I shall order my soldiers to take position for the fight.

Hearing these words, Sumati, of an auspicious mind, being pleased, said to Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies.

Sumati said:

7-11. O king, in the vicinity there is an auspicious city (called) Cakrāṅkā, in which there are sinless persons due to their devotion to Viṣṇu. This Subāhu, most familiar with the religious law, and the lord of that city, is present, surrounded by sons and grandsons, before you. He is always attached to his own wife and is averse to another man's wife. Viṣṇu's story revealing the highest object, dwells in his ears. The king does not take more than a sixth part of the wealth of another person (i.e. any person is his kingdom). He, the religious one, worships brāhmaṇas with the same devotion with which he worships Viṣṇu. Having the vow (of drinking) the honey from the lotuses of the feet of Viṣṇu, he is always engaged in serving him. He is devoted to his own duty; he is averse to another's way of life.

12-14a. The army of no other heroes is like his army. Hearing about the defeat of his son, he, being full of grief and endowed with his four-divisioned army, he is present (here) to fight. You also have these many heroes like Lakṣmīnidhi. With the host of their weapons, they will conquer the enemy. Order them who are well-disposed to you.

14b-21a. Hearing those words, Śatrughna said to his excellent heroes whose minds were full of great joy due to the battle having come near: "Subāhu's soldiers have today arranged the Krauñca array. His heroes have taken position at its opening and sides. Who, knowing (the use of) weapons, will break through it? He who has the power to break through it, or is eager for victory should take up this gauntlet from my lotus-like hand." Then the hero Lakṣmīnidhi took up (the gauntlet) to break the Krauñca(-array). He, surrounded by many heroes, knowing (the use of) all weapons and missiles, said (these) words: "O king, I shall go to break through the Krauñca(-array). Formerly, Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) broke

through the Krauñca(-mountain). (Now) I (shall do) like (him).” Then he said to another hero: “Who will go with him?” Then Puṣkala made up his mind to go after him. Riputāpa, Nalaratna, Ugrāśva, Viramardana—all (these) went by Śatrughna’s order to break through the Krauñca(-array).

21b-27a. Great Śatrughna, seated in a chariot, having all (kinds of) weapons, and surrounded by many soldiers, followed him. At that time the two oceans with big waves and ready to destroy the world appeared to be agitated. Then big kettle-drums from both armies were beaten. At every place were heard the war-drums and sounds of conches. The horses neighed and the elephants trumpeted very much. The best heroes gave out ‘hum’ sounds. The felines of the chariot-wheels made a sound. There on the battlefield many angry warriors who were brave and very proud of the might of their arms were seen saying (to one another): “Cut (him off); break (him).” When both the armies of Śatrughna and his enemy were thus ready to fight, Lakṣmīnidhi said to Suketu who was at the opening (of the array):

Lakṣmīnidhi said:

27b-31a. Know me to be the son of Janaka, known as Lakṣmīnidhi, skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and proficient in fighting. Release the horse of Rāmacandra, the destroyer of all demons. Otherwise, pierced by my arrows you will go to Yama’s abode.

Hastening suddenly to the best hero who was speaking like this, Suketu made his bow ready and discharging arrows quickly became steady. Those arrows had sharp joints; had their feathered parts made of gold; they were difficult to be put up with; they were seen to pervade (everything) in the battle.

31b-40. Having speedily destroyed that volley of arrows, Lakṣmīnidhi stretched his bow and discharged at his chest six sharp arrows charming with whetted joints. Those arrows were seen to have gone down to the earth after having pierced the heart of the brother of the strong-armed one; they were smeared with blood and were stained. With his chest pierced by his arrows, Suketu, who was full of anger, struck him with twenty sharp arrows

with their joints curved. Both were seen by the soldiers to have their bodies pierced with arrows, covered with blood like the kimśuka (trees) full of flowers. The two who were discharging crores of arrows, who were fixing (on their bows) quickly(-going) arrows, who were dexterous and mighty, were (i.e. could) not (be) distinguished by any one. They had coiled (i.e. bent) their good bows, they were showering (their enemy) with the stream of arrows, and were like new clouds executing Indra's order. Their arrows were just seen to behead elephants, horses and brave men, but were not seen when they were fixed on the bow or discharged. By them having bows and arrows in their hands and biting their lips through anger, the earth was filled with great warriors having diadems and rings. Between the two, knowing (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and fighting proudly, a fierce, great battle, causing wonder (even) to the gods, took place. A great battle, piercing crores of warriors, took place. Nobody at no place saw (i.e. could see) the sky in (i.e. due to) the net of arrows.

41-63a. At that time brave Lakṣmīnidhi who destroyed his enemies, fixed sharp, strong arrows, eight in number, on his bow. With four arrows the hero killed the horses of Suketu; and laughing he quickly cut off the very lofty flag (of his chariot). With one he knocked down on the ground the charioteer's head from his body. He, full of anger, cut off, with one (arrow) the (enemy's) bow along with the string. The swift king, with one (arrow) pierced the chest of Suketu. Seeing that wonderful deed, heroes were astonished. (Suketu) whose bow was cut off, who was without a chariot, whose horses and charioteer were killed, took up a big mace and approached (his enemy) with a desire to fight. Seeing him, skilled in mace-fighting, to have approached, he got down with a mace (in his hand) from (his) chariot. Lakṣmīnidhi, who was very angry, took a big mace fully made of iron and variegated with gold (i.e. bright) and full of all charm, hastily struck that mace resembling the fire of the thunderbolt on the chest (of Suketu). O great sage, that hero (though) struck by the mace, did not shake like an intoxicated elephant struck with garlands by a child. Then that best hero said to Lakṣmīnidhi: "O you tormentor of the enemies, if you are brave, (then) put up with one stroke of my mace."

Saying so, he heavily struck on his forehead with the mace. Being struck on the forehead with the mace, he vomitted blood, and was very angry, and struck on his head with the mace of the nature of death (i.e. the fatal mace). Suketu, knowing the ways of the world, also struck him on (his) shoulder. Thus the two, skilled in mace-fighting, being very much angry, fighting with maces, desiring to conquer each other, avoiding each other's strokes, were intent upon killing each other. In that war nobody would lose and nobody would win. The two very mighty and brave ones were wet with streams of blood on (i.e. flowing from) the head, the forehead, the shoulder, the chest, and all the limbs. Then Lakṣminidhi, getting angry, raised his mace speedily and he, the powerful one, went (forward) to strike the powerful younger brother of the king on his chest. Then the king's brother, seeing him coming, held his great mace, and went all of a sudden to kill him from (his) army to (Lakṣminidhi's) army. This one held (i.e. caught) in his hand the mace hurled by him; (and) the very powerful one struck him with the same mace. Then king Lakṣminidhi, seeing that he had taken (i.e. caught) his mace, desired to have hand-to-hand fight with the strongest one. Then the king's younger brother who was angry, who knew (i.e. proficient in) fighting of all kinds, and who was the best among the heroes, seized him with his arms. Then Lakṣminidhi struck on his chest with his fist. Then he too, raising his fist, struck him on his head. The two who were angry and were biting their bud-like lips, struck each other with terrible slaps with the hands resembling the thunderbolt. They indulged in boxing; they bit each other with their teeth; they seized each other's hair; they scratched each other with their nails.

63b-69. Thus the fight between the two was fierce and horripilating. Then the angry brother of the king seized the king's foot, swung him round and threw him on the ground. Lakṣminidhi seized the hand of the king's younger brother and swinging him round for a hundred times high up (in the air), overthrew him on the hip of the elephant. Then he fell on the ground; and then in a moment regaining consciousness, the brave one in the same way speedily whirled him in the sky (i.e. in the air). Then the two, who were fighting, again indulged in

boxing. The two, desiring to kill each other, clung to each other—one's foot on the other's foot, seizing the hand (of the enemy) with his own hand, chest with chest, and mouth with mouth. Both were very valourous, both swooned. Seeing that (men) in thousands were amazed and praised (them): "O king Lakṣmīnidhi is blessed; blessed is the mighty younger brother of the king!"

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Killing of Citrāṅga

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Citrāṅga who was seated in his chariot and was at the neck of the Krauñca(-array), and was adorned with heroes, plunged into that army as a boar plunges into the ocean. Having stretched his very strong bow, resounding like thundering, he discharged sharp arrows burning crores of enemies. Great heroes with their entire bodies very much pierced with the arrows, lay (there) with the diadems and armours on their bodies and with their lips bitten.

4-8. When the battle proceeded like this, Puṣkala taking the bow that was variegated with gems and that very much tormented the enemies, went to fight. The forms of the two who had come together (to fight) looked very charming like the forms of Skanda and Tāraka in the Tāraka-battle in ancient times. That dexterous Puṣkala, quickly stretching his bow, quickly struck him with arrows having curved joints. Citrāṅga too, who was overpowered with anger, fixed sharp arrows on his bow and repeatedly discharged them in the front part of the battlefield. The taking (of the arrow from the quiver) was not noticed; the fixing (of the arrow on the bow) was not noticed; the discharge (of the arrow) was not noticed. Only the two (heroes) who had coiled (i.e. stretched) their bows were noticed.

9-13. Then that Puṣkala who was angry pierced the great, pre-eminent warrior on his chest with a hundred arrows.

Citrāṅga in a moment cut off all those arrows into (pieces of the size of) sesamum seeds; and with (his) arrows he struck Puṣkala on the limbs of his body. With his charming, deceptive missile Puṣkala whirled that divine chariot in the sky (i.e. air). It was indeed a wonder. That chariot, along with the horses, after having moved round in a circle (in the air) became steady; and with a great difficulty it remained on the battlefield. Seeing his valour, that intelligent Citrāṅga who was skilled in (the use of) all missiles, was angry, and said to Puṣkala:

Citrāṅga said:

14-19. You have done a good deed, appreciated by good warriors in the battle, viz. you whirled for a moment my chariot with the horses in the sky (i.e. air). (Now) see also my valour displayed by good warriors. You would be moving in the sky and (would be) honoured by gods.

He the best one among those familiar with the use (of weapons), and knowing (the use of) great missiles discharged with (i.e. from) his bow an extremely fierce missile. Being pierced in the battle with that arrow he alongwith his chariot, horses, flag and charioteer moved in the sky like a bird. (And) even before the best chariot quickly whirling in the sky (i.e. air) became steady, he discharged another arrow. The chariot, along with the charioteer, again whirled round (in the air). Seeing that act of his son, the king was amazed.

20-29. Puṣkala, the killer of the heroes on the side of the enemy, somehow became steady and struck his chariot, along with the charioteer and horses, with arrows. That hero, whose chariot was shattered, resorted to another chariot. That too was broken with his arrows by Puṣkala on the battlefield. When, after having got into another chariot he encountered him, he again shattered his chariot with sharp arrows. In this way that hero, Puṣkala, shining in the great battle, shattered ten chariots of the king's son. Then Citrāṅgaka, remaining in a variegated chariot, speedily came to fight with Puṣkala in the battle. In the battle he struck Puṣkala with five arrows. The son of Bharata (i.e. Puṣkala), being struck with those arrows, was extremely pained. He, being angry, raised his bow, and discharged ten

great, sharp arrows with their feathered ends beautified with gold, at his chest. Those extremely fierce arrows drank his blood. Having drunk it, they fell on the ground like one's ancestors who were false witnesses. Then the angry Citrāṅgaka took five arrows and discharged them at the forehead of the very vigorous son of Bharata. He (i.e. Puṣkala) being struck with those arrows, fixed an arrow on his excellent bow and took a vow to kill Citrāṅga:

30-38a. "O hero, listen to my pledge regarding killing you. Knowing it, you should attentively fight here. If, with this arrow, I do not deprive you of your life, then indeed it is my pledge that I would have (i.e. go to) that world which is reached by those people governed by Yama, who have polluted a chaste woman graceful with good conduct." Having heard these best words, the killer of great heroes laughed. The intelligent hero spoke auspicious words to Puṣkala: "Death always and everywhere is certain in the case of beings. Therefore, O you crest-jewel of heroes, I am not sorry about my death. O hero, that pledge which you, endowed with valour, have taken, is certainly true. That sin which a man who breaks (i.e. changes) the mind of him who desires to go on a pilgrimage, or which a man who knows (i.e. values) any other vow than the lofty vow of Ekādaśī has, gets, will accrue to me who would violate my vow (i.e. if I violate my vow)."

38b-39. Speaking these words only, he became silent, and took up his bow. Then he, having taken out from his quiver an excellent arrow, spoke distinct words leading to the enemy's murder.

Puṣkala said:

40-48. If I have served with a mind free from wickedness the pair of Rāma's feet, then my words would come true. If I have enjoyed my own wife, and do not know (i.e. have not seen) any other woman (even) in a dream, then my words will come true.

Saying so he fixed on his bow an arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, and (capable of) cutting the heroes' head, and discharged it. The powerful son of the king,

seeing the arrow that was discharged, fixed on his bow a sharp arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world. That arrow cut off the arrow ready to kill him. There was a great wailing when that arrow was cut off. The hinder part of the arrow fell on the ground, and the forepart along with the blade cut off his neck in a moment like a lotus-stalk. Seeing him falling on the ground his soldiers wailed profusely and fled away. That excellent head along with the diadem and ear-rings fell on the ground and looked beautiful like the crescent moon (falling) from the sky. Seeing the hero fallen, Puṣkala, Bharata's son, plunged into the array, fully accompanied by all heroes.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Subāhu's Defeat

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Then the king, having seen his pre-eminent son fallen dead (on the ground), was pained by the grief due to (the death of) his son, and wept very much. Being extremely afflicted, he struck on his head with his hands. Trembling very much, he shed tears from his lotus-like eyes. Taking the son who was fallen (dead), who was charming like the curved orb of the moon (i.e. like the crescent moon), who was wet with the blood (oozing) from the wounds caused by the arrows of Puṣkala, who looked charming by means of the ear-rings, whose pair of eye-brows was curved, who was the best, who had bitten his budlike lower lip, he kissed him with his lotus-like mouth and lamenting said these words:

5-7. "O (my) brave son, O hero, why do you not look at me, of an eager heart, with the pair of your clear eyes? Why are you without (i.e. not telling me) a story for my diversion? You indeed appear to have your mind plunging into the sea of anger. O son, tell me how (i.e. why) you are not laughing and not talking to me. (Why) are you not amusing me with your nectar (-like words) having a sweet taste, O son? O you very intelligent

one, take Śatrughna's horse adorned with a white chowrie and possessing beauty on account of a golden leaf; (but) give up your sleep.

8-12. This Puṣkala, spotless with his valour, the best due to his valour, the tormentor of his enemies, the killer of enemies' heroes, appears having a bow (in his hand) before you. Ward him off by good, sharp arrows discharged from your bow. O hero, how do you, being unconscious, lie in the battlefield? The elephants, the foot-soldiers, so also those seated in chariots, being afflicted through fear, will surrender themselves to you. Look at them, O very intelligent one. O son, how, without you, am I able to bear the sharp arrows of Śatrughna, discharged from his fierce bow on the battlefield? Henceforth who is capable of protecting me abandoned by you? If you will abandon your sleep, then I am capable of (having) victory."

13-19. The king, lamenting very much like this, afflicted due to the grief (of the death) of his son, very much and repeatedly beat his chest with his hand. Then (his two sons) Vicitra and Damana seated in their own chariots saluted the feet of their father, and spoke what was proper for the occasion: "O king, when we are alive, tell us what grief you have in your heart. The death longed for by the heroes in a battle, becomes great. Indeed this lordly Citrāṅga who, with his diadem, with his lips bitten with his teeth, looks splendid on the heroes' ground, is fortunate. Quickly tell what work, desired by you, we should do today. We two shall today destroy the entire helpless army of Śatrughna. Today only we shall cause to fall down from the chariot, Puṣkala, the killer of our brother in the battle, after having cut off his head adorned with a crown. Give up your grief. O you very highly intelligent one, how do you appear to be very much afflicted with grief?"

20-24. Having heard these words of his two brave and highly honoured sons, the great king gave up his grief and decided to fight. They too, who were furious in the battle, and who longed for an opponent, went into the enemy's army, full of unlimited warriors. The two heroes, resembling clouds in the rainy season fought in the battle—Damana with Riputāpa, and the other (i.e. Vicitra) with Nīlaratna. The powerful king, holding a bow and remaining in his chariot, covered with gold, beautified with

gems, rich in beauty on account of jewelled poles, and looking down upon great heroes skilled in archery, went to fight with Śatrughna surrounded by crores of heroes.

25-29. Seeing Subāhu, full of wrath, having come to fight with Śatrughna who had destroyed his son and had caused the killing of his entire army, Hanūmat having his nails as his weapon, making a loud sound, and moving by the side of Śatrughna ran to him. Subāhu, with his eyes full of anger, seeing that Hanūmat making a loud sound, coming to him, said laughing: "Where has Puṣkala gone after having killed my son in the battle? Today I shall quickly knock down his head with bright ear-rings. Where is Śatrughna, the protector of the horse? Where is Rāma? And where are the warriors? Let them see me who will snatch away their life in the battle to have come."

30-36. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Hanūmat spoke to him: "Śatrughna, the destroyer of Lavaṇa (the son of Madhu), is the guardian of the army. How would he fight in the battle, O king, when his servant is in the fore. O best of men, having conquered me in the battle you will go to him." He speedily struck with ten arrows on the chest of the monkey who spoke like this, who was very strong and who remained like the best mountain. He took in the cavity of his hands the arrows that came to him and pounded them, the sharp ones tearing (i.e. capable of tearing) the enemy, (to pieces as small as) sesamum seeds. The very mighty one having pounded those arrows and roaring like the thunder of clouds and having surrounded his chariot with his tail, took it high up (in the air). Then that best king, while remaining in the sky (i.e. in the air), repeatedly cut off his (i.e. Hanūmat's) tail with arrows of sharp end. He (i.e. Hanūmat) struck on the end of his tail with arrows with curved joints, abandoned that divine chariot spotted with gold.

37-45. When he (i.e. Subāhu) was released by him, he, with his eyes full of wrath, struck with sharp arrows, that best monkey, Hanūmat. Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, pierced with arrows and covered with blood everywhere (on all the parts of his body), entertained great wrath against the king. Having seized with his large teeth his chariot along with the horses, he speedily pounded it. That was indeed a wonder. Seeing his own chariot being broken, the mighty king quickly resorted to

another chariot and fought with the mighty (Hanūmat). The king, proficient in taking aim with an arrow and conversant with (the use of) great missiles, struck him on his tail, face, and chest and on arm and feet. Then the angry and best monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), jumped and struck with his foot on the chest of the king shining among good (i.e. brave) warriors. He, being struck with (Hanūmat's) foot fell unconscious on the ground; and vomiting blood from his mouth, he trembled with a flood of (i.e. heavy) breathing. Then Hanūmat who was very angry, speedily pounded the horses the heroes and (even) the elephants on the battlefield. Then his brother Suketu and king Lakṣmī-nidhi—both, quite ready, came near (each other) to fight.

46-50. Men, wounded with volleys of arrows showered by Puṣkala, fled and went (away) on seeing the king who was unconscious. The king's powerful son, Damana, seeing his army being defeated, stopped it as a dam stops the high-going sea. Then the king who being struck with the stroke of his foot by the best monkey in the battle was unconscious, saw a dream: in a pavilion on the bank of Sarayū in Ayodhyā Rāmacandra was surrounded by many pre-eminent brāhmaṇa sacrificing priests. There gods like Brahmā and others, crores of universes, with the palms of their hands joined, repeatedly praised him with eulogies.

51-54. Nārada and others with their hands glittering with lutes sang (the praise of) the dark Rāma, of beautiful eyes and holding a deer's horn. Celestial nymphs like Ghṛtācī and Menakā danced there. Vedas, being embodied, stood by Rāghava, full of all charm, and giver of whatever things (i.e. everything), and giver of pleasures to his devotees. Seeing this and other (things), he whose knowledge was destroyed by the curse of a brāhmaṇa, while getting up, regained consciousness, and said: "What have I seen?"

55-58a. Having got up, he, having a retinue of a crore of servants, and surrounded by a crore of chariots went on foot to the feet of Śatrughna. Having called Suketu, so also Vicitra and Damana who were ready to fight, he, who was familiar with law, warded them off. The great, righteous king, endowed with piety said to them: "O brother, O sons, listen to my words possessed of virtue. Now immediately stop fighting.

58b-67. Great unfairness has taken place, since you, O Damana, seized the excellent horse of Rāmacandra. This Rāma is the highest Brahman and is beyond effect and cause. He is the lord of the mobile and the immobile world. He has taken up a human form. I have now perceived this knowledge of Brahman. I, the innocent one, was formerly deprived of the wealth of my knowledge due to the curse of Asitāṅga. Formerly I had gone on a pilgrimage with a desire to know the true nature (of Brahman). There I saw many sages most familiar with religion. With a desire to know (Brahman) I went to see the sage Asitāṅga. Then the brāhmaṇa, showing favour to me said to me: "He, who is the lord of Ayodhyā, is known by the term Para Brahman (the highest Brahman). She who is his queen Jānakī, is said to be actually full of pure intelligence. The meditating sages, desiring to cross the boundless ocean of the worldly existence, difficult to be crossed, directly wait upon him by means of restraints etc. He whose banner is Garuḍa, removes great sins, merely when he is remembered. That wise (man) who waits upon him, will cross the mundane existence." Then I laughed at the brāhmaṇa (and said): "Who is he? Rāma is just a man. Who is that queen Jānakī who is full of joy and sorrow? How can a birthless one be born? What here is the act of a non-doer, which is beyond birth, death and old age? O sage, tell it to me."

68-75. The best sage, getting angry with me who spoke like this, cursed me: "O meanest among the mean, not knowing the (true) nature of him, you are replying (i.e. speaking) to me. Laughing, you are censuring Rāma, (by saying that) he is a human being. Therefore, you who do not know the truth, are (just) feeding your belly (i.e. you are selfish)." Then I clasped his feet. Then he, the ocean of pity, seeing my modesty, spoke to me with kindness: "O king, when you will create an obstacle in Rāma's sacrifice, then Hanūmat will forcibly strike you (with) his foot. Then you will realise the truth, not otherwise (simply) due to your desire." Formerly he told me like this. Now I have seen (i.e. realised) it. When the angry Hanūmat struck me on my chest, I saw Rāmā's (i.e. Lakṣmī's) lord, of the nature of the perfect Brahman. Therefore, the very mighty one should bring the horse, rich in beauty, so also wealth and garments. I

shall give my kingdom (to Rāma). Seeing Rāma in the sacrifice giving great merit, I shall be blessed. Let them bring the horse. I like to hand him over (to Rāma)."

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

King Subāhu Surrenders to Śatrughna

Śeṣa said:

1. They, the strikers (of their enemies), (too) hearing the words of their father, said joyfully, "Let it be so", to the great king longing to see Rāma.

The sons said:

2-9. O king, we do not know anything except the lotuses of your feet. Let that which you have in your mind, take place quickly. Let this horse, adorned with a white chowrie, very much beautified with a jewelled necklace, and smeared with sandal (-paste) etc. be taken there. Your kingdom has the fruit of your orders (i.e. your orders are obeyed), O lord. Your treasures are very rich. Your garments are very costly, fine and excellent. There is (plenty of) sandal; so also there is camphor. Your horses are very charming. The elephants are haughty due to rut. The chariots have golden poles. There are a hundred thousand female servants who are adorned with many ornaments of various colours. There are very agreeable servants. There are gems resembling the sun. There are various jewels. There are white pearls produced from the temples of elephants. There are a hundred thousand corals. O you very intelligent king, give all those things which are very splendid, to Rāmacandra. O king, offer us, your sons and your servants (to Rāmacandra). O king, how is it that you do not make your throne over to him?

Śeṣa said:

10. Hearing these words of his sons the king became glad;

and he said to the brave sons who were ready to do his words (i.e. to obey his orders):

The king said:

11. Let all (the heroes) having put on (their armours), having weapons in their hands, and surrounded by many chariots, bring the horse. Then I shall go to the king.

Śeṣa said:

12-18. Hearing these words of the king the diligent (men), brave in battle, viz. Vicitra, Damana, so also Suketu, went by his order. The heroes went to the city and took in front of the king the horse which was adorned with a golden plate etc., was richly decorated with a jewelled necklace, was decorated with a variegated note, was well adorned with a mass of pearls, and was held by the heroes possessing great weapons and missiles and having all (kinds of) charm from the front and the back by means of a rope. On the head of the horse, a white chowrie appeared aloft. In front of him a couple of good chowries shone again and again. (They) took the horse of the good (i.e. auspicious) horse-sacrifice, which had wind's speed and was made fragrant with Kṛṣṇāgaru sandal, in front of the king. The intelligent king seeing the horse decorated with a jewelled necklace, having the speed of mind and a beautiful form brought (before him) was pleased.

19-23. The very righteous king adorned with royal insignia and accompanied by his sons and grandsons went on foot to Śatrughna. Thinking that wealth is perishable and gives pain to them whose hearts are attached to it, he went to make a proper use of the unsteady wealth. Then he saw Śatrughna adorned with a white umbrella and being fanned by servants standing before him, asking Sumati (to narrate) Rāmacandra's story free from any tidings causing fear, well adorned by heroes, crowded with crores of heroes who desired to protect the horse, and surrounded on all sides by thousands of monkeys.

24-26. Seeing the feet of Śatrughna, he was delighted; and thinking 'I am lucky', and with a concentrated mind uttering

(the word) 'Rāma', he with his sons saluted the feet of Śatrughna. Seeing that pre-eminent and affectionate king, Śatrughna got up from his seat along with all his heroes and embraced him with his arms. The king, the killer of his enemies, having very much (i.e. devoutly) honoured Śatrughna, and being delighted, spoke with a faltering voice to Śatrughna.

Subāhu said:

27-31. Today I am blessed along with my sons, my family, my horses (and elephants) that I am seeing your feet praised by crores of kings. O you ocean of kindness, my ignorant son Damana had seized this best horse. (Please) forgive him this unfairness. He does not know (Rāma) the crest 'of the Raghus, the deity superior to all gods, the creator of the universe with ease, the destroyer and yet the protector also. (Take) this kingdom rich in all constituents and having mighty horses (and elephants). These treasures of me are full of wealth. These sons of me and I myself—all of us are Rāma's servants, obeying your commands. Take all (this) along with their effects. I have no superiority complex.

32-41. Where is that Hanūmat, the bee at Rāma's lotus-feet, due to whose favour I shall have the sight of the king of kings? What is not obtained on the earth in the company of the good? Seeing that great king (i.e. Rāma) having eyes like lotus-petals, I the ignorant one, have today overcome (the effect of) the brāhmaṇa's curse, and will obtain here the entire fruit of my existence, difficult to secure. Being very much separated from Rāma, I have passed a large (portion of my) life. Only a little (part of) it is left. How shall I see the best of the Raghus? Show me (that) Rāma who is proficient in the rite of sacrifice, and by the dust of whose feet (Ahalyā) the dear wife of sage (Gautama) who was turned into stone was purified. The crow—the bird—obtained the highest position due to his arrow's touch. Many in the battle went to (the best) position on seeing the lotus of his face. Those who respectfully take the name of this Raghunātha go to the highest place thought of by ascetics. Blessed are the people born in Ayodhyā, who having drunk with the cups of their own eyes the lotus of Rāma's face go to (i.e. obtain) happiness (and) great prosperity.

Having spoken like this to the king (i.e. Śatrughna) he offered the (sacrificial) horse, his kingdom and wealth (to Śatrughna) and said (to him): "O lord of the earth, I am (your) servant." Hearing these words of the king the eloquent Śatrughna who conquered the cities of his enemies and who was proficient in (using correct) words replied to the king:

Śatrughna said:

42-49. O king, how do you speak (like) this? You are old, (therefore) you are venerable to me. Let this Damana command your entire kingdom. It is the duty of kṣatriyas which enjoins a battle. By my order let all this kingdom and this wealth go back (to your son Damana). As Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) is always adorable to me by means of speech and mind, similarly, O lord of the earth, you will also be adorable (to me). Having armed yourself, having put on an armour, having taken a sword, and with your elephants and horses, you should today be ready to go after the horse.

The lord of the earth who was highly respected by Śatrughna, having heard these words of Śatrughna, consecrated his son on his throne, and the king, a great warrior and a knower of the truth, surrounded by great heroes, having performed purificatory rites according to the sacred commands over his son killed on the battlefield by Puṣkala, grieved for a while from the point of view of the world (i.e. as commonly people do). Recollecting Raghunātha he destroyed his grief with knowledge. Being ready and seated in a chariot, he, led by great warriors and surrounded by a great army, came to Śatrughna.

50-53. The king (i.e. Śatrughna), having seen him having come with his entire army, made up his mind to go to protect the horse. The horse marked by a note on his forehead and released by him, took a turn towards the left and wandered towards many eastern countries. At every place respectable and very brave kings saluted him. Nobody seized him. Some brought variegated garments, some brought wealth, (others brought) people, and some brought (i.e. handed over) their kingdom and saluted him.

CHAPTER THIRTY

*Janaka Releases Sinners from Hell**Śeṣa said:*

1-7. Then the horse, adorned with the note, reached Tejah-pura (city) in which king Satyavān truthfully protected his subjects. Then Raghunātha's younger brother (Śatrughna) with a retinue of a crore going after the horse went in front of (the king) the conqueror of cities. Having seen the beautiful city, adorned with variegated ramparts, shining with golden pitchers all round, adorned at every place with thousands of temples of deities (Śatrughna said to Sumati). "In it monasteries of ascetics, full of ascetics, look beautiful. Here flows the great goddess (Gaṅgā), remaining on the head of him having three eyes (i.e. Śiva), and crowded with swans and ducks, and resorted to by hosts of sages. O Sir, in every house of brāhmaṇas smoke produced from the sacred fire purifies those whose minds were overflowing with sins." With his mind amazed due to the joy produced on seeing that city Śatrughna, the subduer of his enemies, said to Sumati.

Śatrughna said:

8. O minister, tell (me), whose city this is, which being seen by me, gives joy to my mind as it is righteously protected.

Śeṣa said:

9. Hearing these words of king Śatrughna, Sumati told him everything properly and without exaggeration.

Sumati said:

10-13. O lord, being attentive, listen to the auspicious tales of Viṣṇu's devotees, hearing which one is freed from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Satyavān is a king who is liberated while living, is a bee resorting to the lotuses in the form of Rāma's excellent feet, knows sacrifices and their constituents, is a performer of sacrifices and a great protector, whom his father known as Ṛtambhara-famous in the world and very religious, obtained after having propitiated the cow

by means of many vows. The cow, pleased (with him) gave him a son, adorned with many virtues and having a great charm, (called) Satyavān. Know that best king.

Śatrughna said:

14-15. Who is king Ṛtambhara? Why did he worship the cow? How did he have a son—a devotee and worshipper of Viṣṇu? Tell me all this account of the devotee of Viṣṇu. When heard, it removes the mountain of the great sins of beings.

Śeṣa said:

16-18. Hearing these very meaningful words of Śatrughna, he clearly told him the story about his origin. Formerly there was king Ṛtambhara who was childless. He had many wives, but did not have a child on (i.e. from any one of) them. Then he, intent on his well-being, asked the sage named Jābāli who had luckily come there, the cause of (i.e. leading to) the birth of a son.

Ṛtambhara said:

19-21. O lord, tell me, the childless one, the words leading to the birth of a son. Knowing from you that by doing which an excellent child (i.e. a son) holding (i.e. continuing) my family will be born to me, I shall certainly carry out these excellent words (of you). (I shall give) a gift, (I shall observe) a vow, (visit) a sacred place or (perform) a sacrifice, O best sage.

Hearing these words of the king longing for a son and bowing to him, the best sage told him words leading to the birth of a son.

He said:

22-30. O lord, there are three means for him who longs for a child: Viṣṇu's grace, grace of a cow or of Śiva. Therefore, O king, you offer worship to a cow having a divine body, in whose tail, mouth, horn and back gods live. When she is pleased, she will give what is longed for (and) is accompanied

by righteousness. Knowing thus, O R̥tambhara, offer worship to a cow. The ancestors of him and the deities also are always pleased with him who everyday worships a cow with grass etc. All the desires of him, of a pious vow, who gives a cow her daily measure of food, are really fulfilled. A thirsty cow tied at home, an unmarried daughter in menses (i.e. who has attained puberty) and a deity with faded flowers destroy the religious merit obtained before. The ancestors of him who forbids a cow that is eating her grass (i.e. grass meant for her), are on the point of falling (into hell). That foolish man who beats a cow with a stick, goes, bereft of his hands, to the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). The ancestors who have gone down (to hell), of him who wards off the gadflies, dance (saying): “This fortunate son (i.e. descendant) of me (of us) will emancipate us.”

31-37. In this case they narrate this ancient account: the wonderful event of Janaka that formerly took place in the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). Once king Janaka gave up his life by means of abstract meditation. Then an aeroplane decorated with a mass of small bells came (there). Then the king, with his body being carried by servants, got into it, and went (to heaven). On his way he went near the city of Yama. Then sinners were being oppressed in crores of hells. Having received the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from the body of Janaka they became happy. The affliction due to the tormentation in hell became joyful (i.e. bearable) for them. Due to the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from Janaka's body, their great misery perished (i.e. disappeared) at that time. Then the beings oppressed due to sins, not desiring separation from him, lamented very much. They uttered piteous words to him: “O blessed one, do not go from here. We who are tormented, are happy due to the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from your body.”

38-39. Hearing these words, the very righteous king, filled with a flood of pity, thought in his mind: ‘If the beings are happy here due to the touch of the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from my body, I shall stay in this city only. This is charming heaven (for me).’

40-43a. Thinking like this, the king, with his mind being sympathetic, and causing happiness to beings, stayed there only

in front of the hell. Dharma (i.e. Yama), causing severe torment to the sinners, came there at the door of hell. Then he saw king Janaka, doer of great meritorious deeds, full of pity, who had stood at the door (having come) in an aeroplane. The lord of the dead bodies (i.e. Yama), smiling, said these words to Janaka:

43b-53. “O king, why have you, the crest-jewel of piety, come here? This is a place for the wicked sinners who cause harm to the life (of others). O king, men like you, who do meritorious acts, do not come (to this place). Those men who are intent upon deceiving others, who are engaged in censuring others, and are intent on (grabbing) other’s wealth, alone come here. That man who would abandon his wife who is religious and absorbed in serving him without her fault, would come here. He who, greedy through attachment for wealth, deceives his friend, comes here, and receives intense torment from me. Having bound the man who, a foolish one, does not remember Rāma mentally, with words or acts, through hypocrisy, hatred, or ridicule, I throw him among these and cause him to be boiled. Those who have remembered the lord of Ramā, leave my place and quickly go to Vaikuṇṭha. O very intelligent king, my servants, unable to look at (people) like you, bring those who are great sinners. Therefore, O great king, go, enjoy many pleasures. Having got into an excellent aeroplane, enjoy the (fruit of the) religious merit earned by you.” Having heard these words of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the lord of that (city), he, full of the flood of compassion, said to him:

Janaka said:

54-55. O lord, due to pity for (these) beings I (shall) not go (to Vaikuṇṭha). Comforted by the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from my body, they are staying here. O king, if you release all these living in hell, then, being happy, I shall go to heaven resorted to by meritorious persons.

Jābāli said:

56. Hearing these words, he, pointing out to him each one of the many dwelling in hell, said to Janaka:

Dharma said:

57-65. This one cohabited with his friend's wife that confided in him. Therefore, I have roasted him on an iron-pale for a myriad of years. Then having thrown him—the defaulter—into the species of pigs, he, marked with the marks of a eunuch, would be cast down into the species of human beings. This one repeatedly and forcibly embraced the wife of another (man). Therefore he, is roasted in Raurava (hell) for a hundred years. This wicked one stole the wealth of others and enjoyed it. Therefore, having cut off his hands, I shall cook him in puss and blood. This one did not honour and welcome a guest oppressed with hunger that had come to him even by words. Therefore, he should be dropped into the Tāmisra (hell) full of fuel. Let him, troubled by bees, meet with torment for a hundred years. This one, being shameless, loudly reviled another person. This one too sending forth his ears (i.e. with great interest) listened that reviling many times. Therefore, these two have fallen into a dark well. This one who had deceived his friend being dejected, is very much roasted in Raurava hell. Therefore, making them eat the fruit of their sins, I shall release them. O best among men, you, accumulating a heap of religious merit (would please) go (to heaven).

Jābāli said:

66. Thus he pointing out the sinful beings became quiet. The devotee of Rāma with his eyes full of pity said:

Janaka said:

67. Tell me quickly how the miserable beings can be free from hell and doing what would they obtain happiness.

Dharma (i.e. Yama) said:

68-71. These have never propitiated Viṣṇu. They have never listened to his stories. How can (these) sinners (then) be free from hell? If, O great king, you (desire to) release them, even though they are great sinners, then give them that religious merit (of you about) which I shall tell (you now). Once, having got up in the morning, you meditated with pure heart upon

this Śrī Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) who is called the remover of great sins. Give them that religious merit which you collected when you uttered with pure heart the name Rāma, Rāma; by that their freedom from hell would take place.

Jābāli said:

72-77. Hearing these words of the intelligent Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the great king gave (them) the religious merit obtained by him from his birth. (He said:) “Let there be pleasing release of these from hell due to the religious merit earned (by me) from birth by the worship of Raghunātha.” When he was speaking like this, the beings dwelling in hell that moment only became free from hell and became divine-bodied. They said to king Janaka: “O king, by your favour we have been in a moment freed from miserable hell, and will (now) go to the highest position.” He intent on showing kindness to all beings, seeing those men resembling the sun freed from hell, was very much pleased in mind. All those, praising Janaka, the great king, the treasure of pity, went to heaven adorned by gods.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

King Rtamhara is Blessed with a Son

Jābāli said:

1. When those men living in hell went (to heaven), king (Janaka) asked Yama, the best among those who know dharma.

The king said :

2-4. O Dharmarāja, you have said that men who commit sins and are not interested in religious discourses, come to your place. O you righteous one, tell me for what sin I have come here, and the cause of my sin, from the beginning.

Hearing these words of him, O you tormentor of the enemies,

Dharmarāja then told him (the cause of) his arrival to Yama's city.

Dharmarāja said :

5-12. O king, you have great religious merit. None else has like it on the surface of the earth. O you who have been observing the vow of (drinking) the honey from the two (lotus-)feet of Raghunātha, the celestial river in the form of your fame which gives great joy and emancipates the wicked, purifies all the sinners full of the dirt (of sin). Still, O you best king, there is a small bit of sin (in you), due to which you, full of merit, have come to my residence (Saṁyamini). Once you prevented a cow that was grazing (from doing so). Due to the effect of that sin, you have seen the gates of hell. Now, freed from (that) sin and endowed with great religious merit, enjoy many many pleasures obtained through your religious merit. Raghunātha, the ocean of pity, taking away (i.e. desiring to remove) the misery of these, has sent (you) the devotee of Viṣṇu on this great route. O you of a good vow, how would they have been free from sin, if you had not come along this way? O very intelligent one, people like you who are afflicted by others' misery and who are the abode of kindness, thus remove the misery of beings.

Jābāli said :

13-15. Having saluted Yama, who was speaking like this, he went to heaven in a divine aeroplane adorned with the host of celestial nymphs. Therefore, cows are to be honoured; one should not even mentally censure them. One who censures them, remains in hell as long as the fourteen Indras rule. Therefore, O best among kings, worship a cow. Being pleased, she will quickly give you a son who is devoted to piety.

Sumati said :

16-20. Having heard it, he asked about the worship of a cow: How is she to be respectfully and carefully worshipped? What kind of man does she make him? Jābāli duly told him the worship of a cow. He who has undertaken the vow of (worshipping) a cow, should everyday go to the forest to graze her. He

should make the cow eat barley-grains and should collect them from her dung. O king, one longing for a son should eat those barley-grains. He should drink pure water (only) when she drinks water. He should be seated (only) when she would sit on a high seat. Everyday he should ward off the gnats and should himself collect grass or fodder (for her). She gives a son devoted to piety to him who does like this.

Sumati said :

21-27. Hearing these words that pious Ṛtambhara, longing for a son, practised the vow. Worshipping the cow everyday, he pleased her with grass etc. The intelligent one, showing great care for her food (like) barley, warded off the gnats. Of him who was worshipping the cow grazing grass etc. in the forest and having fear from nowhere, auspicious days passed. Once that king, curious to observe the beauty of the forest, had cast his eyes on it, and was roaming all around. At that time a lion having come from the interior of the forest struck the cow that was yelling in many ways, that was helpless and that was afflicted due to the burden of the lion (on her body). Then the king, having come there and having seen his mother (i.e. the cow) struck by the lion, was very much distressed and cried. Being afflicted he came to Jābāli, the best sage, and asked him about the atonement for the sin of killing a cow.

Ṛtambhara said :

28-29. O lord, I had resorted, by your order, to the forest and looked after the cow. A lion not falling within the range of (my) sight (i.e. not noticed by me) came from somewhere and attacked the cow. What do (i.e. should) I do for the atonement of that sin, by your order? How can I fulfil the vow granting a son to me?

30-40. The best sage said to the king speaking like this: “O king, there are means for the atonement of a sin. There are expiations, O you very intelligent one, for all sins of one who has killed a brāhmaṇa, who is ungrateful and who drinks liquor. All the sins of him who observes the (vows) duly go away by means of vows like Kṛcchra, Cāndrāyaṇa (observed) along with

restraints and controls. For two sinners who have committed heaps of sins, there is no expiation: for him who deliberately kills a cow and one who censures Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). The meanest one who mentally desires (giving) pain to cows, resides in a place in hell as long as fourteen Indras (rule). Even that unfortunate man who just once censures Hari, would, surrounded by his sons and grandsons, see hell. Therefore, O lord of men, you should realise that he who censures Viṣṇu or causes pain to cows never gets release. There is an expiation if a cow is killed through ignorance. You (now) go to Ṛtuparnaka, the intelligent devotee of Rāma. He looks equally upon all his foes and friends. He will quickly tell you the expiation for this killing of the cow. Formerly you had attached his countries, so he had abandoned them. Giving up enmity, go to Ṛtuparnaka. Being composed, do quickly what he will tell you (to do), so that there will be the expiation of the sin committed by you.”

41-48. Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him, he went to Ṛtuparnaka who was an excellent devotee of Rāma and who looked equally upon his foe and friend. He told him whatever, the killing of the cow etc., took place. He too thought of a means for the expiation of that sin. Having reflected for a moment, king Ṛtuparna who was intelligent and who knew dharma laughed and said to Ṛtambhara: “O king, who am I before (i.e. as compared with) the sages knowing the scriptures? Why have you, abandoning them, come to me, fancying myself to be learned? If you have faith in me, then I shall say something. O best of men, carefully listen to my words. By means of act, thought and words have recourse to Raghunātha. O you highly intelligent one, please the lord of the worlds without deceit. When pleased, he will grant (i.e. satisfy) all desires of your mind. He will destroy the sin of having ignorantly killed a cow. O you religious-minded one, O you best one, remembering Rāma, look after the cow. By giving gold to a brāhmaṇa, you will atone for the sin.”

Sumati said :

49-57. Hearing those words king Ṛtambhara, with his mind purified, took to remembering Rāma, and observed the vow. Engaged in the well-being of all beings, and always remembering Rāma, he, looking after the cow, went to the forest as before.

Surabhi was pleased with him. When gratified, she said: “O king, choose a boon from me according to the desire of your mind?” Then the king said (to her): “Give me a son who is a devotee of Rāma, who is fond of his father, and who will follow his own duty.” The merciful, desire-yielding, divine cow, being pleased, gave the boon to the king longing for a son, and disappeared. Then at the (proper) time he obtained a son—Viṣṇu’s devotee and serving Rāma. His father (i.e. king R̥tambhara) named him Satyavān. Having obtained the son (named) Satyavān who was greatly devoted to his father and comparable to Indra (only) in valour, the great king obtained great joy. The king, having obtained a righteous son, was full of joy and having deposited (i.e. entrusted) the kingdom with him, went to a forest for practising penance. There, with his mind full of devotion he propitiated Viṣṇu, and with his sins fully washed, he physically went to the place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Satyavān Meets Śatrughna

Sumati said :

1-9. O dear one, this king too who was well known by the name Satyavān pleased by means of his duty Raghunātha, the lord of the worlds. Being pleased (with him) the lord of Ramā (i.e. Viṣṇu) gave him unswerving devotion to his feet, difficult to obtain through crores of religious deeds by his worshippers. He, full of pity and not being fatigued, everyday told the purifying tale of Śrī Raghunātha to people. He beat with sticks, causing fear even to Yama, the man who did not worship Ragunātha (i.e. Rāma), the lord of Ramā (i.e. Viṣṇu). He made every man who would be above the age of eight till he would be eighty years old, observe the fast of Ekādaśī. To him Tulasī was dear; his neck never abandoned the excellent garland from the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha. He was venerable even to the sages.

How then was he not (so) to others? He loved remembering Raghunātha. His sins were washed. His misfortune was destroyed. He, knowing that the very wonderful horse of Rāmacandra has come, will come and give you the kingdom free from troublesome fellows. O king, I have told you the best (thing) that you have asked for. O lord, what more do you ask? Order it (and) I (shall) do it.

Śeṣa said :

10. The horse, possessing many wonders, went into the city. Seeing him, all the people went to the king, and reported to him.

The people said :

11-12. A certain horse, shining with a note on his forehead white like the water of Gaṅgā, has come.

Hearing those charming and pleasing words uttered by the people, the king laughed and said (to them): “Ascertain whose horse that is.”

13-20a. They told him: “A horse, looked after by Śatrughna, has come from the city of king Rāma.” He, having heard the very pleasing, two-lettered name of Rāma, marked with a faltering sound, was very much delighted in mind: “The horse of that Rāma, the lord of Ayodhyā, who is constantly thought by me has come with Śatrughna to my city. Hanūmān who serves the feet of Rāma and who never forgets Rāma in his mind, will also be there. I (shall) go there where there are Śatrughna, (Hanumat) the son of Maruta (i.e. the Wind) and other men who serve the lotus-like feet of Rāma”. He ordered his minister: “Quickly come, taking all the royal wealth with me. I shall go to look after the excellent horse of Raghunātha, and to do (i.e. to offer) service to Rāma’s lotus-like feet, which is difficult to be had.” Saying so he with his soldiers went out to Śatrughna.

20b-26. Just then Rāma’s brother (Śatrughna) along with his soldiers reached the city. Mighty heroes roared; chariots produced big sounds; there were the sounds of the triumphant conches; everywhere there were the flute-sounds. King Satyavān, having come along with his ministers, saluted (Śatrughna’s) feet

and presented to him his very wealthy kingdom. Śatrughna, having recognised the king, observing Rāma's vow, gave his great kingdom to his son named Rukma. He, endowed with truth, and of great glory, having embraced the very glorious Hanūmat of mighty arms and also other devotees of Rāma, regarded himself blessed; and with Śatrughna, he was delighted in mind. Just then the horse well-protected by heroes went a long way off. Śatrughna along with that king and heroes went (after the horse).

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Śatrughna's Army Gets Ready to Fight Vidyunmālin

Śeṣa said :

1-7a. When many excellent warriors like Śatrughna and all great kings having crores of chariots were going, there was all of a sudden, on the way, very fearful darkness in which kinsmen could not recognise their own man or a stranger. The sky was covered with dust and was full of lightning and thunder. In such a very fearful confusion clouds showered profuse blood with puss and (other) foul things. The heroes who were great enemies, became very much confounded. When the people were perplexed, the condition was: 'What is this? What is this?' The eyes of people of renowned vigour were pervaded with darkness. (A demon) who was well known as Vidyunmālin who was Rāvaṇa's friend, lived in the nether world and was surrounded by a line of demons took away the horse. He was seated in an aeroplane made of iron and going according to (occupants') desire.

7b-10a. He causing fear to all heroes took away the horse. In a short while the darkness disappeared and the sky became pure. Those heroes led by Śatrughna said: "Where is the horse?" Looking for the best horse, they saw one another; (but) when they did not see the horse, there was loud wailing. "Where is the horse of (i.e. intended for) the horse-sacrifice? Who, the wicked one, has taken it (away)?"

10b-12. They spoke such words. Just then that lord of demons who was surrounded by the best demons, seated in an excellent aeroplane, was seen by all the best warriors, seated in chariots and adorned with valour. There fearful demons, having bad faces, terrible mouths, long fangs, were seen ready to seize the army (of Śatrughna).

13-14. Then they informed Śatrughna, the best among kings: “We do not know (how) one, shining in an aeroplane, took away the horse into the sky. Having confounded us—the heroes, with darkness, he came, and seized the horse. O best king, do what is proper.”

15-18. Hearing those words, Śatrughna was full of great anger. (He said:) “Who is this powerful demon that has seized my horse? Today let the aeroplane, struck by the volley of my arrows, fall down. Today let the head of my enemy fall down, (after being struck) by my arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. Make ready all chariots filled with great weapons and missiles. Let (our) warriors go to strike back the horse-snatcher.” Speaking thus, he, with his eyes red due to anger, said to his minister who knew justice and injustice and who was proficient in the affairs of a war.

Śatrughna said :

19-21. O minister, tell me who, that are diligent in killing the demon, are very brave, are having great weapons, are best among those who know (the use of) excellent missiles, should be appointed (to kill the demon). Think and quickly tell me. I shall do your words (i.e. I shall do as you tell me). Tell me about the heroes knowing (the use of) all missiles and capable of (fighting with) him.

Having heard this the minister spoke befitting words showing the heroes, bent quickly (before Śatrughna), capable of (fighting in) that excellent battle.

Sumati said :

22-31. Let Puṣkala, the tormentor of the enemies, and having great weapons and missiles and ready to get victory in the

battle, go to conquer the demon. In the same way let Lakṣmī-nidhi possessing a mass of missiles, go. Let him break his vehicle with his sharp arrows. Hanūmat of bold deeds is capable of fighting with the demons. O lord, let him strike the demon with his face and tail. So also let all the brave monkeys who are skilled in fighting and are prompted by your words, go to fight. Let the best ones (like) Sumada, Subāhu, Pratāpāgrya, go to fight with the mean demons with their sharp arrows. May you too, seated in a chariot endowed with great weapons and ready to kill the demon, obtain victory in the battle. O king, this is my view. Let those warriors who are brave and capable of destroying him, go (to fight with him). What is the use of (sending) many other warriors?

When the minister, named Sumati, and best among the heroes, spoke like this, Śatrughna told the heroes skilled in fighting (as follows): “O heroes, let Puṣkala and others, who are skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, state in my presence their pledge to destroy the demon. Let you, making a great solemn declaration befitting your valour and accompanied by the army, go into the battlefield.”

32-33. Hearing these words, the mighty (heroes) of Śatrughna, who were endowed with lustre, made their own great solemn declarations. Then, first, the hero Puṣkala, endowed with great energy, having heard the words of the lord of the earth, made this (i.e. the following) solemn declaration :

Puṣkala said :

34-40. O best king, listen to my very wonderful solemn declaration made due to my valour in the presence of all people that are listening to it. If I do not make the demon overcome with a swoon and his face full of scattered hair, let me have the sin which he who enjoys his own daughter, gets, or which one gets by censuring deities. Let me have that sin if I falsify your words. O great king, listen to my pledge in case the very powerful soldiers (of the demon) do not fall on being pierced with my arrows. If I do not make my words true, let me have the sin of him who distinguishes between Viṣṇu and Śiva or Śiva and Śakti. These are all the words uttered by me (i.e. I had to say). That

firm devotion which I have towards the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha, will itself make (my words) true.

Hearing that pledge of Puṣkala, king Lakṣmīnidhi, made a truthful solemn declaration, adorned with his valour.

Lakṣmīnidhi said :

41-43. If I turn back (from the battlefield), I would have that sin which a man gets if he keeps mum on hearing the censure of the Vedas, or being outcast from all religions, he mentally likes (the censure of Vedas); (I shall have the sin of) the brāhmaṇa who is wicked and sells liquor and lac etc., or who, the fool, being tempted by greed sells a cow; (or of him) who having drunk the water from the money of a mleccha, does not observe an expiation.

44-54. Having heard the pledge, Hanūmat, skilled in battle, said, after having remembered Rāma's feet, (the following) auspicious words: "My lord (Rāma) whom all gods along with demons salute by (bowing) their heads (adorned) with gems, should always be reflected on by meditating saints in their hearts. The glorious Rāma is the lord of Ayodhyā and is worshipped by the lord of the world. Those words which one would utter by remembering him will come true. O king, who (i.e. how insignificant) is this mean, weak demon, seated in (the aeroplane) moving according to (occupants') desire? Tell me quickly what should be done by me. Who would (i.e. is able to) knock me down? With my tail I (shall) lift up the Meru (mountain) along with the lord of gods. I (shall) dry up the entire ocean. I shall even drink up the Saṁvarta (cloud abounding in water). I have the favour of king Śrī Raghunātha and Jānakī. O king, there is nothing on the surface of the earth which would ever be unattainable for me. If, O king, these words uttered by me would be untrue, then at that time only I would be away from devotion to Raghunātha. If I falsify my words, then let me have the sin which a śūdra who would keep a tawny cow with the desire (to obtain) milk (from her), would have. If I speak false words, let me have the sin of that śūdra who infatuated by love has sexual intercourse with a brāhmaṇa woman. Certainly let me have that sin which a

man greedy through the taste of the tongue would drink liquor by the smell of which a man would go to hell and by its touch would even go to Raurava (hell), if, due to Rāma's grace I shall not make my pledge true."

55-59. When this was spoken by the great heroes, the warriors quickly made a solemn declaration shining with their valour. Śatrughna also praising those heroes skilled in battle (with the words) 'Well (said), well (said)', made a solemn declaration when people were observing (i.e. in the presence of people): "In front of you, I shall declare my vow adorned with my energy. Let the magnanimous ones endowed with exertion for fight, listen. If I do not strike with my arrows and knock down on the ground from the aeroplane his head cut off and broken from his trunk, let me certainly have that sin which one would get by giving false testimony or by stealing gold or due to censuring the Vedas."

60-63. Hearing the good words of Śatrughna, those (warriors) honoured by heroes (said:) "O Rāma's brother, you are blessed. Who else but you would be (so) great? O lord of the world, you alone killed the very mighty Lavaṇa, Madhu's son, who caused misery to gods and demons. Who (i.e. how insignificant) is the demon? Where (i.e. of what importance) is his small army? O you very intelligent one, you will (just) in a moment destroy him." Saying so, the heroes became ready on the battlefield. Gladly they went to (attack) the demon to make their pledge true.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Vidyunmālin Killed in Battle

Śeṣa said :

1-7. With chariots having good horses (yoked to them), rich in charm and full of all weapons and missiles and endowed with various jewels, they went to (i.e. marched against) the mean demons. Seeing them the demon seated in a vehicle going according

to (occupants') desire, as it were, repeatedly threatening them, said with a deep-sounding voice: "Let the brave warriors not go to fight. Let them go home. Let them not cast their life. I shall not release the excellent horse. I am well-known as Vidyunmālin, and am the friend of Rāvaṇa. I have come to atone for my friend who is dead. Where has that Rāma who has killed (my) friend Rāvaṇa, gone? Where also is his brother (Śatrughna) who is the crest-jewel of all the brave men? Having killed him—the younger brother of Rāma, and drinking his blood along with bubbles coming up from his neck, I shall atone for (the death of) him (i.e. Rāvaṇa)." Hearing these words Puṣkala, the best among the excellent warriors, said to him endowed with valour and bravery:

Puṣkala said :

8-11. Excellent warriors do not brag in the battle. By means of showering their weapons and missiles they show (their) valour. O you maddened one, he who killed Rāvaṇa is surrounded by his kinsmen. Where will you go by snatching his horse? You will fall (when struck) with Śatrughna's arrows discharged from his bow. Jackals will eat you fallen dead on the ground. O wicked one, do not roar when I, Rāma's servant, am (here). In a battle excellent warriors roar in the battle due to great accomplishment after conquering their enemy.

Śeṣa said :

12-21. The best demon hit strongly with a (missile called) Śakti, Puṣkala—the hero—who was speaking thus, and who was ferocious in battle, on his chest. That Puṣkala, seeing that great iron missile, attached (i.e. decked) with gold, cut it off with three very fierce and sharp arrows. Made lustreless by the arrows, it fell on the ground in three parts. While falling it shone like Viṣṇu's three missiles. Seeing the missile cut off the demon, the tormentor of his enemy, quickly took up a lance having three points and made of iron. The best demon discharged it having sharp points and resembling fire. He, called Puṣkala, made it into (pieces like) sesamum seeds with his arrows. Puṣkala, Rāma's servant, having quickly cut off the trident, fixed on his bow sharp arrows having the speed of mind. The arrows quickly sticking (i.e. striking) his chest produced anger, as the charming qualities

of Viṣṇu produce love in the heart of a devotee of Viṣṇu. The very ferocious Vidyūnmālin afflicted with pain due to being pierced by his arrow and ready to strike took up a fierce mallet. He whose name was Vidyūnmālin, sent (i.e. discharged) that mallet. It struck the chest (of Puṣkala). It produced (blood) and made him foul. Puṣkala, the tormentor of his enemies and the hero struck by the mallet, shaking with tremour, fell in the middle part of the chariot.

22-28. In the same way his brother Ugradamṣṭra fought with Lakṣmīnidhi, with fatal weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Regaining consciousness just at that moment, he said to the demon: "O greatest among the demons, you are fortunate. Great is your valour. Now listen also to my great vow honoured by the brave. Today with sharp arrows I shall knock you down from the aeroplane." Speaking thus, he took up an arrow, which was sharp, difficult to be overtaken, burning, having the lustre of fire, and having great excellence. Just when he exerted to retaliate, a very fierce and sharp arrow got into his chest. Confused by the arrow and with his heart perplexed, the demon, losing his consciousness, fell on the ground from the middle part of the vehicle going according to the occupants' desire. Ugradamṣṭra saw his elder brother falling. Being afraid of the enemy, he took him into the interior of the vehicle.

29-37. With great anger he said to his enemy Puṣkala, the best among the mighty: "O wicked one, having overthrown my brother, where will you go? Having vanquished me in the battle (i.e. if you vanquish me in the battle then only), you will get excellent victory. When I am (alive), put an end to the hope of victory in your heart." He (i.e. Puṣkala), with his eyes full of anger, quickly struck with ten arrows on (i.e. discharged ten arrows into) the chest of the wicked one who was speaking like this. The wicked one, struck with ten arrows by the magnanimous Puṣkala, got angry in his mind, and started to strike him. Grinding his teeth in anger, he raised his fist and struck (Puṣkala). Causing in (others') hearts fear (like) the noise of the whirlwind (caused) by the fall of the thunderbolt, he roared. The hero Puṣkala, knowing (how to wield) great missiles, struck with a fist, desiring the destruction of the wicked-minded one, did not tremble. He discharged into his chest arrows very sharp like the

teeth of a calf. The demon, pained (due to being struck) with those arrows, took up a trident which had three points, which was burning and which was extremely fierce due to lines of flames. The fierce one struck (i.e. hit) the chest of Puṣkala, the great hero. The best archer, struck by the trident, fainted. He suffered from a great mental depression and fell on the chariot.

38-51. Knowing him to have fainted, Hanūmat, the son of Wind, with his heart overcome with anger, spoke to the demon: "O you wicked-minded one, where are you going? With kicks I shall kill you who have come here to snatch away the horse." Saying so, and remaining in the air, he tore with the tips of his nails the great demons, the soldiers of the enemy seated in the vehicle. The son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) struck some with his tail, some with the soles of his feet, some with his fore-arms. Some, when struck, perished; some, being struck, fainted. Then (they) afflicted and frightened due to strokes with the feet, fled. The Wind's son (i.e. Hanūmat) killed there many very fierce demons; they were cut off, broken and divided into two pieces. The vehicle, going according to the will (of the occupants) and with its defences and gateways broken, was surrounded on all sides by the wailing demons. When the very brave Hanūmat was in the sky in a moment, on the earth the (next) moment, the unassailable vehicle moving according to the (occupants') will, would be seen here and there. The monkey, Wind's son, taking any form at will, would be seen striking (the enemies), wherever that vehicle (moved). When the great men (i.e. the demons) remaining in the vehicle, were thus distressed at that time, Ugradaṁṣṭra, the lord of demons, approached Hanūmat. (He said): "O monkey, you have done a great deed, viz. knocking down the warriors. If you stay for a moment, I shall deprive you of your life." Speaking thus, that wicked-minded one struck Hanūmat with a very sharp trident having the lustre of a blazing fire. The mighty one (i.e. Hanūmat) seized the trident coming to him in his mouth and reduced the entire one made of gold to powder. Having powdered that iron trident discharged by the demon, the powerful Hanūmat struck him with many blows of his open hands.

52-57. He (i.e. Ugradaṁṣṭra) struck here and there by the lord of the monkeys with the blows of his open hands, was afflicted and created an illusion, causing fear to the entire world. Then there was

darkness in which none was noticed, in which (a soldier) belonging to one's own side or of the enemy did not recognise many men. Rocks resembling mountain-peaks fell upon the (bodies of) excellent warriors. Being struck by them all of them were perplexed. (Streaks of) lightning flashed; clouds thundered violently, showered puss and blood, discharged dirty water. Many trunks with the heads having ear-rings cut off, were seen falling from the sky. Everywhere naked, ugly, fierce, terrible, very hideous demons, with their hair very much scattered, were seen.

58-63. Then the people, distressed and full of fear of one another, took to their heels; a great portent was thought (to appear). Then the very glorious Śatrughna came (there) in his chariot, and having remembered Śrī Rāma, he fixed arrows on his bow. Having shaken off the illusion with the bewitching missile the powerful one, scattering streams of arrows in the sky, showered the demon (with them) in the battle. Then the quarters brightened up; the sun had its halo (of lustre), clouds went (away) as they had come; lightning subsided. Then the great vehicle, occupied by the demons, and full of words like 'Cut off, break' was seen in front; and thousands of arrows with their feathered ends adorned with gold, repeatedly fell on the vehicle remaining in the sky and going according to (occupants') desire.

64-68. Then the aeroplane, a portion of which was broken, did not appear (moving) high, (but) appeared like a portion of the city that is broken, on the earth. Then the demon, being very angry, fixed arrows on the bow, and roaring, he scattered (i.e. discharged) them on (Śatrughna) Rāma's brother. Those arrows in hundreds stuck to his body in many ways. They, the sharp and bent ones, causing streams of blood to flow, gave him great charm. Śatrughna, endowed with a great power, fixed on his bow a missile presided over by the Wind-deity and causing the demons to tremble. The demons, with their hair loose, and falling from the vehicle and the sky, appeared like groups of ghosts and vampires moving in the sky.

69-76. The demon's son, seeing the missile discharged by Raghunātha's brother, fixed on his bow a missile presided over by Śiva. From it proceeded vampires, ghosts, evil spirits and fiends, having skulls and swords and drinking profuse blood.

They difficult to ward off, and adorned with swords in their hands, gladly drank the blood of the heroes of Śatrughna even while they were alive. Seeing that missile pervading (everything) and destroying all the warriors, he discharged, to send it back, the missile called Nārāyaṇa. That missile, presided over by Nārāyaṇa, in a moment, checked all of them. All of them, impelled by the demon, met with destruction. Then that angry demon Vidyunmālin took a sharp, fierce and strong trident to kill Śatrughna. Seeing Vidyunmālin coming with a trident in his hand, (Śatrughna) struck (him) on his arm with arrows resembling the crescent moon. With his arm cut off with those arrows he prepared himself to strike (Śatrughna) with his hand. (He said:) “O Śatrughna, you are (now) killed. Go. Who will be your protector?”

77-81. When he was talking like this, (Śatrughna) quickly cut off with arrows the head along with the ear-rings of that mighty hero. Seeing him (i.e. Vidyunmālin) with his head cut off, the valourous Ugradaṁṣṭra started striking Śatrughna served by the brave with his fist; but Śatrughna cut off his head with an arrow with a sharp horse-shoe-shaped head. All the heroes skilled in the use of weapons and missiles ran on the battlefield. Except the lord of the demons all with their life remaining (i.e. saved) went (away). Having saluted Śatrughna they gave (back) the horse snatched (away by them). Then were heard all around the sounds of lutes, the sounds of conches and the charming cries of victory of the brave soldiers.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Dialogue between Lomaśa and Āraṇyaka

Śeṣa said:

1-5. King Śatrughna, along with Puṣkala, obtained great joy on obtaining the horse taken away by the demons. Those warriors, with their bodies sprinkled with blood, so also Lakṣmī-

nidhi praised the great king full of energy to fight. When that great demon Vidyunmālin, difficult to conquer, was killed, all gods, O sage, gave up their fear and obtained happiness. The rivers became clean; and the sun became clear. Breezes sprinkled with scented water blew. The great heroes, with spotless lustre and of clean bodies seated in the chariots, became ready. All of them endowed with the good luck of victory said to the king:

The heroes said:

6-8. O you very intelligent one, luckily you have killed the demon Vidyunmālin, due to whose fear gods were frightened and were driven out of the heaven. Luckily the great horse of Raghunātha has been got (back); luckily you have obtained victory everywhere on the globe. O lord, release this charming horse having the speed of mind. Let there be no delay now, O you very intelligent one.

Śeṣa said:

9-14. Hearing these words of the heroes which were proper for the occasion, he, having praised them (with the words) 'Well, well', released the best horse. He that was well-protected by chariots, foot-soldiers, best horses and those who were proficient in the use of all weapons and missiles, went, when released, to the northern direction. O Vātsyāyana, listen to the account of what took place (in the case) of Śatrughna, which burns heaps of sins. He reached Revā's bank resorted to by hosts of sages. Her water was the fluid of the heap of sapphires under the pretext of water. He (i.e. Śatrughna) waited upon by the brave, saluted the respective (i.e. everyone of the) sages and followed the gem of the horse going at will. He went to that old hermitage made of the leaves of palāśa, sprinkled with the waves of Revā and the refuge of those who remove sins.

15. Śatrughna who did all deeds bringing merit and worldly prosperity, on seeing it, said to Sumati who knew everything and was proficient in political wisdom.

The king said:

16. O Minister, O you who are best among those who think,

tell me who am asking you, to whom this hermitage, which appears auspicious belongs.

Śeṣa said:

17. Hearing these words, Sumati, showing his affection, said to the king, with words accompanied by a bright smile.

Sumati said:

18-24. O great king, having seen this best sage, absorbed in all scriptures, we shall indeed have our sins removed. Therefore, bow down before him, and ask him. He who is extremely greedy of the honey from the lotuses in the form of Rāma's feet, will tell you everything. (Bow down before him) known by the name Āraṇyaka, the servant of the feet of Rāma, full of very severe penance and proficient in the significance of all sacred texts.

Hearing these words augmented by religious significance, he went along with a few servants to see him. (They were) Hanūmat, the brave Puṣkala, the best minister Sumati, Lakṣmīnidhi, Pratāpāgrya, Subāhu, and Sumada also. Noble-minded king Śatrughna, surrounded by these reached the hermitage to salute that best brāhmaṇa Āraṇyaka. Having gone there he with all the heroes who had bent down their necks in modesty, saluted the best ascetic.

25-27. Having seen all those kings led by Śatrughna, he then offered them respectful offering and water for washing their feet etc. along with fruits and roots. He said to all the kings: "Where had you gone together? O sinless ones, how have you gathered here? Tell (me) all that." O brāhmaṇa, having heard those words of the best sage, Sumati, skilled in speaking (proper) words, said (to him):

Sumati said:

28-29. By all (these) the horse of the king belonging to Raghu's family is being protected. The hero (Rāma) will perform a sacrifice furnished with all ingredients.

Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) them the best sage, as it were dispelling the entire darkness with the lustre of his teeth, said:

Āraṇyaka said:

30-34. What is the use of other sacrifices furnished with all ingredients, giving (but) little merit and giving perishable positions? Foolish people worship other (god), leaving Hari, the Raghu hero (i.e. Rāmā), the lord of Rāmā, giving a stable glorious position. A foolish man torments (himself) by sacrifices, abstract meditations and vows by leaving him who, even when merely remembered, removes the mountain of sins. Oh! see the folly and illusion of people (that) a man leaving the easy worship of Rāmā, would practise (i.e. he practises) difficult (things). It gives liberation to men and removes all sins merely by being remembered. It is reflected upon by the meditating saints having desires.

35-40. Formerly with a desire to know the reality and thinking much about (how to find) a wise man, I went to many holy places. But nobody taught me the truth. Then, due to my great luck I came across the sage Lomaśa who had come (down to the earth) with a desire to visit the holy places. Having saluted that great sage who had a great (i.e. long) life and whose couple of feet was served by great meditating saints, I asked him (about the truth): “O lord, today (i.e. now) I have obtained the human existence, which is wonderful and difficult to obtain. What should one who desires to cross the fearful ocean of the worldly existence, do? Having thought, tell me if there is a vow, a gift, a prayer to be muttered, a sacrifice, or a deity, that would emancipate me from the ocean of the mundane existence. O lord of reflective thinking (i.e. greatest mediating saint), O You who are the master of the significance of all the scriptures, tell me that knowing which I shall by means of the ocean of your grace cross the fierce mundane existence.”

41-49. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) me, the best sage said: “O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively and with great faith. There are gifts, holy places, vows, voluntary religious observances and restraints. So also there are many abstract meditations, sacrifices giving (i.e. taking one to) heaven. O magnanimous one, I shall tell you a great secret which removes all sins and helps (one) to cross the ocean of the worldly existence. Listen to it. It is not to be told to an atheist, or to a non-

believer, so also to a censurer, or to a wicked man; it should not be given to the enemy (i.e. hater) of devotion. It (i.e. the secret) which is excellent and removes all misery, should be told to Rāma's devotee who is calm and free from lust and anger. There is no greater god than Rāma; there is no greater vow than (that in honour of) Rāma. There is no greater reflection than (on) Rāma; there is no greater sacrifice than (in honour of) Rāma. Having remembered him, having muttered prayers to him, and having worshipped him, a man gets the highest (position) and obtains great glory in this and the next world. When he is remembered, when he is mentally meditated upon, he who is the giver of all desired objects, gives (i.e. generates in the mind of the man) great devotion which helps him to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Even a cāṇḍāla by remembering Rāma goes to (i.e. obtains) the highest position. Then what about those like you who are greatly devoted to the Vedas and (other) scriptures?

50-52. I have disclosed to you the secret of all the Vedas and (other) scriptures. Act as you would desire. Rāmacandra is the only god. His worship is the only vow. (Uttering) his name is the only hymn; and praising him is the only scripture. Therefore, worship the charming Rāmacandra by all means; so that the ocean of the mundane existence would be as trifling as a small puddle."

53-70. Having heard those words, I again put a question: "How is the god meditated upon by men? Or how is he worshipped by them? O you highly intelligent one, O you who know everything, tell me (all that) in detail, knowing which I shall be blessed in the three worlds, O best sage." Having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) me, that Lomaśa, having reflected, told me everything preceded by the meditation on Rāma: "O best brāhmaṇa, O you sinless one, I shall tell you what you have asked me, as to how the lord of Rāma (i.e. Viṣṇu) burns (i.e. removes) the distress of the mundane existence. In the city of Ayodhyā, which is charming and adorned with a variegated pavilion, at the root of the desire-yielding tree giving all prosperity, one should meditate upon the charming Raghurāja (i.e. Rāma) seated upon an attractive throne, adorned with great emeralds, gold and jewels like the sapphire remov-

ing darkness by means of its lustre. (One should meditate upon Rāma) whose body is dark like dūrvā-blades, who is worshipped by god of gods, whose face condemns the beauty of the full moon on the full-moon night, whose forehead resembles the portion of the moon on the eighth day (of the month), who is rich with the beauty of dark hair, who is tinged with the jewels of his crown, who is adorned with beautiful ear-rings having the shape of crocodiles, who is beautified with lips shining with coral-like lustre, who is adorned with the row of teeth having the shape of the rays of the lord of the stars (i.e. the moon—i.e. having pointed teeth), whose mouth is beautified with a tongue sweet like the China rose, on which reside Vedas like the Ṛgveda along with sacred books, who is adorned with a neck possessing the charm of a conch, who, the excellent one, possesses lofty and fleshy shoulders like those of a lion, who has long arms marked with armlets and bracelets hanging up to the knees and adorned with rings and diamonds, who has a very large chest beautified by the perfume of Lakṣmī and marked with beautiful marks like that of Śrīvatsa, who has a large belly with a large navel and adorned with a beautiful waist endowed with a jewelled girdle and special charm, who is adorned with spotless thighs and knees and with majesty, who is adorned with delicate feet marked with lines like a diamond-pin and a barley-shoot and fit to be reflected upon by the meditating saints. Having reflected upon and remembered him you will cross the ocean of the mundane existence. One worshipping him according to his own desire by means of sandal etc. obtains great prosperity in this world and the other world.

71. O great king, you asked me about the excellent meditation upon Rāma. I have told it to you. (With its help) cross the ocean of the worldly existence.”

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

*Lomaśa Narrates the Deeds of Rāma to Āraṇyaka**Śeṣa said:*

1. The best brāhmaṇa, having heard this very important (advice) from Lomaśa, again asked that sage, who knew everything and who was best among the meditating saints.

Āraṇyaka said:

2-4. O best of sages, O you very intelligent one, tell me (what) I am asking you. Preceptors are full of compassion, and explain everything to their servant(s). O magnanimous one, who is that Rāma who is reflected upon by you everyday? What are his deeds? O best brāhmaṇa, tell me. Why has he taken the incarnation? Why is he born as a human being? (Please) quickly tell me all that to remove my doubt.

Śeṣa said:

5-7. Having heard these very charming words of the sage, Lomaśa narrated to him the wonderful good conduct of Rāma. Knowing that people have been merged into hell, the lord of the lords of abstract meditation, the charming highest lord, the ocean of kindness—knowing thus, descended along with Śrī in four ways to spread his glory in the world, by means of which (a man) would cross the terrible (mundane existence).

8-10. Formerly when the Tretā age came, Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, the full incarnation, having lotus-like eyes, was born in the solar dynasty. That Rāma had Lakṣmaṇa as his companion and the young (boy) had side-locks of hair on his temples. Due to the promise of their father, the two youths (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), devoted to Viśvāmitra, were handed over (to Viśvāmitra) for the protection of his sacrifice by the king. They were restrained, (good) archers, brave, and were devoted to Viśvāmitra.

11-15a. To cause an obstacle to them a demoness named Tāṭakā met them in the fearful forest when they were going along their way. Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, sent by the sages' permission Tāṭakā (to face) the torture inflicted by Yama

by means of his practice of archery. By the touch of the sole of his foot Gautama's wife Ahalyā (who had been transformed into) a stone due to Indra's contact, again got her own form. When Viśvāmitra's sacrifice proceeded well, (Rāma), the best among Raghus, killed with great arrows Mārīca and Subāhu. He broke Śiva's bow that was in Janaka's house.

15b-17. When Rāma was fifteen years old, he married, according to (the proper rite of) marriage, the charming Sītā not born from the womb. Having had Sītā (as his wife), Rāma then became (i.e. regarded himself) fortunate. Then for twelve years he enjoyed with her. In his twenty-seventh year, he prepared (himself) for the rank of (i.e. for being consecrated as) an heir-apparent.

18-23a. Then Kaikeyī asked king (Daśaratha to grant) two boons: "By one of the two Rāma, having matted hair, should go away along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa for fourteen years. By the second, my (son) Bharata should be (consecrated as) the heir-apparent." The king sent away Rāma accompanied by Jānakī and Lakṣmaṇa. For three nights he took (only) water (and) on the fourth day he ate fruits. On the fifth (day) Rāma prepared an abode on the Citrakūṭa (mountain). In the thirteenth year, O great sage, Rāma disfigured the demoness Śūrpaṇakhā in Pañcavaṭī. When he was moving in the forest along with Jānakī, the demon (Rāvaṇa), due to the ripening of his sins, came to kidnap her.

23b-27. Then on the eighth day of the dark half of (the month of) Māgha, at the time called Vṛnda, Rāvaṇa took away Sītā left (alone) without Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. She, being taken away by him, wailed like an osprey: "O Rāma, Rāma, protect me who am taken away by a demon." As a hawk overcome with hunger would take a wailing quail similarly Rāvaṇa being under the influence of passion took away Janaka's daughter. When he was thus carrying away the daughter of Janaka, Jaṭāyu, the lord of birds, fought with the king of demons. Struck by Rāvaṇa he fell (down).

28-29. On the tenth day (of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa) Sampāti told the monkeys about Sītā whom (he had seen) on the ninth day of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa to be living in Rāvaṇa's house. On the eleventh day Hanūmat jumped from

the Mahendra mountain and saw her the same night in Laṅkā. During the remaining (part of that) night Hanūmat had the sight of Sītā.

30-34a. On the twelfth Hanūmat stayed on the śimśapā tree. On the same night (he told) a story for (generating) confidence (in Sītā's mind). Then his fight with Akṣa and others took place on the thirteenth day (of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa). On the fourteenth day the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) was bound by Indrajit with the missile presided over by Brahmā. He burnt Laṅkā with fire set to his tail. On the full-moon day the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) returned to the Mahendra mountain. (Having spent) five days from the first day of the second fortnight of Mārgaśīrṣa on the way, Madhuvana was burnt (by the monkey) after again having come back. On the seventh day (a token of) recognition (from Sītā) and full report (of the adventure) was given (to Rāma).

34b-35. Rāma set out on the eighth day when there appeared the Uttarāphālgunī constellation and the time was (the auspicious) Vijayā, and when the sun had reached the middle of the sky (i.e. at mid-day). Having made a solemn declaration, Rāma went towards the southern direction: (His solemn declaration was:)

36-38a. "Even having crossed the ocean, I shall kill the lord of demons." Sugrīva was the companion of Rāma who proceeded towards the southern direction. After seven days his army encamped on (the shore of) the ocean. Rāma, along with his army encamped on (the shore of) the ocean from the first day to the third day (of the first half of Pauṣa).

38b-40a. On the fourth day Bibhiṣaṇa joined Rāma. Consultations took place for crossing the ocean on the fifth day. For four days Rāma undertook fasting to death. Then he obtained a boon from the ocean who advised to make a joint effort.

40b-42. (The construction of the bridge) was begun on the tenth day, and was completed on the thirteenth day. On the fourteenth day Rāma encamped his army on the Suvela mountain. From the full-moon day to the third (of the dark fortnight) the army of the lord of the monkeys crossed the ocean and with Lakṣmaṇa besieged Laṅkā for (getting back) Sītā.

43-45. The encampment lasted for eight days, beginning with the third day and ending with the tenth. On the eleventh day Śuka and Sāraṇa came (to Rāma). On the twelfth day of the dark half of Pauṣa, the counting of (the soldiers in) the army was done. The lord of the best monkeys quickly described the army. For three days from the thirteenth day to the new-moon day Rāvaṇa assessed (the soldiers in) his army and showed inclination to fighting.

46-52a. On the first day of the bright half of Māgha Aṅgada went (to Rāvaṇa) as (Rāma's) envoy. Then Sītā was shown an illusory head of her husband (by Rāvaṇa). For seven days from the second of Māgha to the eighth (of Māgha), a confused battle took place between the demons and the monkeys. On the night of the ninth day of the bright half of Māgha Indrajit bound Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with the serpent-noose. When the lordly monkeys were perplexed and were completely nervous, Pavana, on the tenth day, muttered into Rāma's ear his real form for freeing him from the serpent-noose. Then there was the arrival of Garuḍa on the eleventh day. On the twelfth day Dhūmrākṣa was killed (by Rāma). He himself killed Kampana in the battle on the thirteenth day. From the fourteenth of the bright half of Māgha to the first day of the dark half, Nīla (after fighting with Prahasta) killed him after three days.

52b-58a. From the second day of the dark half of Māgha till the fourth day, in the fierce fight that lasted for three days Rāma made Rāvaṇa flee the battlefield. From the fifth day to the eighth day Rāvaṇa woke up Kumbhakarna. Then he ate food for four days. After six days—from the ninth to the fourteenth—Rāma killed in the battle Kumbhakarna who had eaten up many monkeys. On the new-moon day there was a temporary cessation of hostilities due to grief. During the four days from the first day of the bright half of Phālguna to the fourth day five demons—Bisatantu and others—were killed. In the same way Atikāya was killed (in the battle that took place) from the fifth to the seventh. During (the battle that lasted for) five days from the eighth day to the twelfth day (the two demons) Nikumbha and Kumbha were killed. Then, after three days Makarākṣa was killed.

58b-59. On the second day of the dark half of Phālguna Indrajit won (the battle). There was a temporary cessation of hostilities for five days from the third day to the seventh day due to the soldiers being intensely occupied in fetching the herbs.

60-61a. Then, in the battle that lasted for five days (from the eighth day) to the thirteenth day Lakṣmaṇa struck Indrajit who was well-known for his power and valour. Temporarily ceasing the hostilities, on the fourteenth day Rāvaṇa took initiation (i.e. performed a sacrifice).

61b-70a. Rāvaṇa went to fight on the new-moon day. When from the first day of the bright half of Caitra to the fifth day Rāvaṇa was fighting for five days, there was a great killing of the demons. Mahāpārśva and others were killed (in the battle that took place) from the sixth day of Caitra to the eighth day. On the ninth day of the bright half of Caitra Lakṣmaṇa was pierced (i.e. struck) by a missile (discharged by Indrajit). Rāma who was full of anger made Rāvaṇa flee. The son of Añjanī (i.e. Hanūmat) brought the Droṇa mountain for (treating) Lakṣmaṇa (with the herbs on the mountain). The demons temporarily ceased fighting on the night of the tenth. On the eleventh day the charioteer Mātali sent by Indra devoutly presented Rāma in the battle with a chariot (sent by Indra). From the twelfth day (of the bright half) to the fourteenth day of the dark half i.e. for eighteen days Rāma fought with Rāvaṇa in a single combat in chariots. In the battle that was fierce Rāma obtained victory. During the eighty seven days of the war which began on the second day of the bright half of Māgha and continued up to the fourteenth day of the dark half of Caitra, there was a cessation of hostilities for fifteen days—thus the (actual) war took place for seventy-two days. The obsequial ceremonies of Rāvaṇa and others took place on the new-moon day. Rāma stayed on the battlefield on the first day of Vaiśākha.

70b-75. On the second day of Vaiśākha Bibhiṣaṇa was consecrated on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of Laṅkā. On the third day took place the purification of Sītā and obtaining boons from gods. Having, after a long time, killed the lord of Laṅkā, he, the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa, accepted the auspicious Jānakī, afflicted by the demon (viz. Rāvaṇa) and taking her (with him) with great love, he returned. On the fourth day of

Vaiśākha Rāma got into the Puṣpaka and through the sky again came back to Ayodhyā. When the fourteenth year was complete Rāma along with his group stayed in Bharadvāja's hermitage on the fifth day of Vaiśākha. On the sixth day he met Bharata at Nandigrāma. On the seventh the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) was consecrated (as the king) in Ayodhyā.

76-79a. Maithilī (i.e. Sītā) lived without Rāma in the house of Rāvaṇa for eleven months and fourteen days. Rāma ruled (i.e. was consecrated as the king) when he was forty-two years old. At that time Sītā had completed thirty-three years. That lord Rāma being delighted entered the city Ayodhyā at the end of the fourteenth year and with his brothers ruled there.

79b-83. When he is thus ruling, Agastya born of a pitcher, the priest best among the eloquent, will come to the lord of the Raghu (dynasty). At his words (i.e. suggestion) he will perform a horse-sacrifice. O you of a good vow, his horse will come to your hermitage. His delighted warriors will (also) come to your hermitage. In front of them you will narrate pleasing tales about Rāma. O best of brāhmaṇas, along with them you will go to Ayodhyā. Seeing Rāma having eyes like lotuses in Ayodhyā, you (will) be just at that moment crossing the ocean of the worldly existence."

84-86a. Having thus spoken to me, that best sage Lomaśa, (most) intelligent of all, said: "What do you want to ask (now)?" Then I spoke proper (words): "Due to your grace I have known all the wonderful deeds of Rāma. By your favour I shall obtain the lotus-feet of Rāma." The lord of sages saluted by me went (his way).

86b-92. By his favour I have secured the worship of the feet of Rāma. That I (i.e. such as I am, I), everyday, repeatedly remember Rāma's feet. Being careful, I shall again and again sing his deeds. I shall purify other people by the enchanting song. With a desire to see him and repeatedly remembering the sage's words I shall be delighted. On the earth I am fortunate, I am blessed, I am lucky (that) I shall have a desire to see Rāma. Therefore, by all means that charming Rāma should be worshipped, for he (alone) should be saluted by all with a desire to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Therefore, (tell me) why you have come here. Which king, a religious-minded

one, will perform the great sacrifice, viz. the horse-sacrifice? You should tell me all that now; and should go to look after the horse. You should, repeatedly remembering Rāma's feet, remember them (constantly).

93. Hearing these words of the sage, they were wonder-struck. Remembering Raghunātha, they said to sage Āraṇyaka.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Sage Āraṇyaka Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven

Śeṣa said :

1. By the best sage they were asked (about) the wonderful deeds of Rāma. Regarding themselves as blessed and fortunate they spoke with respect.

The people said :

2-5. On seeing you we are now purified, since by (telling us) the account of Rāma you are purifying people (like) us. Listen to the true statement. You are the best among the brāhmaṇic sages. We shall tell all that you have asked us. By the words (i.e. at the suggestion) of Agastya Rāma is performing a very great sacrifice furnished with all ingredients for removing (the sin due to) the killing of a brāhmaṇa. We who all look after him have come along with the horse to your hermitage. O very intelligent one, know it.

6-11. Hearing these pleasant words, an elixir of life, the brāhmaṇa, devoted to Rāma was highly delighted. "Today the tree of my desire for glory has become fruitful. Today my mother who gave me birth, is blessed. Today I have obtained kingdom free from troublesome fellows. The treasures are very rich today. Today the gods are very much pleased. I have today obtained the fruit of maintaining the sacred fire to which oblations were offered, that I shall see the pair of the lotus-like feet of Rāmacandra.

That extremely charming lord of Ayodhyā, who is everyday meditated upon in my heart, will indeed be seen by me. Hanūmat, embracing me, will ask me about my well-being. The best one, on seeing my great devotion, will be pleased.”

12-13. Hearing these words, Hanūmat, the best of the monkeys, clasped the pair of the feet of the sage Āraṇyaka. “O lord, O brāhmaṇa-sage, I am (Rāma’s) servant standing before you. O lord of sages, know me, Rāma’s servant, resembling a dust-particle.”

14-17. When he was speaking like this, the sage, who was highly delighted, embraced Hanūmat adorned with his devotion to Rāma. Both were full of love, both were bathing with nectar (as it were). Covered (by each other) they appeared as it were drawn in a picture. They sat there and told very pleasant stories. Their minds were full of love for the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha. Hanūmat said various charming words to that excellent sage Āraṇyaka who was full of the thought about the feet of Rāma:

18-24. “O lord, this is the great diamond-like offspring of Daśaratha’s family. He is Rāma’s brother; is very brave. This Śatrughna salutes you. He killed Lavaṇa who was fearful to the entire world; and he made all sages, of excellent penance, happy. This is (Bharata’s son) named Puškala, who is served by very great heroes and who now conquered many great heroes on the battlefield. Know this one of many merits and of great power to be Rāma’s minister, dear to Raghupati (i.e. Rāma) like his own life, knowing everything and proficient in dharma. This is Subāhu, who is very fierce, who is a conflagration to the families of the enemies, and is a bee (howering) round the lotus-like feet of Rāma. This one of great fame salutes you. This Sumada too, who, due to service of Rāma’s feet given (i.e. assigned) to him by Pārvatī, has now achieved the great crossing over the ocean of the mundane existence. This Satyavān who having heard from his servant that the horse (of Rāma) had come, offered his kingdom (to Rāma). He is saluting you (by prostrating himself) on the ground.”

25-29. Having heard these words, sage Āraṇyaka, having embraced (them) with respect, welcomed them by offering fruits etc. They, very diligent ones, being delighted, having performed their daily morning rites in Revā, stayed in the hermitage of the

excellent sage. Having put the sage with his servants in a man-drawn vehicle, Śatrughna reached Ayodhyā where Rāma had taken his abode. He (i.e. the sage) seeing from a distance the city in which the king of the solar dynasty lived, quickly (got down from the vehicle and) went on foot with a desire to see the lord of Raghus. He reached the beautiful city of Ayodhyā adorned with people. A thousand of desires got (into his mind) for seeing Rāma.

30-32. There on the bank of Sarayū adorned with a pavilion, he saw Rāma who was dark like dūrvā-blades, whose eyes had the beauty of lotuses, who was holding on his waist a charming deer-horn endowed with beauty, was surrounded by hosts of sages led by Vyāsa, was well-served by the brave (soldiers), was surrounded by Bharata and Sumitrā's son (Lakṣmaṇa), was giving to the groups of the poor whatever they asked for.

33-36. Having seen him, (the sage) called Āraṇyaka regarded himself as blessed. "My eyes, resembling lotus-petals, are seeing Rāma. Today my knowledge of all sacred texts has become very significant, since, knowing Śrī Rāma, I have reached this city of Ayodhyā." He, delighted, saying these and many other words, and shining with his body very much delighted on seeing the feet of Rāma, went near Rāma's lord who was extremely inaccessible even to other lords of deep meditation, devoted to reflection. "Today I am lucky (that) Rāma's feet will come within the range of my sight (i.e. will be seen by me)." Saying these charming words (he stood) seeing Rāma.

37-40. Rāma too, seeing the best brāhmaṇa glowing with his own lustre, having the form of penance, got up. The great Rāmacandra saluted his feet for a long time. "O brāhmaṇa god, you have today purified my body." Saying these words, the lord, before whose feet (the lights of) the gems on the crowns of gods and demons bending before him were waved, fell at his feet. The best brāhmaṇa, of a great penance, held the best king between his arms, and embraced the dear lord.

41-46. The son of Kauśalyā (i.e. Rāma), the lord, having put him on a high jewelled seat, washed his pair of feet with water. And Hari (i.e. Rāma) himself took (i.e. put) that water, used for washing the sage's feet, on his (own) head, saying: "Today with my attendants and (members of) my family I am purified. Having

smeared him with sandal (-paste), he gave him a milch cow; and he, served by the lord of gods, said (these) charming words: "O lord, I would perform the sacrifice called Vāji-medha (i.e. horse-sacrifice). That will be today fully completed due to the arrival of your feet. Today, sacrifice (called) Aśvamedha (i.e. horse-sacrifice), purified by your feet, will destroy my sin due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa." To him, served by the lord of kings the sage Āraṇyaka smilingly spoke thus in sweet words:

47-58. "O lord, O king friendly to brāhmaṇas, your words are proper. O great king, the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas, are (but) your forms. O king, when you will perform the auspicious act like worshipping brāhmaṇas, all the (other) kings will worship a brāhmaṇa. O great king, the words which you uttered, viz. "I shall perform a pure sacrifice to remove (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder" are but laughable. (Even) a fool void (i.e. ignorant) of all sacred texts, would go to the highest position after having crossed the ocean of all sins (merely) by remembering your name. It is clear that the essential meaning of all the Vedas and old narratives is that Rāma's name is remembered to overcome sins. O Rāmacandra, as long as your name is not distinctly uttered, sins like those of brāhmaṇa murders, roar. O great king, having heard your name, the elephants in the form of great sins run away with a desire to find a place somewhere (to hide themselves). Therefore, O Rāma, O you whose sight is meritorious, how can there be a killing by you? A man, having heard your good (i.e. auspicious) account, instantly becomes pure. Formerly in the Kṛta age I heard the words from the mouth of (i.e. uttered by) sages knowing ancient accounts and residing on the bank of Gaṅgā: 'As long as men do not utter the charming name of Rāma, there are fears for those very sinful cowardly men'. Therefore, now I am blessed; O Rāmacandra, the destruction of my mundane existence has now become easy due to my having seen you." He worshipped the sage who was speaking like this. All the sages uttered the words, 'Well, Well'.

Śeṣa said :

59-67. O Vātsyāyana, best among the sages, and greatly devoted to Rāma, a great wonder took place there. Listen to it when I am telling (it to you). When he saw the great king Rāma

(just) as he had seen him in his meditation, he, who was extremely delighted, said to the best sages: “O best sages, listen to my very pleasant words. Who will be (i.e. who is) so very lucky like me on the earth? There is none like me; there was none born like me; there will be none like me, since Rāmabhadra having saluted me inquired about my (i.e. offered me a) welcome. He the dust of whose feet is always sought for by the scriptures has today after drinking the water (flowing) from my feet regarded himself pure.” When he was speaking like this, Brāhmaṇic (lustre) burst out (from his body) entered (the body of) the lord of the Raghus. (The sage) when all people were watching in the pavilion on the bank of Sarayū, obtained absorption (into the deity, viz. Rāma), which (absorption) is difficult to be secured by the meditating saints. In the sky there was at that time the sound of musical instruments. There was (also) the sound of lutes. Shower of flowers fell in front of them who were watching the interesting wonder. The sages also, having seen it, praised the best sage (saying): “The best sage is fortunate, since he has secured residence in the body of Rāma.”

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Getting Back the Horse from the Possession of an Under-Water Female

Sūta said:

1. Having heard this account, the noble-minded Vātsyāyana obtained great joy and said to the lord of the serpents.

Vātsyāyana said:

2-5. O lord of the serpents, I who listen to the story of Raghunātha who is famous for destroying the affliction of his devotees, am not (at all) satisfied. The great sage Āraṇyaka possessing (the knowledge of) the Vedas, who cast his perishable body after seeing Raghunātha, is blessed. From there where did the king's horse go? By whom was he restrained? How was the

glory of the lord of Rāma produced there? O lord of serpents, tell me all the truth, since you are omniscient. You hold the body of Viṣṇu; you actually possess his form.

Vyāsa said:

6. Hearing these words, he, with his heart delighted, narrated Rāma's deeds highlighting his so many (innumerable) virtues.

Śeṣa said:

7-16. O brāhmaṇa sage, you are well asking about Raghu-nātha's virtues by expressing a desire to hear them, by regarding them as not having been heard, though you have repeatedly heard them. From there the horse, surrounded by many soldiers, went out to the charming bank of Revā resorted to by hosts of sages. Then all the soldiers, skilled in fighting and carefully watching the path of (i.e. taken by) him, proceeded wherever the horse (moved). Then the horse holding a golden note on his forehead and with his body worshipped, went to a pool of water in Revā full of unfordable water. Then the excellent horse of Rāmacandra plunged into water. At that time all the great heroes were wonder-struck. They just said to one another: "How can the horse be regained? Who will go into the water to bring the horse of great splendour?" When, thus dejected, they were consulting one another, the lord of the Raghu (family) arrived there with hundreds of heroes. Seeing all of them dejected, the crest-jewel of the brave called Śatrughna, asked them with a voice deep-sounding like that of the clouds: "Why do you all today stay in groups in the water? Where is Raghunātha's horse adorned with the golden note? Has it been drowned into the water? Or has it been snatched by some haughty person? Tell me that quickly as to how you are confused."

Śeṣa said:

17. Having heard these words of the best (descendant of) Raghu, the king, the heroes told everything to the crest-jewel of the brave.

The men said:

18-22. O lord, we do not know. For a while he was in the water. Then he plunged (into the water). Your charming horse did not come (up). You yourself (should) go there, and bring the horse quickly. O you very intelligent one, we would go there with you.

Hearing these words of the soldiers, the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Śatrughna) was dejected on seeing the men ready to swim in the water. He said to the chief minister: "What should we do hereafter? Tell (me) how the horse will (i.e. can) be brought (back). Which brave ones should be employed to find out the horse in the water? Tell me who will bring back the horse and by what means."

23-26. Hearing these words of the king, Sumati, the best minister, said, as it were delighting Śatrughna, what was proper for the occasion: "O lord, you, of wonderful deeds, have glorious power. It is clear, you have the power to go to the nether world through water. Another thing is: Puṣkala the magnanimous one, has also the power. So also Hanūmat engaged in serving the feet of Rāma (has the power). Therefore, you three (should) go and certainly bring the horse from the place where the sacrificial horse of the intelligent Raghunātha might be."

Śeṣa said:

27-32. Hearing these words, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's warriors, himself, along with Hanūmat and Puṣkala entered the water. When he entered the water, he saw a city. The city was rich with the beauty of many gardens and immeasurable. He saw there Rāma's horse well adorned with the golden note, and tied to a golden pillar decked with rubies. There excellent ladies having attractive forms were waiting upon a beautiful lady comfortably seated upon a couch. Seeing them all the ladies said to their queen: "These (individuals) of a small height, young and with well-nourished bodies will be the best object of your food. The blood of these men when they die (i.e. when they will be killed) will be sweet."

33-36. Hearing these words of her female servants, that

sinless beautiful lady, gesticulating her face with her eye-brow; laughed a little. At that time the three shining with the beauty of their armours, having helmets, and endowed with valour and bravery, reached there. O brāhmaṇa, seeing there the ladies endowed with the wealth of beauty, they expressed their amazement: “What is this great thing being seen?” With the feet (of the lady) shining with the lustre of the gems in their crowns, all the magnanimous ones saluted the divine, excellent, ladies.

37-39. That beautiful young lady, the greatest of all, asked those men: “Who are you that have come here? How is it that you men are holding bows? My place is greatly deluding and is inaccessible to all gods. No one that has come here ever returns. To which king does this horse belong? How is it that the horse is fanned with chowries? (How is it) rich in beauty with the golden note? You should tell (everything) to me.”

Śeṣa said:

40-43. Having thus heard her words full of deluding manner, Hanūmat, with his fear gone and smiling, said: “We are the servants of the king, the crest-jewel of the three worlds. This group of the three worlds salutes (him) the crest-jewel of all gods. Know the horse to belong to Rāmabhadra who is proceeding to (perform) a horse-sacrifice. Release our horse. O you beautiful lady, how (i.e. why) has he been tied? We are skilled in (the use of) all missiles; we are proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. Killing those who obstruct (our) horse, we shall forcibly take (back the horse).”

44-49. Hearing these words of the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), that excellent lady, seated in a hollow, proficient in (using proper) words, laughed, and said: “Nobody is able to free this horse brought by me, even (if he fights) with sharp points of arrows that are blazing up, (even for) a myriad of years. But I am the servant of the lotus-like feet of Rāma. I do his work. I shall not seize the horse of that intelligent king of kings. I, who took away the good horse, have committed great rudeness. Let that Rāmacandra, the protector, who loves his devotees, pardon me. You, the men of him, the protector, are afflicted for that horse. O best one, ask for a boon difficult to be secured even by gods, so that the best man would forgive me the severe harm

(done to him). Giving up all bashfulness, choose the best boon."

50-52. Hearing her great words, Hanūmat said to her: "Due to the grace of Raghunātha everything that we have is excellent. Still, I ask for an excellent boon. Give that one, desired by my mind: Let Raghunātha be our lord in every existence, and let us be his servants doing his work." Hearing these words of the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), that lady laughed and said sweet words, honoured for their merit:

53-63. "O servants of the lord of (the) Raghu (family), whatever is desired by you, which is difficult to be obtained by deities, will take place. There is no doubt. Yet, I who slighted (Rāma) shall give (you) a boon to please Ragunātha. My words would come true. Later king Viramaṇi, accompanied by great heroes and protected by Śiva, will seize your horse. O you very powerful ones, take a great missile from me to conquer him. You, great Śatrughna, should fight with him in a single combat in chariots. When, in the battle, you will discharge this missile; he, being purified by it, will again realise the true nature of Rāma. Realising him, and giving the horse (back to you) he will fall at your feet. Therefore, take from me the missile destroying the enemy." Hearing that (i.e. those words), Rāma's brother (i.e. Śatrughna), facing the north, and with his body purified, received that wonderful missile given by that female devotee. Having received that missile, he became one with great might, destroyer of the enemies, difficult to be assailed and propitiated, and a hook to drive the elephants in the form of his enemies. Having saluted her, Śatrughna, the best among the descendants of Raghu, took the best horse, and from the water went (up) to the bank of Revā, fit for comforts. Having seen him, all the soldiers, with their bodies delighted and full of joy, praised him (as): "Well (done), well (done)!" and asked him about the coming out (i.e. as to how the horse came out of the water). Hanūmat told them about the great (i.e. important) coming (out) of the horse, and also about having received the boon. They too, hearing (it) were delighted.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

The Seizure of the Horse by Viramaṇi's Son

Śeṣa said:

1-8. When everywhere the tabors were sounded and when everywhere there were the sounds of lutes, the horse was released. From there he (went) to Devapura fashioned by gods, in which men's houses laughed, as it were, (i.e. were bright) by means of the constructions of crystal walls at the spotless Vindhya mountain resorted to by elephants. Even the houses of the subjects (i.e. ordinary people) were made of silver here (i.e. in this city). Here the ornamental ruby gateways were girdled by variegated gems; in every house there were attractive, most beautiful women that with side-glances attracted the hearts of men. Here, O brāhmaṇa, in every house rubies were seen to have been fixed in the good (i.e. beautiful) floors, as it were, to vie with the lips of the women. In every house the pleasure-mountains fashioned with sapphires produced the hope of (the arrival of) clouds in (the minds of) the peacocks having plumages. In this city swans, restrained on the crystal-floors in the houses were not afraid of a cloud and did not remember the Mānasa lake. (In it) at the abode of Śiva darkness was always dispelled by the moonlight; (so) the men there did not distinguish between the bright half and the dark half (of the month).

9-11. There the great king Viramaṇi, the chief among the righteous (kings), ruled over a large kingdom full of all enjoyments. His very brave and powerful son named Rukmāṅgada (once) went to a forest to sport with women of charming bodies. The sound of their anklets and also the sound of their bracelets attracted the mind of Cupid (himself); then what to say about others!

12-16. He (i.e. Rukmāṅgada) went to the great forest which was full of trees with good flowers, where Sadāśiva had made his abode, and which shone with the six seasons. In it the many campaka trees adorned with blooming buds caused affliction in the hearts of passionate men, when they were seen by the men. (There) the mango trees, having crores of sprouts, were bent with fruits etc. (There were) the nāga (trees), the punnāga trees,

the śāla (trees), the tāla (trees) and the tamāla (trees). In it the cooings of cuckoos were heard. The good jasmine (creepers) had always lost their sleep (i.e. were blossoming) due to the humming of bees. (There) the groups of the pomgranate (trees) were linked to the karṇikāra (trees); the rows of the sylvan trees shone with the ketakī and kanakī trees.

17-20. With his mind full of joy, singing sweetly and indistinctly, and having a body—the abode of charm—he, with women on all sides having a strong desire to talk sweetly and having raised breasts, entered the forest through passion and free from fear. Some pleased him with their knowledge of dancing, some (pleased) him with their singing arts, some with clever words; others, being intoxicated, pleased him with the signs (i.e. knittings) of their eye-brows. The women made him happy with their skill in embracing. Having collected flowers with them he, having Cupid's body, praising them with tender words, adorned those women.

21-23. When the intelligent king of kings was passing his time like this, that extremely charming horse went to that region of the forest. The women seeing him, on whose forehead was arranged (i.e. put) the golden note, who resembled Gaṅgā (in colour), whose body was tawny due to the reddish saffron, who was uniform in speed which excelled that of the wind said (the following) to their lord. The women had a tawny complexion like the interior of a lotus. They had set back the beauty of corals afraid of their red lips, with their red lips. Their faces were beautiful due to the laughter meted out by the rows of their teeth. They were lustrous due to their seductive eyes resembling Cupid's arrows.

The women said:

24. O darling, who is this great horse adorned only with the golden note? To whom does he, endowed with loveliness, belong? Seize him with your might.

Śeṣa said:

25-26. Hearing those words spoken (by the women), he having charming and sportive eyes, easily seized the horse with only one hand resembling a lotus. Having read the golden note

having clear letters, he seized him, and again said these words to the women.

Rukmāṅgada said:

27-32. On the earth there is none else like my father in valour and wealth. How can that king Rāma show haughty disregard of him? Let my very mighty father whom Rudra, the holder of the trident, always protects, whom gods, demons, yakṣas salute with their heads having jewels (bowed), perform the horse-sacrifice. Let this (horse) go to the stable. Let my soldiers tie him.

Hearing these words, the charming women had their faces joyful, and embraced their lover. The great son of king Vīramāṇi, seizing the horse, entered with his wives the city with great enthusiasm. When the sounds of the tabors that were beaten, were loud, he, being praised on all sides by the bards, went to the great house (i.e. palace) of his father.

33-37. He told him about his having seized Rāma's wonderful horse released for the horse-sacrifice, moving freely and protected by Śatrughna endowed with great power. The great, very intelligent king Vīramāṇi, having heard his words, did not very much approve that deed of him. Taking the seizure of that horse which was brought (to him by his son) like a thief's act and bringing him (to Śiva) he told lord Śiva, of wonderful deeds, having a lady (i.e. Pārvatī) as the half (part) of his body, having the moon for decorating his body. The great king Vīramāṇi honoured by the great, having condemned the deed done by his son, consulted him.

Śiva said:

38-44. O king, your son who took away the great horse of the intelligent Rāmacandra, has done a wonderful deed. Today a great war deluding gods and demons, with the great king Śatrughna, the only protector of a crore of heroes, appears (imminent). Your son has carried away (the horse)—the constituent of the sacrifice—of that Rāma who is held by me in my heart, and who is spoken (about) with my tongue (by me). But in the battle there will be a great gain, since we shall see the

lotus-like feet of Rāma, which are waited upon by me. Now a great effort must be done to protect the horse. They will forcibly take this horse, though protected by me. Therefore, O great king, with modesty you should (first) give along with the kingdom, the horse and food and then see the pair of his feet.

Having heard these words of Śiva, the best king said to him, whose pair of lotus-like feet were adorable (even) to Indra and others.

Viramaṇi said:

45-50. This is the duty of kṣatriyas to preserve valour. He is eager to surpass it by the sacrifice called horse (-sacrifice). Therefore whosoever is possessed of self-respect, has to maintain his own valour, by doing, as is possible, a deed, (even) spending (i.e. harming) his (own) body. Everything is done by (my) son since he has seized the horse. He has angered king Rāma. (So) O lord, do what is proper for the occasion. It would certainly not be an act to be done by kṣatriyas that he (i.e. a kṣatriya) overcome with fear, should all of a sudden, salute the feet of his enemy. The enemies laugh at him (and say): “This mean king is a coward. He is insignificant; he, the mean one, being overcome with fear like a common man, has bowed (before me).” Therefore, when the fight is imminent, you should think and do whatever is proper and should protect your devotee.

Śeṣa said:

51-56. Hearing these words, Śiva laughed, and spoke words in a voice deep-sounding like a cloud, and infatuating his mind: “Even if the thirty-three crore gods are present, who would take the horse from you when I am your protector. If Rāma comes and shows himself to me, then I shall salute his very delicate feet. One should not fight with one’s lord. (Doing so) is said to be a very evil course. Other heroes are (insignificant) like blades of grass. They are not capable of doing anything. Therefore, O best of kings, fight when I, your protector, am well-settled. Who would take (away) the horse even if the three worlds come together.”

Śeṣa said:

Hearing those great words of Candracūḍa (i.e. Śiva) the king who took pleasure in fighting was very much delighted in his mind.

CHAPTER FORTY

Śatrughna Resolves to Fight Against Vīramāṇi

Śeṣa said :

1-7. Looking for king Rāma's horse the great king's soldiers endowed with great power (or army) came (there). (They said :) "Where is the horse? Who has taken him? How is it that he is not seen? Who, a very dull one, will go to Yama's city after having (i.e. because of his having) taken the horse?" While the soldiers of Raghu were searching the course of the horse, the great king surrounded by a large army came (there). He asked all his servants: "Now where is my horse? How is it that the horse, adorned with the golden note is not seen?" Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the servants who were following the horse, said: "The horse having the mind's speed has been snatched away by someone into the forest. Therefore, even though we know the path well, the horse is not noticed. Therefore, O lord, an effort should be made now to get (back) the horse." Hearing their words, Śatrughna, the killer of his enemies, and having a fascinating form, asked Sumati:

Śatrughna said :

8. Which king stays here? How did he secure the horse? How much is the power (or army) of the king, who has today taken away my horse?

Sumati said :

9-12. O king, this is Devapura fashioned by the lord himself. It is like the Kailāsa (mountain) inaccessible (even) to hosts of

the army, well joined together. In it rules the very brave and valourous king Viramaṇi, protected by Śiva, and he is ruling justly. He, Śiva who is the destroyer of the whole universe, (but) who always lets loose (his) partiality for his devotee, is won over (by the king) by means of his devotion. So if the horse is taken, there will be a great war. Let the good ones, being careful, protect the army.

13-16. Hearing this, that Śatrughna, the very glorious one, and the crest-jewel of all kings, waited (i.e. got ready to fight) after arranging the army. When he having consultations with his good minister (Sumati), waited comfortably, the divine sage (Nārada), eager (to see) the battle, came there. Having seen the sage, the abode of austerities, that had arrived there, Śatrughna got up (from his seat) and seating him on a seat, offered him a respectful offering. He, skilled in speaking, pleasing Nārada the best sage, with words, said to him pleased with the welcome (offered to him):

Śatrughna said :

17-19. O highly intelligent brāhmaṇa, tell me where my horse is. My servants, experienced in their duty, cannot trace his course. Tell (me the name of) that insolent kṣatriya who has taken (away) my horse. O you abode of penance, how will the horse be got (back by us)?

Hearing these words of Śatrughna, Nārada, sounding the lute and repeatedly singing Rāma's account, said :

Nārada said :

20-24. O king, this is Devapura. Viramaṇi is the great king there. His son, who was in the forest, has seized your best horse. Today you will wage a very fierce battle (against him). Here (i.e. in this battle) soldiers having might and valour will fall. Therefore, O very powerful one, you should remain here with great effort. Make an array to which access is difficult for the enemy's soldiers. O king, in it you will have victory over the best king with difficulty. Who would defeat Rāma even on the entire earth?

Speaking like this, the brāhmaṇa disappeared, and remained in the sky watching the very fierce battle like the one between gods and demons.

Śeṣa said:

25-26. Then king Vīramaṇi, the crest-jewel of all brave men, asked his general, very eminent and brave among the enemies, to proclaim loudly by beating the war-drum; and told him with deep sounding words:

Vīramaṇi said:

27-31. O general, give the order (with the beating) of the war-drum in my beautiful city. Hearing it, let my well-equipped (heroes) march against Śatrughna.

Hearing the words of Vīramaṇi, the general at that time made the proclamation with the war-drum making a great sound. In every house and on the road the sound of the war-drum was heard: "Let all the heroes present in the capital march (against) Śatrughna. Those who looking upon themselves as brave disobey the order of the king, even though they may be sons or brothers, should be killed by the king's order. Let the heroes listen to the sound (which is produced) when the war-drum is beaten. Having heard it, they should, without delay, perform their duty."

Śeṣa said:

32-34. The best heroes, having heard the sound of the war-drum, with their bodies decorated with golden armours and with the interior of their hearts delighted by the festival of fight, went to the best king. Some, having put on beautiful helmets on their heads, and very charming due to the armours, and (thus) crores of them well adorned, went (to the king). The furious ones, as a result of the king's message, went (to the king), in chariots to which two horses looking beautiful due to gems and gold were yoked.

35-45. All of them obeying the command of the king went riding very charming horses to the king's abode. Rukmāṅgada also, who was well adorned with a distinguished golden armour and a helmet, got into his chariot having mind's speed. His

younger brother Śubhāṅgada, having put on his body an excellent armour full of (i.e. decked with) big gems, went to (participate in) the festival of fight. The king's brother Vīrasimha, proficient in the use of all weapons and missiles went there by the king's order, for that was a royal order. The king's sister's son also who was known as Balamitra, equipped with an armour and a sword, went to the king's palace. His great general Ripuvāra, making ready the army with its four constituents, reported to the king. Then king Viramaṇi got into the best chariot full of all weapons and missiles and high due to having high wheels made of gems. Then in the ocean of the heroes the sound of conches, as if well impelling the cowardly warriors to fight, was heard. Kettle-drums sounded by auspicious musicians were beaten on all sides. The troops of him who proceeded to fight, stood there. All (the soldiers) had averted the evil by recitation of hymns; all were adorned with all ornaments. All fully equipped with missiles and weapons went to the battlefield. The mountains and caves were filled with the sounds of kettle-drums and conches. Is it that their sound went to call those who stayed in heaven?

46-48. When that din took place, the great king Viramaṇi, full of enthusiasm to fight, went to the battlefield. When, after arriving at the battlefield full of chariots and foot-soldiers, he remained there, his army went there like the ocean to wash away the (enemy's) men from that place. Having seen that army full of warriors fighting from chariots, proficient in (the use of) weapons, and making a great noise, the king (i.e. Śatrughna) said to Sumati:

Śatrughna said :

49-50. The powerful Viramaṇi who had seized our horse, has again come with a great army having four divisions. How should the battle be fought? Who, fierce with might, will fight? Show all those heroes to me, and (show me also) how the desired victory would be had.

Sumati said :

51-54. O lord, that great king, endowed with devotion to Śiva and surrounded by a huge army, has come to fight. Now, let the hero Puṣkala knowing the use of great missiles fight. Let

other warriors like Nīlaratna, proficient in fighting (fight). O innocent one, you should fight with Śiva or with the king. He, of a great power and valour, should be conquered in a single combat. In this way, O king, you will be victorious. O very intelligent lord, later you should do what you like.

Śeṣa said :

55-57. Hearing these words Śatrughna, the killer of the heroes of his enemy, having determined to fight, ordered his good warriors: "All the kings with their armies proficient in (the use of) weapons, should quickly exert themselves in such a way that I get victory." Hearing it, those (kings) proficient in fighting, full of great energy, went with their soldiers to fight (against the enemy in order to obtain) victory for the descendant of Raghu.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Rukmāṅgada Is Defeated by Puṣkala

Śeṣa said :

1-7. Those very powerful heroes of Śatrughna, endowed with valour and quite ready to fight, went into the army of Vīramaṇi. The men discharging arrows, piercing many soldiers, holding bows were seen standing in the battlefield. Many elephants were killed there. On the battlefield were seen jewelled chariots shattered with their horses. Having heard about their destruction the mighty Rukmāṅgada, standing in a jewelled chariot, came there to fight with the soldiers. He fixed arrows on his bow and had two inexhaustible quivers. That mighty Rukmāṅgada, full of great anger and with blood in his eyes, making thousands of brave men terrified with his arrows causing wailing (in the enemy's camp), went (to fight). The mighty prince challenged Śatrughna and Bharata's son Puṣkala like himself in fame and glory.

Rukmāṅgada said :

8-15a. You who perform brave deeds and whose power and valour are great; come to fight with me, the strong and lustrous prince. O brave one, what is the use of frightening and killing others, crores of men? Having fought a great battle with me, obtain victory.

The mighty Puṣkala laughed and quickly struck him who was speaking like this on his large chest with sharp hooks. Not bearing it, the prince fixing arrows on his great bow struck with ten arrows Puṣkala in his chest. Both excited while fighting, both desiring victory, shone in the battle like Kārtikya and (the demon) Tāraka. Fixing very sharp arrows ten in number on his bow Puṣkala, the hero, made the prince chariotless. With four (arrows) he knocked down his four horses; with two (he knocked down) his charioteer; with one (he knocked down) his flag and with two (he knocked down) the guards of his chariot. The swift one pierced the prince with one (arrow).

15b-17. Seeing that wonderful act all heroes were very much delighted. He whose bow was broken, who had lost his chariot, whose horses and charioteer were killed, became extremely angry and got into another chariot. Standing in the excellent chariot adorned with gems of horses, he took a big strong bow furnished with a string.

18-19. Rukmāṅgada said these words to the brave Puṣkala: "O you tormentor of the enemies, having done (a) great (act of) valour where are you going? Today see my valour brought about by might. O hero, stand carefully; I shall take your chariot to the sky."

20-22a. Saying so he fixed a very fierce arrow on his own bow. Then enchanting the 'bhrāmaka' missile (i.e. the whirling missile), he discharged that sharp arrow adorned with gold at the feathered part into Puṣkala's chariot. By that arrow his chariot was taken to a distance of a yojana. With difficulty it was held in check by the charioteer; the chariot roamed on the earth.

22b-24. Puṣkala, who knew the (use of) great missiles, getting back his position with difficulty, and fixing an arrow on his bow said (these words) to him: "O best among the heroes, reach heaven resorted to by all gods. O best king, people like you are

not fit for (living on) the earth. They are fit for the assembly of Indra. Therefore, go to the abode of gods.”

25-28. Speaking thus he discharged a great missile reaching the sky. (Struck) by that arrow the chariot straightway went into the sky. Going beyond all worlds it went to the sun's orb. By its flame the chariot, along with the horses and the charioteer, was burnt. With his chariot greatly burnt by its rays, he being extremely pained, fell, keeping in heart Śiva, the destroyer of the impious ones. With his body burnt by the rays, he fell there on the ground. He became extremely unhappy; and swooned on the battlefield.

29-33. When the prince dropped unconscious on the ground, there was a great wailing on the battlefield. The enemies led by Puṣkala got victory; (while) the enemies who had preserved the horse, were intent on fleeing. Then king Vīramaṇi, seeing the swoon of his son (i.e. seeing that his son was unconscious), was full of anger, and marched against Puṣkala who stood in the battlefield. At that time the earth, along with the mountains and excellent forests, trembled; the brave ones were delighted, (while) the cowards were oppressed with fear. Holding a great bow and two inexhaustible quivers and breathing heavily due to anger, he challenged his enemy.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Vīramaṇi Is Defeated

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing him challenging king Puṣkala in the ocean of the great army, even Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, having with a sound raised the tail of his big body and having made a sound like that of a cloud, ran to him. When the best heroes stood in the battlefield, the lord of monkeys went to the best king. Seeing Hanūmat coming the mighty hero Puṣkala looked at him with his eyes full of much blood (i.e. very red) due to anger towards his enemy with a deep-sounding voice like (the

sound of) a cloud and filling the battlefield with his sound Puṣkala who knew (the use of) great missiles, spoke to that Hanūmat:

Puṣkala said:

5-10. O great monkey, how (i.e. why) have you come to fight in this battle? How much is the 'great' power of the king Viramaṇi? It is very little. When the three worlds coming together stand before you, (even) then you may or may not desire to go to fight. Who is this king Viramaṇi (before you)? How much is his power? It is battle. O hero, your fierce arrival (i.e. the arrival of you, the fierce one) here is not considered (necessary). By virtue of the side glance in the form of the grace of Raghunātha I shall come out after overcoming him who is difficult to be subdued. O lord of monkeys, do not have a mind to fight. With the heap of Rāma's grace you crossed the ocean in the form of demons. Similarly by remembering Rāma well I shall overcome this one difficult to be subdued. There is no doubt that the ocean of the miseries of them who after having encountered a difficulty remember Rāma, gets dried.

11. Therefore, O mighty hero, O powerful one, go near Śatrughna. I shall just come, after having vanquished king Viramaṇi in a moment.

Śeṣa said:

12. Having heard these courageous words uttered by Puṣkala (Hanūmat), the killer of the heroes of the enemy, again spoke (these) words to Puṣkala.

Hanūmat said:

13-16. O son, do not act rashly towards king Viramaṇi. He is a donor, a protector and is endowed with might and valour. You are young, (while) the king is old and the best among those who know (the use of) all weapons and missiles. In a battle he has conquered many heroes adorned with (i.e. characterized by) bravery. Know that by his side is protector Śiva, won over by means of devotion and living in his city with Umā (i.e. Pārvatī). Therefore, O Puṣkala, I will fight with this king only. Having vanquished other heroes, obtain great fame.

Puṣkala said:

17-23. Having won over Śiva through devotion he has installed him (i.e. his image) in his city; but the great lord does not directly live in his heart. That Rāma, having propitiated whom Sadāśiva reached the highest position, does not go to any other place after leaving my heart. The entire immobile and mobile world remains where Rāma remains. Therefore, I shall conquer king Vīramaṇi in the battle. O monkey, go to fight with other kings who are very haughty, in the battle. Do not be worried (about me), O lord.

Having heard these courageous words, Hanūmat went to fight with Vīrasimha, the younger brother of king (Vīramaṇi), in the battle. Lakṣminidhi, fought in a single combat in chariots with his son named Śubhāṅgada who knew the use of great weapons and missiles. Prince Sumada, distinguished by his own valour and might, (equipped) with weapons went to fight with Balamitra.

24-25. Seeing the king and challenging him, Puṣkala, skilled in a single combat in chariots, seated in a chariot decked with gold went to him. The king who spoke well, seeing Puṣkala, skilled in fight, to have come (there), said (to him) with fearless words on the battlefield.

Vīramaṇi said:

26-30a. O child, do not march against me who am angry and fierce and irascible in a battle; go (back) with a desire for (i.e. in order to save) your life. Do not fight with me. Kings like me favour children like you. They do not strike them. Therefore, go out of the battlefield. I was eager (to fight with you) till I had not seen you with my eyes. Now my mind does not desire to strike you. All that great act of you, having (but) a child's intelligence, viz. that you pierced my son with arrows and caused him to swoon, is forgiven by me.

Hearing these words, Puṣkala said to him:

Puṣkala said:

30b-33. (You say) I am a child, and you are very old, proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. But the view of kṣatriyas is: Those alone who have a superior power are old and

not those who are old in age. I made unconscious your son who was proud of his valour and might. Now I shall knock you down with (my) weapons in the battle. Therefore, O king, stand with care in the battle. Nobody (even if) he remains at Indra's position, can conquer me, a devotee of Rāma.

34-45a. Hearing these words of Puṣkala, the best king, seeing (i.e. knowing him to be) young, laughed, but again became angry. The furious son of Bharata, having seen him to be angry, struck the king in his chest with twenty sharp arrows. The king, seeing those arrows, discharged by him (i.e. Puṣkala) coming to him got very angry and cut them off in many ways with sharp arrows. Seeing the arrows being cut off he, the prince named Puṣkala and the son of Bharata, was very angry at heart, and struck the king on his forehead with three arrows. Stuck there, they shone as if they were the three peaks of the Trikūṭa (mountain). The king afflicted by the arrows and full of great anger, struck the hero Puṣkala, in his heart with nine arrows. By these arrows profuse blood was quaffed from the body of the son of the younger brother of Rāma, as (it were) angry poisonous snakes had clung on his body. Puṣkala who was extremely angry, again quickly pierced the king with a hundred arrows of sharp joints. By the arrows his armour was cut off. His crown along with the helmet (was broken). His chariot (was) broken. His great bow which was made ready, was also cut off due to the flood of (i.e. profuse) anger. Wet with the blood and with his body pierced with arrows the king getting into another chariot marched against the son of Bharata. (He said to Puṣkala:) "O hero, O bee (howering round) the lotus-like feet of Rāma, you are blessed. Today you have done a great feat that I was deprived of my chariot. Now, O hero, protect your life when I am fighting (with you). For you, (to save) your life is not easy when I stand (before you) in the form of death."

45b-56a. Speaking like this, he, proficient in (the use of) many weapons, struck (him) with innumerable arrows. On the earth and in (every) direction (only) his arrows (were seen) there. On all sides he pierced and cut into two the chariots along with the warriors (in them). On the battlefield flowed a river having the stream of blood, where the intoxicated elephants

looked like peaks of mountains, the hair on the heads of beings again and again appeared like moss. Many arms of the heroes, which were beautified with rings and which were smeared with sandal, appeared after they were cut off like serpents. The heads of the best heroes had the resemblance of turtles. There the flesh of the great heroes was (i.e. looked like) mud. When such an incident took place, hundreds of witches drank, with vessels, the blood of the creatures falling in the battle on the battlefields. With joy and eagerness they enjoyed the flesh. Having drunk the blood and having eaten the flesh, the furious (witches) danced, laughed and sang loudly on the battlefield. The goblins there on the battlefield with their bodies intoxicated, holding with their hands the heads of creatures, were engaged in sounding them like musical instruments made of bell-metal. The furious jackals, causing fear to cowards, having eaten much flesh of those that fell on the battlefield roared. The cowards who were frightened got into the hollows of *aśvattha* trees. They were eaten up by the witches. Sinners survive nowhere.

56b-64. Seeing this destruction of his army, Puṣkala, the best among the heroes, also, brought about destruction on the battlefield. The heads of elephants were cut asunder, pearls fell (from their heads). That river (of blood) full of hair, appeared like the *Tāmraparṇī* (river). The arrows discharged by Puṣkala and stuck into the bodies of men destroyed the life of the heroes on all sides. On the battlefield, all the excellent warriors with their bodies wetted with blood, with their bodies pierced appeared like the *kiṁśuka* (trees). At that time Puṣkala who was angry and full of wrath, having spoken (a few words) to the king, struck him with many arrows. The king with his body pierced by his arrows and with his armour shattered, regarding him as very powerful, struck him with crores of arrows. Due to those arrows profuse blood discharged from the armour flowed (down). His body in the grip of the cage of arrows, became brilliant. That son of Bharata, remaining in the cage of arrows and with his mind afflicted, was not able either to take or to fix his arrows. Remembering Rāma, and holding tightly the great bow in his hand, he discharged sharp arrows keeping off the hosts of his enemies.

65. O best of sages, having shaken off the net of those arrows with those arrows, and having blown his conch, he with his fear gone said to the king in the battle.

Puškala said:

66-70. O hero, you have done a great feat by putting me, a great warrior and tormentor of heroes, into the cage of arrows. Due to your old age you are venerable to me; (but) O king Vīramaṇi, today, now, see my great act of valour on the battle-field. O hero, if with three arrows I shall not make you unconscious, then listen to my pledge deluding all the heroes: O hero, if I do not cause you to fall into a swoon in the battle, let me have the sin of him who, a great sinner and of very foolish deeds, even after reaching Gaṅgā that removes sins, censures her and does not plunge into her (water). Be ready, O king.

71-78. Hearing these words of Puškala, the best king (Vīramaṇi) was angry, and being very much afflicted fixed sharp arrows (on his bow). Those arrows went (off) after piercing the great chest of the son of Bharata and fell down on the earth like those who are averse to the devotion to Rāma. Then he aiming at his large expansive chest, discharged a sharp arrow, bright like fire. The lord of the earth cut it into two with his arrow; and burning like the orb of the sun it fell into the chariot. He fixed another auspicious arrow through (i.e. remembering) his devotion to his mother. He too cut it off with a big arrow. Then dejected in heart and remembering Rāma, the destroyer of his affliction, as to what to do (then), the knower of (i.e. he who was proficient in the use of) great missiles discharged (an arrow). The arrow resembling a serpent and burning with the sun's radiance, stuck into his chest, and made him unconscious. Then all wailed and were intent on fleeing. When the king became unconscious, Puškala obtained victory.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Defeat of Puṣkala and Śatrughna

Śeṣa said:

1-7. Hanūmat having come to Vīrasimha, said these words: “O brave one, stop; where are you going? In a moment I shall conquer you.” Hearing these powerful words of the monkey, he burning with a flood of (i.e. great) anger sounded his bow having the sound of clouds and discharging sharp arrows shone on the battlefield. Hanūmat, Añjanī’s son, seeing those sharp arrows firmly stuck to his body, (and therefore looking) charming as in a heavy downpour of rain from a cloud in Āṣāḍha, became extremely angry in his heart. With his fist having adamant strength he struck (Vīrasimha) on his chest. The hero struck with the fist fell on the ground. Seeing his uncle fainting, Śubhāṅgada (came to the battlefield). Rukmāṅgada also abandoning his swoon, went to the battlefield. Both of them showering arrows, loudly thundering like two clouds and causing great destruction, marched against the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat).

8-11. Seeing that the two heroes had come the lord of monkeys having encircled with his tail the two holding bows along with their chariots, broke them (by throwing them) on the ground (and) they became unconscious just at that moment only. With their bodies tinged with blood the two became motionless. Balamitra fought with Sumada for a long time and made him unconscious with (i.e. by striking him with) arrows having very sharp joints. In a moment Puṣkala led him to a swoon (i.e. made him unconscious) which was (characterized by) loss of sensation. Śatrughna’s army destroying the (enemy’s) warriors got victory.

12-20. At that time Śiva seated in an excellent chariot and stretching his divine bow ran (i.e. rushed) to these warriors. The great one carrying the crescent moon in his twisted hair and having as ornaments serpents touching at will, took up his bow. The great god, the remover of the afflictions of his devotees, seeing his own men unconscious, went along with mighty troops to fight with these warriors of Śatrughna. With his attendants and followers he causing the earth to tremble came there to protect his devotees as he formerly came to Tripura. The trident-

holder saluted by gods, the author of deluge, having eyes very red due to anger, saw very intelligent soldiers (there). Seeing the great god who had come there, the powerful younger brother of Rāma went to the battlefield to fight with the crest-jewel of all gods. Seeing Śatrughna having come (there), the holder of the trident, held a bow with the string (stretched), and being very angry said: “Puṣkala, the servant of Rāma’s feet, who went to the battle after having killed my devotee, has done a great feat. Today where is that Puṣkala knowing (i.e. proficient in the use of) great missiles? Killing him who troubled my devotee in the battle, I shall get happiness.”

Śeṣa said:

21-28a. Saying so he sent Virabhadra to Puṣkala. “Go to fight with Puṣkala who is troubling my servant in the battle.” He sent Nandin to (fight with) the very mighty Hanūmat. He sent Bhṛṅgin of mighty arms to (fight with) Kuśadhvaja. He ordered his own attendant by name Caṇḍa to (fight with) Sumada. The large-minded Puṣkala seeing that the great attendant of Mahārudra (i.e. Śiva) had come went to fight (with him). In the battle Puṣkala struck him with five arrows. With his body wounded by those arrows he directed the trident (towards him). The very strong one, having cut off the trident in a moment, roared. O brāhmaṇa, seeing his trident cut off the mighty follower of Rudra quickly hit Bharata’s son on his head with (the missile called) Khatvāṅga. That great warrior, hit with the Khatvāṅga, became unconscious for a moment. That good warrior Puṣkala knowing (i.e. proficient in the use of) great missiles, giving up his swoon (i.e. regaining consciousness) that moment only cut off with his arrows the Khatvāṅga in his hand.

28b-42a. Virabhadra, with the Khatvāṅga in his hand cut off became extremely angry and shattered the warrior’s chariot. Having broken the chariot of the warrior and having (thus) made him a foot-soldier, he fought with the magnanimous Puṣkala in a close fight. That very mighty Puṣkala abandoning the chariot shattered to pieces by him (i.e. Virabhadra), hit Virabhadra with his fist. They hit each other with fists, thighs and knees. They were eager to kill each other. They desired to conquer each other. Thus (the fight) between the two powerful

ones lasted for days, going on day and night. None lost in it and none of the very powerful ones won it. When the fifth day came, the very mighty Virabhadra seized the great hero Puṣkala and jumped into the sky. There a great fight, attracting (even) the gods, took place between the two, with fists, strokes of feet, arms and excellent hoofs (i.e. feet). Then Puṣkala who was extremely angry seizing Virabhadra by the neck struck (i.e. threw) him on the ground. The very mighty Virabhadra distressed by that stroke seized Puṣkala by the foot and repeatedly shaking him and throwing him on the ground the very mighty one cut off his head with blazing ear-rings with his trident. The very strong Virabhadra having killed Puṣkala roared. That roaring follower of Śiva frightened great warriors. When Puṣkala fell in the battle, there was a very great wailing. All the very proficient men became frightened on the battlefield. They informed Śatrughna that Puṣkala killed by Virabhadra, the attendant of Śiva, had fallen on the battlefield. The great hero, the mighty (Śatrughna) having thus heard about Puṣkala's being killed in the battle, was very much grieved and due to great grief trembled.

42b-47a. Knowing that Śatrughna was distressed Rudra spoke to him who was grieving for the hero (viz. Puṣkala) when Puṣkala was killed in the battle: "O very powerful Śatrughna, do not be distressed on the battlefield. The fall of heroes in a battle is said (to lead) to fame. The hero named Puṣkala who fought for five days with Virabhadra who causes great destruction and who in a moment killed Dakṣa that insulted me, and who in a moment killed the demons, the soldiers of Tripura, is blessed. Therefore, O lord of kings, O very powerful one, giving up your distress fight; When I—the warrior—am standing (before you), stand (i.e. wait) carefully, O best among the heroes.

47b-54. The brave Śatrughna, having abandoned his grief got angry with Śaṅkara, and making his bow ready he covered the great god with arrows. Those arrows, it was a great wonder, did not produce any wound on the body of the lord of gods who had come there for the protection of his devotees. Those arrows (of Śatrughna) and also the arrows of Śaṅkara remained in the sky, pervading this entire universe of the sage (i.e. Brahmā) working wonders. Everywhere (people) on seeing that war of arrows thought it to be the deluge, destroying the world and

deluding everyone. Those (gods) who had remained in their own cities having come to see it by resorting to (their) divine cars, praised very much that (fight) of the two: “This one is the author of the destruction and the creation of the three worlds. This one is also the younger brother of the great king Rāmācandra. What will be this (i.e. what will it lead to)? Who, on the earth, will be victorious? Which hero will meet with a defeat on the battlefield?” The fight between the two thus continued for eleven days.

55-62. When the twelfth day came, the king (i.e. Śatrughna) full of anger discharged the missile called ‘Brahmā’ to kill Mahādeva. Knowing that (his) enemy Śatrughna had discharged the great missile he laughed and absorbed it and discharged the great (missile called) Brahmaśiras. Being very much astonished (he thought) what should be done hereafter? Into the chest of him (i.e. of Śatrughna) who was thinking like this, the crest-jewel of gods (i.e. Śiva) quickly struck an arrow resembling fire. (Being struck) by that arrow Śatrughna became unconscious on the battlefield. The entire army served by the warriors, wailed. All heroes, led by Subāhu, Sumada, and proud of the strength of their arms, were knocked down on the earth by the attendants of Śiva. Seeing Śatrughna pained by the arrow and fallen unconscious and Puṣkala being put in a chariot by the servants to protect him, the angry Hanūmat, wagging his dreadful tail, remembering Rāma, and delighting his own (colleagues) came to fight with Śiva, the author of destruction.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Hanūmat on the Droṇa Mountain

Śeṣa said :

1. The hero Hanūmat, desirous of killing the lord of gods, came near Rudra on the battlefield and said (to him):

Hanūmat said :

2-5. O Rudra, what you are doing is against religious merit.

Therefore, I desire to punish you eager to kill Rāma's devotee. Formerly I heard it said variously by gods and sages that Rudra, the trident-holder, always remembers Rāma's feet. All that has become (i.e. proved) false in your case, who are fighting with Śatrughna. My brave (hero) Puṣkala is killed and Śatrughna also has become unconscious. Therefore, I shall today knock you, ready to destroy the three worlds, down. O Śarva (i.e. Śiva), you who are aversc to Rāma's devotion, stand carefully.

Śeṣa said :

6-9. That great lord said to the monkey speaking like this: "O best hero, you are fortunate. What you say is not false. This Rāmacandra saluted by gods and demons is my lord. Śatrughna, the killer of his enemy's heroes, brought his horse. Inspired by devotion to him (i.e. Rāma) he came to protect him. The duty (of the lord) is that his devotee, his own soul, must be protected on any account. Let the great Raghunātha look upon me who am shameless by showing pity for me who was a little angry due to the great grief of my devotee."

Śeṣa said :

10-16. When the lord of Caṇḍī was speaking like this, Hanūmat, extremely angry, took a big stone and hit it at his chariot. His chariot, hit with the stone was broken to pieces along with the charioteer, horses, flag and banners. All the deities in the sky praised the lord of monkeys: "O lord of monkeys, you are blessed; you have done a great feat." Seeing Śrī Śiva without a chariot Nandin ran to him. He said to the great god: "Sit on my back." Hanūmat was extremely angry with Śiva who was seated on (the back of) the bull (i.e. Nandin). Drawing out a big stone he then quickly hit it on his chest. Hit with it the lord of the beings (i.e. Śiva) took a sharp, bright, spear, having three points and resembling the flames of fire. Seeing that great trident, bright like fire, that came to him, he (i.e. Hanūmat) took it in his hand and in a moment quickly broke it into (pieces as small as) the sesamum seeds.

17-21. When the lord of the monkeys quickly in a moment broke the trident, Śiva took in his hand the (missile called) Śakti entirely made of iron. That Śakti discharged by Śiva stuck to

(i.e. hit) the chest of the intelligent (Hanūmat) (and) in a moment the lord of the monkeys became afflicted. In a moment having overcome that pain he seized a strong tree and hit it on (Śiva's) chest adorned with great serpents. The lordly serpents struck by the hero were frightened. Leaving him and going here and there they speedily went to the nether world. Śiva seeing the tree discharged (by Hanūmat) and (hitting) his chest got angry and took a terrible pestle in both his hands.

22-29a. (He said): "O mean monkey, you are (now) killed. Flee and go (away) from the battle. In a moment I shall destroy your life with (this) pestle." Seeing the pestle discharged by the angry Śiva the monkey remembering Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) avoided it very speedily. That pestle made of strong iron and discharged by Śiva, fell down. Having torn off the entire earth it went to the nether world. Hanūmat, the servant of Rāma, was extremely angry at that time. Taking a mountain in his hand he hit it on the chest (of Śiva). While the lord of Satī (i.e. Śiva) was thinking of cutting off the mountain he was struck by the lord of monkeys with a tree having many branches. When he (i.e. Śiva) was intent on cutting it off, he was hit with rocks (by Hanūmat). The persevering Śiva made up his mind to break those rocks. Just then he showered him (i.e. Śiva) with trees and mountains. Having encircled the protector of the beings (i.e. Śiva) with his tail he struck him again and again with stones, mountains, trees and strokes of his tail. Nandin was very much frightened, and even the moon was reduced to pieces. The very angry great god got very much confused.

, 29b-32. He said to the lord of monkeys who every moment made him very much disquieted: "O follower of the protector of Raghus, you are blessed. You have today done a great feat, so that I am very much pleased with you. O you, having a great speed, I am not easily obtainable by means of charity or sacrifice or a little penance. Therefore, ask for a boon from me."

Śeṣa said :

33. Hanūmat laughing (i.e. smiling) and speaking in fearless words, spoke to that very much delighted great god (i.e. Śiva) who was speaking like this:

Hanūmat said:

34-40. O great god, by Ragunātha's grace I have everything. Yet I ask for a boon from you who are pleased with the battle. This our (hero) named Puṣkala has fallen down dead. So also Śatrughna, Rāma's younger brother, became unconscious in the battle. Many other heroes wounded with arrows have also fallen. Some are unconscious, some have sunk; (please) protect them along with your own attendants. Do that by which big ghosts, vampires and fiends, so also foxes and others, will not take them away and eat them up; and (do that by which) their bodies will not be split. By all means preserve all of them, till, having conquered the attendants of Indra, I bring (either) the Droṇa mountain or the herbs thereon, and bring back, per force, to life these heroes kept under (your) control. Here I go to take that Droṇa mountain on which life-restoring herbs exist.

41-47. Hearing these words (Śiva) said to him: "All right. Quickly go to that mountain. I shall preserve your dead warriors." Having heard those words of the lord, he went to the mountain Droṇa. Having crossed all islands he went to the milky ocean. Here (i.e. on the battlefield), great Śiva, with his very strong and brave attendants took care of the corpses. Hanūmat having reached (the mountain) Droṇa and having put that great mountain called Droṇa on his tail quickly started for the battlefield. O brāhmaṇa, when he was engaged in carrying it, the mountain shook. Seeing it shaking the hosts of deities protecting it wailed and said: "What is this happening on the mountain? Who is this hero of great power and valour that is taking away this (mountain)?" Doing (i.e. saying) so all the gods together saw the monkey. Saying to him, "Leave it" they struck him with crores of weapons and missiles.

48-55. Seeing them all striking (him) Hanūmat was very much angry. In a moment the hero struck them all as Indra had struck the demons. Some of them were struck (by him) with his feet; some were crushed with his hands. Some were struck with his tail and some were hit with the peak (of the mountain). All of them struck by the monkey, perished in a moment. Some wet with blood, fell on the ground. Some trembled due to the fear of the monkey (and) went to Indra, the lord of gods. Seeing them

disturbed with fear and wet with blood, Indra, the best of all gods, being dejected said to the gods: "How (is it that) you are shaking with fear? How (is it that) you are wet with blood? By which demon or by which mean goblin have you been struck? Tell me the whole truth, so that knowing it I shall go to (i.e. march against) him; and having struck and bound him, the mad one who struck you, I shall come (back)." Hearing these words the best gods spoke in piteous words to Indra saluted by gods and demons.

Gods said :

56-61. We do not know (we are not sure, but) someone, taking the form of a monkey, came here and was intent upon taking that mountain after encircling it with his tail. When he decided (i.e. was about) to go back, all of us gathered together and being well-equipped and showering him with all weapons and missiles, fought with him. He, the powerful one, vanquished all of us in a battle. Many excellent gods, struck (by him) there fell on the ground. We with our bodies quite wet with blood and afflicted with the wounds and (i.e. but) alive due to our religious merit, have come here.

Hearing these words of the gods Indra ordered all gods endowed with great power: "Go to the great mountain Droṇa to bind the very mighty monkey. Binding him who has committed a great sin against the gods, bring him (here)."

62-67. Thus ordered, they went to the best mountain Droṇa, where the mighty hero, Hanūmat, the best monkey, stood. Having gone there all of them spoke to Hanūmat. They were struck by Hanūmat with fists and slaps. In a moment, they with their bodies having bloody wounds fell there. Others intent on fleeing went to the lord of heaven. Hearing it (i.e. the account) angry Indra, the best of gods, directed all the best gods towards the great hero, the lord of monkeys. Ordered by him they went where the mighty lord of monkeys (stood). Having seen all of them come there the best of the monkeys said: "O heroes, do not go to (i.e. march against) me in the battle. I shall now forcibly take you near the city of Yama."

68-72. Though told like this, all of them endowed with great

... got ready and struck the monkey with weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Cruel due to anger some of the best gods struck the mighty one with various (weapons and missiles like) lances, hatchets, swords, spears with sharp edges, pestles and śaktis. He quickly struck all the best gods with rocks. Some fled to Indra and told (the account) to him. Hearing the words told by them the lord of the gods was frightened. Having gone near (i.e. to) Bṛhaspati, the head and the counsellor of the residents of heaven, the excellent preceptor of gods, and having saluted him, he asked him:

Indra said :

73. O lord, who is the monkey that has come to carry Droṇa (mountain)? Who (i.e. he) has killed my heroes, the gods, holding weapons.

Śeṣa said :

74. Having heard these words uttered by him, the great Āṅgīrasa (i.e. Bṛhaspati) spoke to Indra, the lord of gods, who was dejected with fear.

Bṛhaspati said :

75-80. He is the servant of him (i.e. of Rāma) who killed Rāvaṇa in the battle and burnt (i.e. destroyed) Kumbhakarna and who killed all the enemies. Know him to be Hanūmat who with the fire (set) to his tail burnt Laṅkā along with the Trikūṭa mountain and who killed Akṣa. He killed all (the gods). He is intent upon (taking) the Droṇa (mountain). The great king (Rāma), the best one among the mighty, is performing the horse-sacrifice. The great king Viramaṇi, Śiva's devotee, took away his horse. Then a battle fascinating the gods, took place. In the battle Śiva killed many heroes of Rāma. To revive them this very mighty one will certainly take the Droṇa (mountain). (Even) after fighting with him for hundreds of years he, the powerful one, will not be vanquished by you. Therefore, propitiate the monkey. Give him the herb thereon.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

*Śrī Rāma Appears on the Battlefield**Śeṣa said:*

1-2. Having heard the words of Bṛhaspati, the Supreme Being, the enemy of Vṛṣaparvan, having come to know that Wind's son (Hanūmat) had come there on Rāma's mission gave up the fear in his mind that was due to the monkey and was delighted and said to Bṛhaspati.

Indra said:

3-8. How shall we manage, O master of gods, if this Droṇa (mountain) is taken (by Hanūmat)? Tell me further, how can the gods survive? Now properly propitiate the son of Wind. Rāma will be very much delighted, and the gods would have happiness.

Hearing the words of the lord of gods, Bṛhaspati, putting Indra in the front and surrounded by all gods went there where the fearless monkey, Hanūmat, stood. Having forcibly conquered the happy gods he was roaring. They led by Bṛhaspati, went near him and having saluted the feet of the son of Wind fell (at his feet). Bṛhaspati, the best among the eloquent being urged on by the lord of gods, the master of the world, spoke to the hero.

Bṛhaspati said:

9-11. Not knowing your valour the gods have done (this) act. O you highly intelligent one, you are the servant of Rāma's feet. What for is this undertaking, and how have you come here? We who are bent before you, will carry out what you say. O you son of Wind, having a body causing fear to the demons, give up anger and regard the lord of gods with favour.

Śeṣa said:

12-15. Hearing these words of the preceptor of gods he of a great fame, spoke to all gods and to Bṛhaspati: "In the battle with king Viramaṇi, Śiva killed many warriors. To bring them back to life I shall carry the Droṇa mountain. Those who, proud

of their power and valour, will stop it (i.e. the mountain from being carried by me) will be sent to Yama's abode by me. Therefore, give me either (the mountain) Droṇa or the herb on it, by which I shall revive the heroes who died on the battlefield.

Śeṣa said:

16-21. Hearing these words of the magnanimous son of Wind they all bowed before him and gave him the reviving herb. The gods had given up their fear and were delighted and the residents of heaven being happy went (back) keeping the lord of gods in front (i.e. led by the lord of gods). Hanūmat took the medicine and came to the battlefield. He was praised by all the hosts of gods eagerly watching that feat. Even all the enemies having seen the monkey who had come (back), praised him (with the words), "Well (done), well (done)", and looked upon the monkey as wonderful. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), full of great joy, came there and went near the dead warrior Puṣkala, the heart of Rāma, protected by Śiva on the fierce battlefield. Having called Sumati, the minister honoured by the great, he said (to him): "I shall bring back to life all the heroes, that died in the battle."

22-27. Saying so, (he put) the medicine on the great chest of Puṣkala, and joining his head with his body, spoke (these) auspicious words: "If I recognise (only) lord Rāghava (i.e. Rāma) by the deeds of my mind, body and speech, then let him quickly revive by means of the medicine." When he was saying these words, Puṣkala got up on the battlefield and he, the crest-jewel of the brave, gnawed his teeth in anger: "Where has that Virabhadra, making me unconscious on the battlefield, gone? I shall instantly knock him down. Where is my excellent bow?" To him who was speaking like this the lord of the monkeys said: "O hero, you who are talking about him on the battlefield, are blessed. You who were killed by Virabhadra, have been again brought back to life by the grace of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma). Come on, let us go to Śatrughna who is unconscious."

28-35. Saying so he went to the front of the excellent battle. (There) Śatrughna afflicted by Śiva's arrow, was breathing (i.e. was alive). Having gone there near the magnanimous

Śatrughna Hanūmat put medicine on his chest that had come to (i.e. started) breathing, and said to him: “O best Śatrughna, revive. O you of great might and valour, why (i.e. due to what) did you become unconscious on the battlefield? If I being diligent (i.e. diligently) keep celibacy till (the end of) my life, then let this hero Śatrughna revive in a moment.” No sooner did he utter these words than Śatrughna came back to consciousness in a moment. (He said:) “Where is Śiva? Leaving the battlefield where has Śiva gone?” Śrī Rudra, the trident-holder had killed many heroes in the battle. The magnanimous lord of the monkeys revived them all. Then all of them were well-equipped; their minds were full of anger. Seated in their own chariots they with their bodies wounded marched against their enemies. Puškala marched against Virabhadra; Kuśadhvaja against Caṇḍa; the hero Hanūmat against Nandin; and Śatrughna against Śiva in the battle.

36-52a. The king marched against Śatrughna who was the best among the mighty, who had stretched his bow, and who had stood after calling (i.e. challenging) Śiva in the battle. The heroic king Viramaṇi and the mighty Śatrughna fought in the battle with each other a fight causing wonder to the sages. O brāhmaṇa, king Viramaṇi in a moment shattered to (pieces like) sesamum seeds more than a hundred chariots of Śatrughna, the lord of kings. Then Śatrughna who was very angry on the battlefield, discharged the Āgneya missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Agni) to burn him along with his army. The king seeing that great burning missile discharged by Śatrughna got very angry and took up the Vāruṇa missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Varuṇa). Seeing that (fire) cooled by the Vāruṇa missile the strong younger brother of Rāma discharged at him the Vāyavyāstra (i.e. the missile presided over by Vāyu). Due to it great (i.e. strong) wind was produced. The clouds struck by the wind moved in all directions. They roamed here and there and the army (of Śatrughna) became happy. Seeing his army afflicted by the wind the great king Viramaṇi took (i.e. fixed) the mountain-like missile eradicating the enemy on his bow. The wind was checked by the mountains and did not blow on the battlefield. Seeing it the younger brother of Rāma (i.e. Śatrughna) took up the missile like the thunderbolt.

All the mountains struck by the Vajrāstra were reduced to pieces like sesamum seeds and were powdered in the battle honoured by the heroes. The heroes with their bodies shattered by the Vajrāstra (i.e. the thunderbolt-like missile) were adorned with blood on the battlefield. The battle was interesting. Then the great king Vīramaṇi who was very angry fixed on his bow the wonderful Brahmāstra (i.e. the missile presided over by Brahmā) burning the enemies. Śatrughna took an arrow and remembered the very charming missile given by that female devotee and deluding all enemies. The Brahmāstra, which left his hand came to the enemy. Just then he, named Śatrughna, discharged the deluding missile. In a moment the Brahmāstra was cut into two by the Mohanāstra (i.e. the deluding weapon) and quickly stuck into the king's chest and made him unconscious. Hundreds of arrows were discharged by king Śatrughna. And all the brave attendants of Śiva that had become unconscious lay so on the ground near the feet of Śiva.

52b-60. The very angry Śiva seated in his chariot went to the king. Śatrughna at once went to fight with Śiva on the battlefield. Making his bow ready and drawn out he fought. Between the two a fight breaking the enemy, took place. It brightened up the atmosphere by means of the weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Such a battle due to (i.e. involving) killings by missiles and counter-missiles and strikings and counter-strikings did not take place even between gods and demons. At that time Śatrughna was very much afflicted in the battle with Śiva. On the advice of the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) he remembered his lord (i.e. Rāma): "O lord, O brother, the very fierce Śiva is snatching away my life. Raising your bow protect me on the battlefield. O Rāma, many crossed the ocean of grief by (uttering) your name. O Rāma, O Rāma, the cloud of kindness, lift me who am in misery." When he was speaking like this, Rāma who was dark like the blue lotus, whose eyes were like lotuses, having (tucked) a deer's horn to his waist, and who had the body of (i.e. like that of) an initiated person, was seen on the battlefield. Seeing him on the battlefield, Śatrughna was amazed.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

*Viramaṇi Surrenders the Horse to Śrī Rāma**Śeṣa said:*

1-4. Seeing his brother Śrī Rāma destroying the affliction of him who had saluted him to have come (there) Śatrughna became free from all unhappiness, O best brāhmaṇa. The confused Hanūmat seeing with joy Rāma's feet saluted him who had come (there) for the protection of his devotees and said: "O lord, it is (but) proper for you to protect your devotees, since you freed everyone vanquished and tied with a noose in the battle. O you descendant of Raghu, we are now blessed that we shall see your feet. In a moment only we shall conquer the enemies by your grace."

Śeṣa said:

5-17. O brāhmaṇa, seeing Rāma who was within the scope of (i.e. known by) meditation of the meditating saints, who gave fearlessness to those who saluted him, who had come there, Śiva fell at his feet, and said: "You are the only Puruṣa (i.e. the Supreme Being) actually rising above Prakṛti (i.e. Nature). With a portion of you, you create and destroy the universe. You who are formless, are the highest cause of the entire world. Endowed with Māyā you who are only one, take up three forms: At the time of creation (you exist) in the form of Brahmā, In protecting (the world) you are full of your lustre; and at the time of the final destruction of the world (you are) I known as Śarva (i.e. Śiva). O highest lord, your act of performing the horse-sacrifice for removing (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, is (but) a wonderful mockery. Wherefrom can sin (come to) you, the spotless water from whose feet called Gaṅgā I carry inside (i.e. on) my head to pacify my sins? Certainly I did the act to hurt you much. O you kind one, forgive (me) about it which obstructs you. What do (i.e. can) I do? I did this for maintaining truthfulness. Knowing your prowess I came (here) for the protection of my devotee. This (king Viramaṇi) formerly bathed in the river called Śiprā and practised wonderful penance in the temple of Mahākāla at Ujjayinī. Then, I who was pleased,

said to the king: 'O great King, ask for (your desired object).' He chose a wonderful kingdom. I said to him: 'Your kingdom (i.e. rule) will be in Devapura. I shall diligently dwell for your protection in your city till Rāma's sacrificial horse comes (to your city)'. O Rāma, I who granted such a boon, am really your servant. I am now pitied (by you). The king will give back (i.e. restore) the horse along with his sons and beasts; and he will offer service to (your) feet.'

Śeṣa said:

18. Hearing these words of Maheśa (i.e. Śiva), the best of Raghus (i.e. Rāma) with his eyes full of pity spoke with a grave voice:

Rāma said:

19-22. It is but the duty of the gods to protect their devotees. You have done an auspicious deed, since you have now protected your devotee. O Śiva, you are in my heart (and) I am in your heart. There is no distinction between us. (Only) the wicked-minded fools see (the distinction, i.e. they look upon us to be different). Those men who make distinction between us who are indeed of the same nature are roasted for a thousand kalpas in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka. Those who are your pious devotees were (i.e. are) my devotees only; and my devotees also salute you with great devotion.

Śeṣa said:

23-36. The lord (i.e. Rāma) having heard these words of Śiva revived the unconscious king Viramaṇi by touching him etc. The able lord and god along with Śiva, also revived other unconscious sons of king Viramaṇi, who were afflicted with arrows. Making the king ready, the lord of the beings (i.e. Śiva), made him, surrounded by his sons and grandsons, salute Rāma's feet. Blessed was king Viramaṇi who saw the best Raghu, difficult to be secured by meditating saints devoted to deep and abstract meditation even after myriads (of years). O best brāhmaṇa, having saluted Raghunātha (and thus) having their bodies rendered blessed, they became most venerable even to Brahmā etc. The king (Viramaṇi) gave (back) the best horse

to Rāma who was praised by Śatrughna, Hanūmat and (other) great warriors like Puškala. The king Vīramaṇi urged on by Śiva then gave (Rāma) everything along with his kingdom and with sons, beasts and kinsmen. Then Rāma was praised by all his enemies and servants, and especially by Śatrughna and others, who were very much eager. Seated in a jewelled chariot he then disappeared. When Rāma disappeared, all were amazed. Do not look upon that Rāma who alone is saluted by the world, as a human being. Being in water or on the land he is always present everywhere. At that time the heroes were thoroughly delighted and embraced one another. A great festivity with (the sound of) musical instruments and auspicious instrumental music, took place. Then all the heroes who were pleased and amazed, and who were proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, followed the horse that was released. Having directed that servant (viz. Vīramaṇi), telling him to seek the refuge of Śrī Rāma, the only one difficult to be obtained in the world, Śiva, of a truthful vow, and the author of the deluge and creation, disappeared there. Adorned with (i.e. accompanied by) his servants, Śiva went to Kailāsa.

37-38. King Vīramaṇi meditating upon the lotus-like feet of Śrī Rāma and accompanied by his army, went along with the mighty Śatrughna. For those excellent men who listen to this story of Rāma, there is never the misery due to the mundane existence.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Sacrificial Horse Develops Stiffness

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the horse went to Hemakūṭa close to Bhārata. The horse with chowries tied (on to his body) was protected by thousands of warriors. That Hemakūṭa was (many) yojanas in expanse and length on all sides and had myriads of silver and golden peaks. There was an excellent

garden adorned with trees (like) śāla, tāla, tamāla, karṇikāra, hīmtāla, nāga-punnāga, kovidāra and bilva, also campaka, bakula, megha (a kind of fragrant grass), madana, kuṭaja and others. It was also adorned with creepers like jātikā, yūthikā and navamālikā (varieties of jasmine), so also with mango-trees, vines with sweet grapes, and pomegranates. It was noisy with many birds; it was resounding with (the humming of) bees. It had the sounds of peacocks' notes. It gave joy in all seasons.

7-13. Accompanied by Śatrughna the horse which had mind's speed and had a charming golden note on his large forehead (came there). While that horse (let loose) for the horse-sacrifice, was (thus) going, suddenly a wonder took place. Listen to it, O best brāhmaṇa. His body became stiff, and he did not move, but (just) stood on the path. The best horse became immovable like the Hemakūṭa. Then all the guards of the horse gave him strokes with whips. Even though he was (thus) beaten (i.e. whipped) the horse with his body having become stiff, did not move (on). The guards of the horse, having approached Śatrughna, cried: "O lord, we do not know what has happened to (our) excellent horse. O you very intelligent king, when the excellent horse having mind's speed, was proceeding, there was a sudden stiffness in his body. We whipped him, but he did not move. O best king, having considered this, take whatever action (you deem proper)."

14-21. Then the king who was amazed, went along with his soldiers near the great horse. Puṣkala seized his feet with his hand, and lifted (i.e. tried to lift) him up from the ground. But he did not move from it (i.e. from the ground). Though attacked by the strong one the horse did not move at that time. Large-hearted Hanūmat decided to lift him up. The best among the powerful ones encircled him strongly with his tail, and with (great) might dragged (i.e. tried to drag) him. Yet he did not move. Then, Hanūmat, the best monkey, being amazed said to Śatrughna, the greatest among the mighty, when the heroes were listening (i.e. in the presence of the heroes): "(Encircling) Droṇa with my tail, I now (i.e. recently, had) lifted it up easily. But it is a great wonder now that this (comparatively) small horse does not move. The excited, strong heroes have in this

case realised the general cause: Even though dragged, he did not move from his place as much as (the measure of) a sesamum seed." Having heard the words of the monkey Śatrughna, the best among speakers, said to Sumati, the best of the ministers.

Śatrughna said:

22. O innocent minister, why is there the stiffness in the body of the horse? Why (for what cause) is there stiffness in the horse's body, O innocent one? What remedy should be employed here, so that the horse can move?

Sumati said:

23. O lord, some sage proficient in all (branches of) knowledge should be looked for. I know only what actually occurs in a region and is perceptible but do not know what is concealed from the senses.

Śeṣa said:

24-29. Hearing these words of Sumati he, the knower of dharma, looked, along with his servants, for an auspicious sage. All the soldiers going everywhere looked for a sage, a knower of dharma. But, nowhere did they find the best sage. But one diligent follower (of the horse) went as far as (the distance of) a yojana in the east. There he saw a great hermitage where all beasts and men also had no enemies, (as) the very charming ones had all their sins destroyed due to a bath in Gaṅgā, where many (sages) practised penance with fire. With their faces hung down, they filled their bellies with (i.e. subsisted on) smoke, leaves and air; where the smoke rising from the sacred fire always purified (everything). It was happy with many sages and was excellent due to creepers with their leaves taken off.

30-32. He, coming to know that the charming hermitage belonged to the sage Śaunaka, reported it to the king with his heart full of wonder. Hearing that Śatrughna along with his servants became extremely glad. Along with Hanūmat, Puṣkala and others he went to that hermitage. Having seen there the best sage who had properly offered oblation to the fire, he

saluted (prostrating before him) like a staff, his feet destroying sins.

33-36. Seeing king Śatrughna, best among the mighty, coming (there), he offered him materials of worship and water for washing the feet; and became glad on seeing him. The best sage seeing him comfortably seated and resting said to the king: "O lord, why are you wandering? Your wandering is great. If, kings like you do not roam over the entire earth, then the wicked will harass the good who are free from affliction. O king, Śatrughna, the best among the mighty, tell me (why you are wandering like this). May all your wandering etc. be for our good."

Śeṣa said:

37. The king with his body delighted replied in a faltering tone to the brāhmaṇa who was speaking like this.

Śatrughna said:

38-41. Not far away from your abode all of a sudden a wonder took place in the case of Rāma's horse having the mind's speed. O best among the wise, hear (about) it. The horse by chance went into your garden rich in beauty. In its skirt there developed stiffness in his body (just) in a moment. Then my mighty heroes like Puṣkala, fierce with madness, forcibly dragged the horse. Yet he did not move. Due to our good fortune you who are known to be a boat for us who are drowned into the boundless ocean of misery, are seen by chance. Tell us the cause (of the stiffness of the horse's body).

Śeṣa said:

42-43. The best and very intelligent sage, when asked like this, mentally conceiving the horse along with the cause (of its stiffness), thought for a moment. Having in a moment known it with his eyes dilating with amazement, he said to the king who was grieved and full of doubt.

Śaunaka said:

44-55. O king, listen, I shall tell you the cause of the stiffness (of the body) of the horse, hearing which you will be free from

misery. Such is the strange account. In the Gauḍa country in a great forest adorned by the bank of Kāverī, a brāhmaṇa named Sāttvika practised a great (i.e. severe) penance. One day he drank water. One day he ate (i.e. subsisted on) air. One day he did not eat anything. In this way he would pass three days. When he was thus engaged in the vow Death himself seized him with his fangs; (and) the observer of the great vow met with death. Playing with celestial nymphs in a divine car, rich in all (kinds of) beauty and adorned with all gems, he went to the peak of Meru. There was a great Jambu tree, the fluid from which was enjoyable. (There was) a river called Jāmbavatī, full of golden water. In it, sages, meritorious due to many (kinds of) penance, and having all pleasures, sported eagerly according to their desires. There he (i.e. Sāttvika) joyfully playing at his will with the celestial nymphs, being arrogant due to pride on account of his high opinion about himself, acted disagreeably with them. Then he was cursed by the sages: “Be a hideous demon.” Then, he being extremely afflicted said to the sages, rich in knowledge and penance: “May all you kind brāhmaṇas favour me.” He was then favoured by them: “When you will speedily stiffen (Rāma’s) horse, you will hear Rāma’s account. After that you will be free from this very fierce cause.” O lord, that brāhmaṇa thus addressed by the sages became a demon. He has stiffened Rāma’s horse. Free him by narration (of Rāma’s account), O sinless one.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

The Horse Is Relieved of Stiffness

Śeṣa said:

1. He who killed the enemy’s heroes, having heard what the sage told, was amazed at heart, and said to Śaunaka:

Śatrughna said:

2-3. The way of fate is mysterious, due to which that (brāhmaṇa) named Sāttvika, though he had reached heaven (i.e.

had become divine), was made a demon by his deeds. O lord, O great sage, tell me about the path (i.e. the consequence) of deeds, and which hell is (obtained by beings) due to the result of which deeds.

Śaunaka said:

4-36. O best among the descendants of Raghu, you are blessed that you have such a good thought. Though you know (it) you are saying (i.e. asking about) for the good of the people. I (shall) tell (you about) various results of various deeds. O great king, listen to them. Hearing (about) them one would obtain salvation. He, of a wicked mind, who forcibly seizes the wealth of others, the child of another person, and another's wife for the sake of enjoyment, is dropped after being tied with Yama's noose into the Tāmīśra hell for a thousand years. There the arrogant servants of Yama beat him up. Then tormented by the fruition of his sins, he goes to (i.e. is born in) the species of pigs. Having experienced great misery there he goes to human species (i.e. is born as a human being) which is characterised by diseases etc. and which acquaints him with his infamy. He engaged in (committing) sins, deceives (other) beings, and feeds his own family only. He would fall into (the hell called) Andha-tāmīśraka. Those men who kill beings here (i.e. in this world) wrongly fall into (the hell called) Raurava and are eaten up by ruru (deer). He who, for (filling) his own belly, plainly kills (other) beings, is, through Yama's order, dropped into (the hell called) Mahāraurava. He, the sinner, who hates his own father or a brāhmaṇa, (is dropped) into the vicious (hell called) Kāla-sūtra extending over a myriad yojanas. He who hates cows is roasted for as many years as the hair on (the bodies of) the beasts by Yama's servants. That king who would, on the earth, punish him who does not deserve punishment or that greedy king who gives physical punishment to a brāhmaṇa, is harassed by Yama's servants having faces like those of pigs. Then for being free from (his) sins he is born in wicked stocks. Those men who through their might foolishly snatch or destroy the little wealth of brāhmaṇas or the means of subsistence of cows, are oppressed very much, and are thrown into (the hell called) Andhakūpa in the other world. He who being greedy brings and

eats all alone sweet food, and intent on tasting (i.e. enjoying) it does not give it either to a deity or to his friend, certainly falls into the hell called Kṛmibhojana. That man who, when not facing a calamity, would snatch away gold etc. or the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, would fall into the very vicious hell (called) Sanda-mśa. The fool who nourishes his own body (only) and does not know (i.e. care for) anyone else, is dropped into the very terrible hell (called) Kumbhīpāka hot with oil. The servants of Yama make the man who would, through folly, desire an unapproachable lady to be his wife, embrace her metallic image (in hell). Those who, insolent through their might, violate the propriety of conduct as laid down by the Vedas, fall into Taraṇi and become eaters of flesh and blood. He who having made a śūdra woman his wife would lead the householder's life with her, is full of great misery and certainly falls into the Pūyoda (hell). Those fools, those rogues who practise religious hypocrisy for cheating people, are beaten by Yama and fall into Vaiśasa hell. Those fools, those sinners who make their wives of the same caste drink their semen, are engaged in drinking semen in a stream of semen. Thieves, those who set fire, those who are wicked, those who administer poison, those who plunder villages, being full of sins, are thrown into Sārameyādana (hell). A man who, full of sin, forcibly snatches the wealth of others, falls with his face downwards into Avicinaraka. Having experienced much misery there he would go to (i.e. would be born in) the most sinful stock. The servants of Yama make him, the foolish man who through (sheer love of) taste drinks liquor, drink liquid iron. That man who through the pride of his knowledge and conduct, would disregard his elders, is after death thrown with his face downwards into the Kṣāranaraka. Those men who deviating from righteous conduct commit treachery, are thrown into the hell (called) Śūlaprota full of many torments. That wicked man who inflicts pain on all men through his words, falls into the Daṇḍaśūka (hell) and is bitten by snakes. Thus, O king, there are many hells for the sinners. Having committed sins they go (to them); and these (sinners) experience terrible agony. Those who have not listened to the story of Rāma or have not obliged others, have all (kinds) of miseries in hell. It is said that he who has happiness here,

would have it in heaven. Those who are miserable and diseased, have come from hell.

Śeṣa said:

37-39. Hearing this the king, trembling every moment, again asked the brāhmaṇa to get all his doubts removed. (He said :) “O great sage, tell (me) the characteristics of the respective sins. Due to which sin, and having which characteristics, is (a man) born on the earth?” Hearing those words of him, the sage said to the king: “O king, listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristics of the sinners.”

Śaunaka said:

40-69. One who drinks liquors and one having black teeth is born in hell. One who eats what is prohibited, is born as one having chronic enlargement of the spleen. He who eats (food) seen by a woman in her course, is born as one who has worms in his belly. Having eaten (food) touched by a dog, a cat etc. a man would be of (i.e. give out) foul smell. A man who eats (food) without offering (it) to gods etc. has a disease in his belly, is unhappy, and is troubled by a great malady. By creating obstacles in the food of others (i.e. by spoiling their food), indigestion takes place (in the body of the man who spoils others' food). He who though he has wealth (i.e. though he can afford to give good food), gives bad food, has slow digestion. A man who gives (i.e. administers) poison, gets vomiting sickness; he who kills (a person) on the way, has a disease in his feet. A wicked man is born as one suffering from asthma and cough in hell. A rogue would suffer from epilepsy; and he who torments others would suffer from colic. He who causes forest conflagration would suffer from dysentery. He who would throw dung into a temple or into water, would suffer from a very terrible disease of the anus (as) a manifestation of his sin. The diseases caused by miscarriage are consumption, urinary diseases and dropsy. A man who breaks the image (of a deity), does not have stability (in life). One who speaks wickedly becomes maimed; one who censures others becomes bald-headed. A man who laughs at what others say becomes squint-eyed; he who steals gold of a brāhmaṇa has bad nails. He who steals copper becomes

corpulent. He who steals bell-metal becomes a leper. A man who snatches tin has his hair tawny. A man who takes away lead suffers from headache. A man who steals iron becomes a block-head. A man who steals hide is surrounded by (i.e. full of) fat. A man who steals honey smells like a goat. By stealing oil a man is extremely troubled by itch. By stealing raw food a man becomes toothless; and by taking away cooked food he would suffer from a disease of the tongue. By copulating with his teacher's wife a man suffers from strangury. By copulating with his sister he becomes a leper. So also by cohabiting with his daughter he suffers from leprosy. By cohabiting with his brother's wife he suffers from leprosy called gulma-kuṣṭha. By cohabiting with her who is approachable only by his master, he suffers from leprosy with red spots on the cheeks. By cohabiting with the wife of his confidant he suffers from ring-worm. By having sexual intercourse with his father's sister he would have boils in the right side of his body. By cohabiting with his maternal uncle's wife he would have boils on the left side of his body. He has leprosy on his waist by cohabiting with the wife of his paternal uncle. By having sexual intercourse with his friend's wife he becomes one whose wife dies (i.e. becomes a widower). By having sexual intercourse with a woman of his own family he suffers from fistula in the anus. One who cohabits with a female ascetic suffers from urinary disease. By having sexual intercourse with the wife of a learned brāhmaṇa he suffers from ulcer in the nose. By cohabiting with the wife of him who is initiated a man has a flow of defective blood. He who cohabits with the wife of his kinsman suffers from the ulcer of the heart. He who has sexual intercourse with a woman of a higher caste suffers from the ulcer of the head. By cohabiting with a beast he suffers from a urinary disease. There is no doubt that men suffer from these diseases in hell. Women also suffer from these diseases by having sexual intercourse with the respective men. Thus, O king, the characteristics of great sinners are narrated. The sin would perish by means of religious merit due to charity, by hearing Rāma's deeds, or by (practising) penance. The river of the narration of the deeds of Viṣṇu would wash all the sins—the mud—of the sinners. There should be no doubt about this. (Even) Gaṅgā does not purify him who despises Hari. Even very meritorious holy places are not

able to purify him. He who being weak in knowledge (i.e. being ignorant) laughs at the deeds being narrated, does not get freedom from hell even at the end of the world. O king, go with your followers for freeing the horse. Relate the deeds of the lord of Śrī, so that the horse would move.

Śeṣa said :

70-76. Having heard this, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's heroes, became delighted and accompanied by his servants saluted him, and turning back went (back). Having, with Hanūmat, gone to the side of (i.e. near) the excellent horse, he narrated Rāma's deeds destroying terrible misfortunes. "Go (in) to the divine vehicle due to the religious merit obtained by the narration (of the deeds) of Rāma. Move freely in the world. Be free from the bad birth." When after having these words Śatrughna stood by, he saw an excellent (man) borne in a divine car. He said: "By listening to the narration (of the deeds) of Rāma, I have become free. O very intelligent king, I (shall) go to my abode. Give me leave to go." Saying so the divine one seated in his divine car, left. At that time, the followers (of Śatrughna) along with Śatrughna were amazed. Then the horse was free from the stiffness and the ground; and wandering through that forest full of birds proceeded.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

King Suratha Seizes the Horse

Śeṣa said :

1-3. Seven months passed as the horse easily roamed over Bhāratavarṣa full of kings. He going round all the excellent Bhārata (country) was honoured by excellent kings. Surrounded by excellent warriors and mighty soldiers like Śatrughna he roamed over many countries near the Himālayas. Taking into consideration Rāma's might nobody seized him.

4-11. Praised by the kings of Aṅga, Vāṅga and Kaliṅga the horse went to the beautiful city of Suratha. The city was named

Kuṇḍala, where the ear-rings fell from Aditi's ears trembling with joy and fear. There no man ever violated religious laws. The people there remembered Rāma everyday. There everyday men, Rāma's servants, free from sins, worshipped Aśvattha and Tulasī. There everyday men of pure hearts, free from fraud, worship charming temples having Rāma's idols. There is the name of Rāma (told) in words and never the account of a quarrel. In the heart he alone is meditated on, and no memory of sex finds a place. There men whose bodies are purified by the story of Rāma and who have assiduous devotion to truth, never indulge in gambling. In it lives the mighty and righteous (king) Suratha whose mind is delighted by recollecting Rāma's feet, and is very mad (after Rāma).

12-17. How shall I describe the excellent servant of Rāma, viz. Suratha, whose all virtues spread on the earth purify sins? Once the servants of that king saw, while they were wandering, the sacrificial horse smeared with sandal (-paste). When they saw the note (on the forehead) of the horse, which had clear letters, they were amazed. Knowing that the horse which was charming to the eye, was released by Rāma, they were delighted; and being eager they told (about him) to the king who was in the assembly: "O lord, there is the city Ayodhyā. Its lord is Rāma. The horse which is fit for a horse-sacrifice and which is released (by Rāma), has, while wandering, reached along with the servants the vicinity of your city. O great king, seize that very charming horse."

Śeṣa said :

18. Hearing these words uttered by his (servants), the king, being full of joy, said to his strong heroes in a voice grave like (the thundering of) the clouds:

Suratha said :

19-20. We are blessed that with our servants we shall see the face of Rāma. I shall seize his horse surrounded by a crore of warriors. I shall release the horse when Rama would come. The object of me, the devotee, always engaged in meditating (on Rāma) will be fulfilled.

Śeṣa said :

21-24. Saying so, the king ordered his servant: “Forcibly seize the horse. The horse should not be released. He (should be kept) within sight. By this, I think I shall have a great gain in that I shall see Rāma’s feet, difficult to be obtained by Brahmā, Indra and others. He, one’s relative, or son, or kinsman, or beast or vehicle, alone is blessed, by whom Rāma would be obtained. Therefore, seizing the sacrificial horse which has the speed he desires, which is charming, and which is adorned with a golden note, tie him in the stable.”

25-26. They who were thus addressed, went and quickly seized Rāma’s horse and gave him whose entire body was auspicious, to the king. The king, the destroyer of the demons and proficient in righteous deed, gladly received him, and said to his mighty servants:

27-35. “O very intelligent Vātsyāyana, listen attentively. No man in his (i.e. Rāma’s) country was attached to another man’s wife. No man was attracted to another man’s wealth, and no one was lustful. No man was attached to (things liked by) the tongue, and went along a wrong path; (everyone) would narrate (nothing else) but (the deeds of) Rāma.” The king said to his servants: “You skilled in religious deeds have come to serve; tell (me) your movements. (In my country) men have the vow of having one wife only (i.e. were loyal to their wives). They do not crave for others’ wealth. They are not attached to censuring others. They have not gone away from the course laid down by the Vedas. The warriors everyday do recollection etc. of Rāma. I who am angry towards Yama, keep them for service to Rāma. I do not allow those wicked, sinful men, behaving in the opposite way, to reside in my country.” In his country did not live the most sinful ones who mentally committed sins. (There lived people whose) all sins were destroyed by meditation on Hari and were full of joy. When the country was like this and the king was religious, all the men that died (i.e. after death) obtained bliss. In the city of Suratha there was no entrance for the servants of Yama.

36-38. Then Yama taking up the form of a sage came to the king. He having put on garments of the barks of trees and with

his head adorned with matted hair, saw Suratha, the servant of Viṣṇu, in his assembly. He had the Tulasī (-leaf) on his head and uttered the great name of Hari. He always made his people listen to (i.e. narrated to his people) the accounts dealing with religious deeds. Then the king, seeing the sage who was, as it were, penance incarnate, saluted his feet and gave him water for washing his feet etc. The best king said to the sage who was comfortably seated and who was resting:

39-41. "Today my existence is blessed; today my house is blessed. Tell me various excellent stories about Rāma, hearing which the sin of the hearers perishes everyday." Hearing these words uttered (by the king) the sage, showing all his teeth, laughed very much and clapped his palms. (The king) said to the sage who was laughing: "What is the reason for your laughing? (i.e. what made you laugh)? Kindly tell me so that my heart will be pleased." Then the sage said to the king:

42-54. "O king, listen attentively to the excellent reason for (my) laughter. You told me: To me narrate the glory of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). Who is Hari? Whose glory (should I narrate)? All men are influenced by their deeds (i.e. fate). Due to deeds heaven is obtained; due to deeds (one) would go to hell. Due to deeds alone, all (things) like sons and grandsons would (be had). Indra after performing a hundred sacrifices went to the highest position. Brahmā also obtained the wonderful world called 'Satya' due to his deeds (i.e. his fate). Many gods like Maruts who became successful due to their deeds enjoy, being served by the hosts of celestial nymphs, pleasures. Therefore, perform sacrifices etc. and indeed worship deities, so that you will have spotless fame on the earth." Hearing these words of him he, with his mind agitated with anger and with his heart fixed on Rāma alone, spoke to the brāhmaṇa skilled in (various) acts: "Do not say (anything) about the account of deeds giving a perishable fruit. You who are condemned by the world, go out of my city. Indra will quickly fall down. Brahmā also will fall down, but men eager for Rāma's worship will not fall. See Dhruva, Prahlāda and the wonderful Bibhīṣaṇa. So also others who are Rāma's devotees never fall. These servants of Yama will beat with iron mallets and by binding with nooses, those wicked ones who condemn Rāma.

O mean brāhmaṇa, I do not punish you due to your brāhmaṇa-hood (i.e. because you are a brāhmaṇa). Go, go away from my sight; otherwise I shall beat you."

55-63. When the greatest king called Suratha, his servants were eager to drive him out by holding him with his arm, then Yama taking up his own (i.e. original) form, adorned by people, said to the king: "O servant of Viṣṇu, I am pleased; ask for (what you want). O you of a good vow, though I tempted (i.e. tried to lead astray) you with many words, you, served by the good, did not swerve from service to Rāma." Then the king, seeing Yama very much pleased, said: "If you are pleased, then grant me an excellent boon. Let me not meet with death till I meet Rāma. O Yama, let me never have fear from you." Then Yama said to the king: "This will take place in your case. The chief of the Raghu (family) will truly do everything desired by you." Saying so Yama praising the deeds of him who had set his heart on the devotion to Rāma, vanished and went to his own city. That righteous king, the servant of Rāma, seized the horse with great joy and said to the servants of Viṣṇu: "I have seized this horse of Rāma, the lord of the earth. All of you, skilled in fighting, should be ready everywhere."

64-69. Thus told, all the very powerful soldiers of the king became ready in a moment, and being eager (i.e. eagerly) went to the assembly. The king's ten brave sons were: Campaka, Mohaka, Ripuñjaya, Durvāra, Pratāpin, Balamodaka, Haryakṣa, Sahadeva, Bhūrideva and Sutāpana. These ten sons of the king became ready on the battlefield. Full of great enthusiasm they desired to march (against Śatrughna). The king too called his bright chariot fashioned with the beauty of gold and adorned with horses having excellent speed. The king having enthusiasm to fight, surrounded by the entire army, stood directing all his servants in the assembly.

CHAPTER FIFTY

*Āṅgada Delivers Śatrughna's Message to Suratha**Śeṣa said:*

1-6. Then the younger brother of Rāma came (there) and asked his servants: Where is the very charming sacrificial horse?" At that time those very mighty heroes said (these) words to Śatrughna: "We do not know. Some warriors took the horse and went into a city; and all of us were despised by the mighty servants of the king. You are now the authority as to what should be done now." Hearing those words of them, Śatrughna became very angry and the hero gnawing his teeth and repeatedly licking (his lips) with his tongue said: "Snatching my horse where will you go? Now (only) I shall ruin with (my) arrows (your) city with the people (i.e. the inhabitants)." Saying so, he said to Sumati: "Whose city is this? Who is its lord that took away my horse?"

Śeṣa said:

7-12. Hearing these angry words of the king the minister spoke in a sweet voice words with distinct syllables: "Know this to be a very charming city named Kuṇḍala. The righteous, mighty kṣatriya Suratha lives here. He is always given to religious conduct and is the servant of the couple of feet of Rāma; he is Rāma's servant like Hanūmat by thought, deeds and speech. There are hundreds of (good) deeds of this righteous (king) Suratha who is all-good, has a retinue of very strong (soldiers). If the best horse is snatched away, there would be a great war here. Many heroes skilled in fighting will fall (in the battle)." Having heard (the words) thus spoken, Śatrughna, the killer of the heroes of his enemy and the best among the eloquent, again said these words to (his) minister.

*Śatrughna said: **

13. How should we act here if he has snatched away Rāma's horse? He does not come to fight with (our) army which is strong and served by heroes?

Sumati said:

14-16. O great king, an eloquent messenger should be sent to the king, by (hearing) whose words the best among the strong will come along with his army. Or, the horse might have been carried away through ignorance by some proud (person). He will give us (back) the excellent, auspicious, sacrificial horse.

Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him, the intelligent and powerful Śatrughna said these polite words to Aṅgada.

Śatrughna said:

17-19. You (please) go to Suratha's great city which is nearby. Having gone (there) as a messenger say to the king: "You have taken away knowingly or unknowingly Rāma's horse. Give him (back); or go in for a fight along with your warriors." O you, who are endowed with the greatest might and who are intelligent, act as a messenger in the same way as you acted as the messenger of Rāma to Rāvaṇa in Laṅkā.

Śeṣa said:

20-22. Hearing these (words) and saying, 'Yes' to the king, Aṅgada went to (Suratha's) assembly full of groups of warriors. He saw (there) king Suratha holding Tulasī-sprouts and telling (about) Rāma to his own servants. The king too seeing the monkey having a charming body and knowing him to be Śatrughna's messenger and Vālin's son, said to him.

Suratha said:

23. O lord of the monkeys, how and for what purpose have you come here? Tell me the full reason so that knowing it I shall do that (what is proper).

Śeṣa said:

24-29. The lord of the monkeys very much wondering in his heart said to the king who was speaking like this and who served Rāma: "O best king, know me to be Vālin's son, the lord of the monkeys. I have been sent to you as a messenger by Śatrughna. O king, some of your servants came and have now suddenly and unknowingly taken away my horse, (and thus)

have done an unjust act. Go gladly to Śatrughna and having fallen at his feet quickly give the horse (back to him) along with your kingdom and sons. Otherwise, with your body wounded and deprived of your head by the arrows discharged by Śatrughna you will lie adorning the surface of the earth. Where will you go by snatching the sacrificial horse of him who easily in a moment destroyed the lord of Lañkā?

Śeṣa said:

30-35. The lord of the earth, replied to him (i.e. to Aṅgada) who was speaking like this. “You are saying everything that is proper. Your words are not untrue. But listen to my words, O servant of Śatrughna’s feet. I have seized the great horse of the intelligent Rāmacandra. Through the fear of Śatrughna and others I will not at all release him. If Rāma himself will come and appear before me, then (only) I with my sons will, after saluting his feet, give him my entire kingdom, much wealth, corn and army. If Rāma would not come, I shall now even in a moment conquer the great warriors like Śatrughna and bind them in my house.”

Śeṣa said:

36. Hearing this, the intelligent Aṅgada laughed at the king; and said very important words with great courage.

Aṅgada said:

37-48. You, being devoid of understanding due to your old age, are speaking (like this)! That (i.e. understanding) has left you, since you, strengthened by your devotion (to Rāma) are despising Śatrughna who easily killed the demon Lavaṇa, the enemy of king Māndhātṛ, who killed many very strong and insolent warriors in battles. You are binding (i.e. thinking of binding) that lord of warriors who killed Vidyunmālin seated in (a vehicle) moving according to the occupant’s desire. You appear to me to be devoid of wisdom. Śatrughna’s brother’s son Puṣkala is very mighty and knows (the use of) great missiles. Śatrughna has very much pleased Virabhadra, the attendant of Rudra. How can I describe his great valour earned through his might, resembling whom in might, fame or glory, there is none

on the earth? Near him remains Hanūmat who has (set) his heart on the lotus-like feet of Rāma, whose (i.e. of Hanūmat) many deeds will be heard (i.e. known) by you, who in a moment forcibly burnt the demon's (i.e. Rāvaṇa's) city (Laṅkā) along with the Trikūṭa mountain, who killed Akṣa, the son of the wicked lord of demons, who repeatedly brought the mountain Droṇa along with the deities in it on the tip of his tail for reviving the soldiers. Rāma (alone) knows his uprightness. None else who is a dunce, knows it; him, the lord of monkeys, his servant, Rāma does not forget (even) a little from his heart. All the lordly monkeys like Sugrīva who live on the earth, serve king Śatrughna. They are eager to see (the horse). (So also there are others like) Kuśadhvaja, Nīlaratna, Riputāpa knowing (the use of) great missiles, (and) Pratāpāgrya, Subāhu, Vimāla and Sumada. (So also) king Vīramaṇi, full of truth (i.e. truthful), is the servant of the king. These and other kings serve him.

49-50. There (i.e. among them), who are you (but) a mosquito in the ocean, O hero? Realising that, go (i.e. march) with your sons to the kind Śatrughna. Having given (back) the horse you will go to the lotus-eyed Rāma (and) seeing him you will make your limbs and your existence blessed.

Śeṣa said:

51-56. The king said to the messenger who was speaking in various ways: "You (will) immediately show them (to me, as) I do not know all (of them). O messenger, the might of Hanūmat who, taking Rāma on his back went to protect the sacrifice, is not as (great) as my own. If with devotion I worship Rāma mentally, with words and deeds, then he will quickly show me his body. Otherwise, let the heroes led by Hanūmat endowed with devotion bind me, and take (back) the horse speedily. (You) go to (my) enemy Śatrughna and tell him what I said. Let (your) good warriors be ready. This I, powerful one, am going to the battlefield. On the battlefield he will after thinking (properly) do what is proper. Let them free the great horse or give him to me."

Śeṣa said:

57. Having heard this and having smiled the hero went where the king (stayed), and having gone to him told him (everything) as was told by Suratha.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Hanūmat Frees Puṣkala from Campaka

Śeṣa said:

1-7. On hearing the words of Suratha from the mouth of (i.e. through) Aṅgada all (the soldiers) proficient in fighting and seated in their chariots became ready (to fight). There was the sound of the war-drums, so also of kettle-drums. On the battlefield the sounds of the roars of the soldiers arose. All the world was full of the sounds of the chariots and the trumpets of the elephants. The great sound (even) reached the sky. The soldiers skilled in fighting and full of enthusiasm for fighting made various sounds which scared the timid ones. When such a din took place, the king named Suratha surrounded by his sons and soldiers went to the battlefield. Pervading fully the earth with elephants, chariots, horses and hosts of foot-soldiers, and inundating it as the ocean (inundates it), he was seen with (or by) soldiers. Seeing that army resounding with the sounds of conches and also with cries of victory, and ready to fight, the king said to Sumati.

Śatrughna said:

8. The king surrounded with a huge army has come. O you very intelligent one, tell (me) what we should do now.

Sumati said:

9-10. Now many very fierce warriors like Puṣkala skilled in fighting and proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, should fight. The very strong, very brave son of Samira (i.e. of

Vāyu, viz. Hanūmat), very proficient in fighting, should fight with king (Suratha).

Śeṣa said:

11-18. When the great minister was speaking like this, the haughty sons of the king indeed stretched their bows on the battlefield. Seeing them, the very strong, respected soldiers like Puṣkala who were furious in battles and who had bows and arrows in their hands and who were seated in their chariots, went (to fight). The great warrior Puṣkala knowing the (use of) great missiles, fought in a single combat in chariots with Campaka protected by a great hero. That Kuśadhvaja, son of Janaka, fought with Mohaka. Vimala (fought) with Ripuñjaya, Subāhuka with Durvāra. Pratāpāgrya (fought with) Pratāpin, and Aṅgada with Balamoda. Nīlaratna fought with Haryakṣa, and Satyavān with Sahadeva. The powerful king Vīramaṇi fought with Bhūrideva. Ugrāśva, endowed with might, fought with Asutāpa. (Those warriors) skilled in fighting, fought a great single combat in chariots. All of them were skilled in (the use of) weapons and missiles and were proficient in fighting. O best sage, when the fight with Suratha's sons thus started, there took place great destruction.

19-21. Puṣkala said to Campaka: "O prince, what is your name? You who have come (to fight) with me in the battlefield, are lucky. Now wait; why do you go? How would you live (now)? O you proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, come to fight with me." Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him the mighty son of the king said to Puṣkala with a tone grave like the (thundering of) the clouds:

Campaka said:

22-25a. Fight here will not take place with (i.e. depending upon) name or family. Yet I shall tell you my name preceded by (i.e. with) my might. My mother is lord Rāghava; my father is said to be Rāghava. My brother is Rāmacandra; and my kinsman is Rāghava (i.e. Rāma). My name is Rāmadāsa (i.e. Rāma's servant). I am ever Rāma's servant. Rāma who favours his devotees, will save me in the battle. Yet following the belief of the people (i.e. convention) I shall now describe (myself) to you.

25b-28. I am Suratha's son; and Viravati is my mother. My name is that (i.e. Campaka) which makes all lovely in the spring season. The bees attracted by honey abandon the abode of my juice drunk in the spring. In complexion I resemble gold. I have a mark in the centre. O hero, know me as having the attractive name which is the name (of that tree). Fight with me with arrows. Nobody is able to conquer me in a battle. I shall now show you my wonderful valour.

Śeṣa said:

29-31. Hearing these great (i.e. important) words Puṣkala was glad in heart. Taking him to be difficult to be conquered he discharged arrows in the battle. He went (i.e. marched against) Puṣkala who was discharging arrows in crores. (And) then Campaka, full of anger, made his bow ready. He discharged sharp arrows which destroyed the hosts of enemies, which were marked by his name, and which had golden-feathered ends.

32-37. The great hero Puṣkala discharging arrows sharpened on (whet-) stones and causing darkness everywhere with arrows, cut off those (arrows) on the battlefield. Seeing his arrows being cut off by the hero, Campaka, full of anger, challenged the mighty Puṣkala. Saying "Leaving the battlefield, do not go (away)" he again quickly pierced Puṣkala at his chest with ten arrows. Those arrows of a sharp speed came and stuck very much (i.e. very deep) into the chest of Puṣkala, and quaffed the powerful blood. Afflicted by those arrows the hero too, through great anger, took five arrows, holding them like mountains. These powerful arrows, and the arrows of him, arranged in the sky, were cut off in a hundred ways by the king's son.

38-41. The mighty son of Suratha having cut off the very sharp arrows, took up a hundred arrows and struck Puṣkala on the chest. Those arrows cut off into a hundred ways by the magnanimous Puṣkala and opposed by the speed of (his) arrows fell in the vicinity of the battlefield. Seeing that very great feat the mighty son of the king clearly struck him on his chest with a thousand arrows.

42-44. Puṣkala knowing (the use of) great missiles, quickly cut them off too; but he again immediately fixed a myriad arrows on his own bow. Puṣkala knowing (the use of) great missiles cut

them off too. Then being very angry he sent a shower of arrows. Perceiving that shower of arrows (coming to him), the destroyer of heroes, viz. Campaka, praising Puṣkala (with the words) "Well (done), well (done)", struck him. Seeing Campaka possessing great valour Puṣkala who knew (the use of) all weapons, fixed the missile of (i.e. presided over by) Brahmā on his bow.

45-48. The great missile discharged by him set ablaze the ten directions; and having pervaded the sky, the heaven and the earth, it was on the point of causing universal destruction. Campaka, proficient in (the use of) all missiles, seeing that missile discharged, discharged the same missile to kill his active enemy. People looked upon one of the two lustres as the final destruction of the world. The best missile united with the other one, destroyed it. Seeing that wonderful feat, Puṣkala saying, "Wait, wait", angrily struck Campaka with infallible arrows.

49-52. The magnanimous Campaka not caring for the arrows discharged (by Puṣkala), discharged the terrible missile called Rāmāstra towards Puṣkala. When he saw the missile discharged by the noble Campaka, and decided to cut it off, he was struck by an arrow. He was bound by the brave Campaka and was again put into his own chariot. The noble-minded one decided to send him to the city. When he named Puṣkala was bound there was great wailing. The warriors intent on fleeing, went to Śatrughna.

53-56. Seeing them routed, Śatrughna said to Hanūmat: "Which hero has completely defeated my army adorned with heroes?" O king, then he said: "This hero Campaka, firm in his position, is taking (away) the hero after tying him up." Hearing such (i.e. these) words of him, Śatrughna full of anger, said to Vāyu's son (i.e. Hanūmat): "Quickly free (him) from the king's son (i.e. Campaka) who, the very mighty one, has tied up (our) warrior Puṣkala, O best among the heroes, free him (i.e. Puṣkala) from him (i.e. Campaka). How do you delay in the battle?"

57-67a. Hearing these words, and saying "Yes", Hanūmat went to free Puṣkala from the hero Campaka. Seeing Hanūmat to have come to free him he, the very angry one, struck him with hundreds and thousands of arrows. He broke the arrows discharged by the noble one (i.e. Campaka). The mighty one

was again quickly discharging arrows at him. He pounded all those arrows discharged by the enemy. Taking a śāla (tree) in his hand he struck the king's son (with it). The strong one made the śāla discharged by him like (i.e. of the size of) sesamum-seeds. Hanūmat discharged an elephant on the head of the prince. He too was struck by Campaka, so he died and fell on the ground. Hanūmat knowing (the use of) great missiles, discharged rocks. By means of a mechanism controlling arrows Campaka greatly pounded all the rocks; O brāhmaṇa, it was a great wonder. Seeing that all the rocks discharged by him were pounded, Hanūmat thinking that he was very powerful, was very much angry at heart. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), seized him in his hand, and jumped into the sky. Campaka fought with that Hanūmat. The best monkey was very much beaten by him in a close fight. The hero, terrible on account of a mountain of (i.e. great) pride, was angry in his mind.

67b-71. Seizing Campaka by his foot, he dashed him on the ground. Struck by the lord of monkeys, the speedy one got up in a moment and seizing Hanūmat by his tail whirled him round. The lord of the monkeys seeing his power and laughing again seized him by his foot. Having whirled him for a hundred times he dropped him on the haunch of an elephant. That Campaka, the son of the king, fell on the ground. Adorning the battlefield rich due to being embellished by heroes, he fainted. At that time the men, the followers of Campaka, wailed. (Hanūmat) freed Puṣkala who was tied up from the noose of Campaka.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

King Suratha Wins the Battle

Śeṣa said :

1-4. Seeing Campaka fallen Suratha, the mighty kṣatriya, with his body filled with grief, went, seated in a chariot (to the battlefield). Suratha who was very powerful, was angry and heaving heavy sighs, called (i.e. challenged) the monkey. Seeing the

king challenging him the very brave hero, the lord of monkeys, having great speed, went to (i.e. marched against) him. King Suratha with his beautiful voice deep-sounding like (that of) the clouds, seeing Hanūmat who despised great heroes coming, said:

Suratha said :

5-8. O best monkey, possessing great might and valour you who performed a great feat for Rāma in the demon's city, are blessed. You are the devoted servant of Rāma's feet. You, the hero, overthrew my mighty son Campaka. Now having tied you up I shall go to my city. O best among the lordly monkeys, wait carefully. I have told (you) what I thought to be the truth.

Hearing these words of Suratha the lord of the monkeys said with a grave voice (to him) on the battlefield adorned only by warriors.

Hanūmat said :

9-10. You remind (us) of Rāma's feet. We are the servants of Rāma's feet. If you bind me forcibly, my lord (Rāma) will free me. O hero, make true (i.e. carry out) the pledge that you have in your heart. (A man) who remembers Rāma goes to the end of (i.e. destroys) his misery. The Vedas say this.

Śeṣa said :

11-18a. Suratha having praised Vāyu's son (Hanūmat) like this, pierced him with many fierce arrows sharpened on a whetstone. Not minding those arrows discharged (by Suratha) and causing bloodshed, Hanūmat seized (Suratha's) bow ready with arrows with his hand. The angry monkey holding the bow in both his hands broke it; and shouting (i.e. with his shouts) he scared the warriors and tore them with his nails. Seeing that his bow with the string attached was broken by him (i.e. by Hanūmat), he took another bow adorned with a great (i.e. strong) string. The monkey angrily seized that bow also and broke it. He (i.e. Suratha) took another bow. The mighty (Hanūmat) broke that (also). When that bow was broken, he took another bow. He (i.e. Hanūmat) having a great energy, quickly broke

that bow also. Making great sounds in many ways every moment through great anger, he thus broke to pieces eighty bows of the king. Then (the king) getting very angry took (the missile) called Śakti.

18b-23. The hero (i.e. Hanūmat) struck by the Śakti fell down. (Then) in a moment being anxiously desirous (to defeat Suratha) he got up and, being very angry, seized the king's chariot. Seizing it he flew with a great speed toward the sea. Seeing him flying Suratha, the killer of his enemies, struck the active Hanūmat on his chest with iron-clubs. He dropped the chariot from a distance and in a moment it was shattered to pieces. Getting into another chariot he (i.e. Suratha) speedily went (i.e. rushed) to (Hanūmat), the son of Vāyu. Encircling the chariot along with the horses and the charioteer and with the banners, Hanūmat shattered it on the battlefield. Getting into another chariot, the very powerful king went (to attack Hanūmat). Hanūmat with his body getting strength violently broke it.

24-27. Seeing the chariot shattered Suratha got into another (chariot). He forcibly broke it along with the horses and the charioteer. In this way Hanūmat shattered fortynine chariots. Seeing that feat the king too along with his soldiers was amazed. Being angry he said to the lord of monkeys: "O son of Vāyu, acting bravely (like this) you are blessed. No one (but you) has done or will do this feat. O son of Vāyu, O bee (hovering round) the lotuses of the feet of Rāma, wait for a moment till I make my bow ready."

28-34. Saying so, and stringing the bow he, full of anger, fixed on his strong arrow the missile called Pāśupata (i.e. presided over by Paśupati). Then ghosts, friends, goblins, led by witches, frightening Hanūmat, suddenly appeared (there). The monkey was bound by the Pāśupata missiles. He was seen by the people (bound by the missiles). While they were wailing, the son of Vāyu remembering Rāma in his mind broke them in a moment. With his body freed he at once fought with king Suratha. Seeing him with his body freed Suratha, knowing (the use of) great missiles, taking him (i.e. Hanūmat) to be very strong, took the missile known as Brāhma (i.e. presided over by Brahmā). The strong Māruti laughed and swallowed the Brāhma missile. The king, the protector of the earth, seeing that (the missiles was) swallowed

by him, remembered Rāma. Remembering Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, he fixed the Rāma-missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Rāma) on his bow, and said these (words) to him: “O best monkey (now) you are bound.”

35-39a. Having heard those words, when the hero Hanūmat, Rāma’s servant, would go ahead, he was bound on the battlefield by the king with the Rāma-missile. To the king Hanūmat said: “O king, what do (i.e. can) I do now? You have bound me with the missile of (i.e. presided over by) my master, and not with any ordinary one. I respect it; O king, take me to your city. That abode of kindness, my master, will come and release me.” When the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) was bound, the angry Puṣkala went to (i.e. marched against) the king. He pierced that Puṣkala who had come (like that) with many arrows. The mighty one struck the king with thousands of arrows.

39b-46. The king cut off many of his arrows on the battlefield. When that great warrior Puṣkala was thus angry in the battle, the entire world—immobile and also the mobile—was filled with arrows. Seeing their firm resolve to fight, the soldiers of gods were perplexed. Then what to say of (i.e. what can be said about) men who got scared in a moment! With the discharges of missiles and counter-missiles a fierce, thrilling battle took place among the warriors. Then the angry king took an arrow. But it was cut off by the arrows angrily discharged by Bharata’s son (Puṣkala). When that arrow was cut off, the king took another. When he (i.e. Puṣkala) cut off (i.e. tried to cut off) that arrow, he was wounded on chest (with it) which stuck to (i.e. struck) his chest. Having fought a very great (i.e. fierce), wonderful battle with the king, the very lustrous and very intelligent Puṣkala fell into a swoon. When Puṣkala had fallen, Śatrughna who tormented his enemies, got angry with Suratha and seated in his chariot went (to him).

47-58. The very mighty brother of Rāma said to king Suratha: “You have done a great feat that you have bound the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat). You have overthrown even the great hero Puṣkala and so also my other very mighty and brave warriors in the battle. Now wait. O king, where will you go by overthrowing my soldiers on the battlefield? Now put up with my arrows.” Hearing these words of the hero, the mighty Sura-

tha having in his mind the charming lotus-like feet of Rāma, said: "In the battle I have knocked down your warriors waiting for Hanūmat. Now I shall overthrow you also on the battlefield. Recollect Rāma who, the hero, (will) himself come and protect you. Otherwise, O you tormentor of the enemies, you will not live before me." Saying so, the king struck him with thousands of arrows. He put the great Śatrughna into the cage of the volley of arrows. Śatrughna (trying to) avoid the volley of arrows, discharged a missile to burn the arrows with bent joints. The great king Suratha, seeing that missile discharged, destroying it with the Varuṇa missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Varuṇa), pierced him with crores of arrows. Then he fixed on his bow the wonderful missile given by the female devotee which deluded all heroes and made them sleep. The king seeing that great deluding missile remembered Viṣṇu and said to Śatrughna: "This one is proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. No other delusion seems to be causing fear and tormentation to me who am deluded by the recollection of Śrī Rāma."

59-65. When the hero spoke like this, he discharged the great missile. Cut off by the arrow it fell on the battlefield. Seeing that the great missile was fruitless against the king, he being extremely amazed, fixed an arrow on his bow. The destroyer of great demons fixed on his bow that fierce arrow resembling fire in lustre with which Lavaṇa was killed. Seeing that (arrow) the king said: "This arrow sticks to (i.e. strikes) the chest of the wicked. It does not even remain in front of the devotee of Rāma." When he was saying like this, Śatrughna struck him with that arrow and pierced him in his chest (with it) resembling flames of fire. The tormentor of the enemies, afflicted by the arrow and full of great agony became unconscious for a moment in the interior of his chariot. Having in a moment overcome that agony he said to his enemy before him: "Endure one stroke of (i.e. given by) me. Where will you go from my presence?"

66-69. Speaking like this in the great battle he fixed on his bow an arrow full of flame of fire and having golden feathered ends. That arrow that was discharged from the bow and that remained on its way, though cut off by Śatrughna with the upper part of his (sword's) blade, fell upon his chest. Being rendered un-

conscious by that arrow, he fell on the chariot. The entire army that was defeated wailed and fled away. Suratha, the servant of Rāma, obtained victory in the battle. Then heroes rendered unconscious by his ten sons, fell somewhere.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rāma Frees the Bound Heroes

Śeṣa said:

1-11. Seeing the army defeated and also seeing his master (lying) unconscious, Sugrīva went to fight with the king. “Come, O king, where are you going after rendering all the warriors unconscious? O you proficient in fighting, quickly fight with me.” He possessing power saying so uprooted some huge tree with branches and struck it on his head. Due to that stroke the very mighty, very brave king looked at Sugrīva and angrily fixing sharp arrows (on his bow) struck them on his chest. Sugrīva laughed and at once foiled all those arrows. He, the very powerful one, struck Suratha on his chest. Tearing Suratha with his nails he violently struck him with mountains, peaks (of mountains), trees and bodies of elephants. With the very terrible missile called Rāma (i.e. presided over by Rāma) he quickly bound him also. The best monkey (i.e. Sugrīva) took Suratha to be a servant of Rāma. He became like an elephant which, having an iron chain hanging from his feet, cannot do anything. Putting all the warriors into his chariot he went to his own city. Going to his assembly, the very great one said to Hanūmat who was bound: “Remember the kind Raghunātha, the protector of his devotees, so that he of the best mind will instantly release you. Otherwise, even after a myriad years I shall not free you from bondage.”

12-13. Having heard these words Hanūmat seeing himself tightly bound and the warriors unconscious and afflicted with the strokes of the enemy, remembered for freedom from the bondage Śrī Rāmacandra born in Raghu’s dynasty, husband

of Sītā and having eyes like lotus-petals. With all his senses free from grief he remembered the kind one for his own freedom from bondage.

Hanūmat said:

14-17. O lord, O best among excellent men, O kind one, O lord of Śītā, O you whose face is charming on account of beautiful hair, O you who burn (i.e. destroy) the affliction of your devotees, O you having an attractive form, release me at once from the bondage. Do not tarry. O abode of pity, you freed (beings) like the excellent elephant, so also gods who were being profusely burnt by the fire of the family of demons, and you untied the hair-bonds on the heads of their beautiful wives. (Please) remember me. You are engaged in the performance of a sacrifice along with the best sages; you give a thought to religious merit, O you whose feet are praised by kings. O god, O Supreme Being, today I have been firmly tied with a noose by Suratha; quickly release me. If in spite of my remembering you very much, O you whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by excellent gods, you would not release me, then the manifested world would laugh at you; therefore do not delay in this matter; quickly release (me).

18-27. Hearing this (prayer), the Raghu-hero (i.e. Rāma), the lord of the world and the abode of kindness, quickly came by the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) to release his devotee. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) saw him who was well accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa who followed him, and Bharata, and who was accompanied by hosts of sages led by Vyāsa. Seeing his lord having come (he) said to the king: “O king, see Hari who has kindly come to free his own (devotee). Formerly, merely by being remembered he freed many votaries of him. In the same way he has come to free me tied with a noose.” Seeing Śrī Rāmabhadra (who had) come there, that Suratha, full of the flood of devotion, in a moment saluted him hundreds of times. Śrī Rāma having four arms, embraced him with his arms; and, repeatedly sprinkling his devotee with tears of joy, he said: “Your body is blessed. You have done a great feat. You fully tied the powerful lord of monkeys—Hanūmat.” Śrī Rāma freed the excellent monkey from the bondage. He

looked at all those unconscious warriors and (merely) by (his) glance he revived them. They gave up their swoon (i.e. they regained consciousness). They were seen by Rāma serving gods. They got up and saw the charming Rāmacandra. They saluted the lord of Raghus. He enquired after their well-being.

28-32. Then Suratha, having seen Rāma to have come there for favouring his votary, gladly presented to him his entire kingdom along with the (sacrificial) horse. He pleased Śrī Rāma with (i.e. by giving him) many excellent garments. He said (to Rāma): “O Rāghava, I did an unjust act; (please) forgive me.” Then Śrī Rāma said: “You have protected the (sacrificial) horse. It is the duty of kṣatriyas to fight along with the lord. You have done a good deed. The warriors are highly pleased on the battle-field.” (The king) along with his sons (then) worshipped Viṣṇu in a human form (i.e. Rāma). Having stayed (there) for three days and having dismissed him with a blessing, the mighty Śrī Rāma along with the sages went back in the divine car (i.e. Puṣpaka) moving according to (the occupants’) will. Seeing him (going like that) all of them were amazed and told (one another) charming stories about him.

33-37. The powerful and very mighty Suratha, having placed (his son) Campaka in his city, decided to go with Śatrughna. Śatrughna, having got (back) his horse, caused the kettle-drums to be sounded. He (also) caused the various sounds of conches to be produced everywhere. The hero along with Suratha let loose the sacrificial horse. He roamed in foreign countries. (But) no powerful (man) seized him. Wherever the wandering horse went there Śatrughna along with great army and with Suratha also went. Once he (i.e. the horse) went to the excellent hermitage of Vālmiki which was resorted to by excellent sages and was marked with smoke in the morning (and which was situated) on the bank of Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Lava Binds the Sacrificial Horse

Śeṣa said:

1-5. Jānakī's son Lava surrounded by sages' sons went to bring sacred fuel fit for the rites in order to perform the rites. There he saw the sacrificial horse marked with a golden note and made fragrant with the divine perfume of saffron, agaru (sandal) and musk. Seeing (the horse) and with curiosity aroused he said to the sons of the sages: "Whose horse having mind's speed has fortunately come to my hermitage? Come with me; observe (him); do not be afraid." Saying so that Lava quickly went near the horse. He born in the family of Raghu and standing near the horse, holding a bow and an arrow, stood invincible like Jayanta near the horse.

6-11. Having gone (there) with the sons of the sages he read the excellent note, shining with lines of distinct letters, and placed on the (horse's) forehead. "There is the great family of Vivasvat which is well-known in all the worlds; in which there is no one that is dependent or none that is greedy of another's wealth. To the family belongs Daśaratha who is the banner of the solar dynasty, who is a (great) archer, who is great, who is a teacher initiating (one) in (the science of using) a bow, whom all the deities with gods salute with their heads having (ornaments of) jewels (bent down). The noble Rāmacandra, descendant of Raghu, crest-jewel of all the brave, removing the pride of the might of the warriors, is his son. His (i.e. Rāma's) mother is the daughter of the king of Kośala, the producer of a jewel. From her womb was born a jewel of a son, Rāma who causes fear to his enemies, who is well-trained by a brāhmaṇa, is performing a horse-sacrifice to remove the sin due to his having killed the best brāhmaṇa, viz. Rāvaṇa.

12-17. He has let loose this sacrificial horse, chief among horses, surrounded by a large army and well-protected by moats. My brother Śatrughna, the killer of Lavaṇa, surrounded by an army consisting of the groups of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, is his protector. Let that king who has, through his conceit, the pride that he is great, or let those who think that they

are brave, they are best among the archers or that they are mighty here (i.e. on the earth), seize forcibly the horse adorned with a jewelled necklace, having the velocity of mind and moving at his will, and very bright due to his movement everywhere. From him (who has seized the horse) hurt by the arrow discharged from (Śatrughna's) bow, my brother Śatrughna will easily and forcibly free him. Let those kṣatriyas born from a kṣatriya girl (i.e. woman) or born in good families having good wives, seize him. Those of wrong bodies (i.e. those that are not proper kṣatriyas) should, after presenting their kingdom to Raghu (i.e. Rāma), salute him."

18-21. Having read like this, Lava, wielding a weapon and a bow, got angry, and with words faltering through anger said to the sons of the sages: "See quickly the audacity of that kṣatriya king who has written this in the note on the (horse's) forehead about his valour and might. Who is this Rāma? Who is Śatrughna? They are (but) insects having very little might. They are born in the family of kṣatriyas, and not we, the excellent ones? He does not have as his mother Sītā who has given birth to a hero—who has given birth to Kuśa, who had in her womb a gem called Kuśa, as the piece of wood (called Araṇi) used for kindling the sacred fire has fire (in it).

22-24. I shall now show on all sides my being a kṣatriya etc. If he is born of a kṣatriya and if he is killer of his enemy, he will take (back) this horse fit for the sacrificial rite, which is bound by me. Otherwise, he will abandon his kṣatriyahood and will worship Kuśa's feet. Now, with the arrows discharged from my bow he will lie down. So also the other great warriors, ornaments of the battlefield (will lie down)."

25-28a. Uttering these words, Lava, the best one, holding a bow and arrows, despising all kings, seized the horse. Then the sages' sons said to Lava who desired to seize the horse: "Rāma, the king of Ayodhyā, is very mighty and brave. Even Śakra (i.e. Indra), insolent through his power does not (dare) catch his horse. Do not seize him. Listen to these words of me (i.e. of us) which are beneficial." Hearing these words he said to the brāhmaṇa-sons:

28b-34. "O best brāhmaṇas, you do not know the power of kṣatriyas. Kṣatriyas are proud of their valour (while) brāh-

maṇas have food (only). Therefore, going home, you eat (whatever) is brought by your mothers.” Thus told they remained quiet and watched the valour of that Lava. Those sons of sages remained away and out (of the range of the imminent fight). When this incident took place, the servants of that king (i.e. Śatrughna) came (there, and) seeing the horse bound, they said to Lava: “Who has bound the horse? Oh, with whom is Yama angry? Who, being in the midst of volleys of arrows, will get (i.e. suffer from) a great agony?” Then Lava quickly said: “I have bound this excellent horse. With him who releases (i.e. tries to release) him, (my) great brother Kuśa will be angry. What will even lord Yama himself, after coming over here, do? Being very much pleased with the shower of arrows, he will salute (Kuśa) and go (back).”

Śeṣa said:

35-37. He holding the bow in both his hands discharged arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads at those servants of Śatrughna who had on hearing these words come there to release Rāma's horse that was bound and who said, “This is a child”. They with their arms cut off went to Śatrughna through grief, and when asked (by him), they all told about the cutting off of their arms by Lava.

CHAPTER FIFTY FIVE

The Observation of the Spies

Vyāsa said :

1. Having heard this charming account of the powerful Lava the sage entertaining a doubt again asked the serpent (i.e. Śeṣa) having a thousand faces.

Śrī Vātsyāyana said:

2-3. Formerly you had said that Rāma due to the censure by a washerman and ardently longing for fame abandoned Sītā all

alone in the forest. Where were the two sons born to Jānakī (i.e. Sītā)? Where did they learn archery? How did they learn the science which enabled them to take away the horse of Rāma?

Vyāsa said:

4. Hearing these words of the sage, the very intelligent serpent Śeṣa praised the brāhmaṇa and narrated to him the wonderful deeds of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

5-8. Protecting according to dharma a part of the earth, along with his wife Rāma ruled in Ayodhyā with his brothers. Sītā retained his semen (i.e. Sītā conceived), and five months had passed (i.e. her pregnancy was five months old). The queen shone very much like the triad (of Vedas) holding the Supreme Being. Some time Rāma asked (Sītā) the daughter of Videha (king Janaka): "What is your cherished wish? I shall fulfil it." The chaste lady, getting abashed, was asked in private only. With her words faltering through abashment she said these nectar(-like) words to Rāma:

Sītā said:

9-17. By your grace I have enjoyed everything and shall enjoy good (things). O dear one, no cherished wish remains in my mind. She whose lord is like you whose good feet are praised by gods, has all excellent (things). Nothing remains (to be secured). You are asking with persistence about the cherished wish present in my mind. (So) O you charming lord, I tell the truth to you. O lord, a long time has passed since I saw the chaste ladies like Lopāmudrā. O lord, my mind becomes eager to see those beautiful ladies. With you I obtained the kingdom and lived happily. I am ungrateful (as I have not seen them). Desirous of saluting them some time, I, having gone (to them) shall honour them, the treasures of penance, with garments etc. I shall also offer them bright gems and ornaments, so that the chaste ladies gratified by me will give me pleasant blessings. This, O dear one, is the longing in my mind. (Please) fulfil it.

Hearing these very charming words of Sītā, Rāmacandra

who was very much pleased, said to his beloved (i.e. Sītā): “O Jānakī, you are lucky. In the morning you will go, and having seen those ladies with penance as their wealth, (and thus) having made yourself blessed, you will come back near (i.e. to) me.”

18-26. Hearing these words of Rāma she was extremely pleased. (She thought): ‘In the morning I shall certainly see the female-ascetics.’ The spies who were sent to ascertain his fame that was reported (by others) slowly went to him at night. ‘Everyday listening to very charming stories about Rāma, they had that day gone to the large house of a rich man. Seeing a lamp burning and noticing (i.e. hearing) human voices, the spies remained there for a moment, and heard the great glory (of Rāma). There a certain beautiful lady pleased with her child sucking her breasts, said these pleasing words to it: “O son, drink (i.e. suck) as much pleasing milk of me as you like. O my son, later it will be difficult for you to have it. Rāma, shining like the petals of a blue lotus, is the lord of this city. Therefore, the people living in the city will not be reborn. How can there be the drinking (i.e. sucking) of milk in the absence of birth? Therefore, thinking in your mind that the milk is (later) difficult to obtain, drink (suck) it repeatedly. For them also who will remember Śrī Rāma, meditate upon and talk about him, there will certainly be no drinking (i.e. sucking) of (the mother’s) milk (i.e. they will not be reborn).”

27-38. Hearing these words—the nectar of Rāma’s glory, they being delighted went to another house—a great house of a fortunate person. Just then, another spy, thinking that it was a pleasant house, remained there for a moment with a desire to listen to Rāma’s glory. There a beautiful lady, chewing tāmbūla, affectionately offered it to her husband, seated on a couch. She, abounding in beauty, fumigated with camphor and agaru (sandal), seeing her husband, and with her eyes moving said with her bangles making a jingling sound to him having the form of Cupid: “O lord, you appear to me like the lord of Raghu (family) having an extremely handsome and very delicate body, a pair of eyes with their corners resembling lotuses, an attractive and expansive chest, and arms with armlets—you are to me actually Rāma.” He, handsome like Cupid, having heard these very pleasant words of his wife, dancing (i.e. moving) the corners of his eyes, said: “Listen,

O darling, you, a chaste lady, have spoken very pleasant (words). It is proper for the loyal wives that their husbands are just like Rāma to them; but (see), where am I, the luckless one, and where is that great, fortunate Rāma? (i.e. there is a great disparity between Rāma and me). Where am I, small like an insect, and where (is Rāma) worshipped by gods like Brahmā? Where is the fire-fly, the gem of the sky, and where is the low moth? Where is the lord of beasts (i.e. the lion), the enemy of the elephants, and where is the dull-witted hare? Where is that respectable Gaṅgā, and where is the water on the street flowing the wrong way? Where is Meru, the abode of the gods, and where is a small heap of the guñjā fruits? Similarly, where am I, and where is Rāma, by (the touch of) the dust of whose feet the lady who was reduced to a stone, became in a moment one having the form that enticed (even) Brahmā?"

39-45. With passion produced in her, taken away by love for him, and making her eye-brows like bows dance (i.e. knitting her eye-brows), she embraced her husband who was speaking these words. Hearing words like these, the spy went to another house. Just then another spy heard words full of glory. Some lady making ready all (things) like a bed with flowers (strewn over it), sandal with camphor, fit for love-making, said (these) words to her husband: "O my lord, lie on the bed with flowers (strewn over it) and fit for enjoyment, also have smearing with sandal etc., so also enjoyment in various ways. People like you alone deserve enjoyment, and not those who are averse to Rāma. Enjoy properly everything that is obtained through Rāma's grace. A loving (wife) like me, sandal removing torment, a bed with flowers arranged over it—all (this) is due to Rāma's grace. Those men who will not worship Rāma are deprived of garments, enjoyments etc. and are not able to fill their belly (i.e. to maintain themselves)."

46-51. To the lady who was speaking like this, the husband who was delighted, said: "You are telling the truth; I have everything due to the grace of Rāma." The spy, hearing about Rāma's glory, went (away). Just then a spy, remaining in someone else's house, heard (these) words. A certain lady engaged in playing upon the lute with her husband on the bed, to whom her husband was singing the glory of Rāma, said to her hus-

band: "O lord, we in whose city lord Śrī Rāma himself is the king and protects his subjects like his own sons, are most fortunate. The great feat, difficult to perform, which he performed, is not easy to do: He controlled the ocean and built a bridge over it; he having killed his enemy Rāvaṇa, after having shattered it with (the help of) the monkeys, brought (back) Sītā. Thus he performed a great act."

52-56. Hearing this speech containing very sweet words, the husband smiled, and again said these words to her: "O innocent, beautiful lady, this is not a great feat of Rāmacandra, viz. the killing of Rāvaṇa etc. or controlling the ocean etc. He, the great one, requested by Brahmā etc. easily came (down) to the earth and performed good deeds which remove great sins. Do not look upon Rāma who gives joy to Kauśalyā, as a human being. He who sportively obtained humanhood (i.e. was born as a human being), creates, protects and destroys the world. We are lucky that we see Rāma's lotus-like face which is difficult to be seen by gods like Brahmā."

57-67. He heard the deeds of Rāmacandra, giving delight to the ears. The spy that stood at the door repeatedly heard such words. Another spy having gone to another house stood there to listen to Hari's (i.e. Rāma's) glory. There also he heard the splendid glory of Śrī Rāmabhadra. A very beautiful lady, playing with dice with her husband, as it were causing her bangles to dance, spoke (these) sweet words: "O dear one, I have speedily won everything; what will you, having a mind to win, do (now)?" Saying these words in jest she joyfully embraced her husband. The husband said: "O you of a beautiful body, O you very charming one, I alone have won. I, who always remember Rāma, do not have a defeat anywhere. Remembering Rāma, the charming one, I shall just now vanquish you, as formerly the gods after remembering him, vanquished Diti's sons (i.e. the demons) in a moment." Saying so he turned over the dice. Just then he won; being delighted he said these words: "What I said has come true; I have defeated you, O young lady. One who remembers Rāma has never any fear from one's enemy." Speaking like this they who longed for each other, tightly embraced each other. Then the spy went home. Thus the five great spies, having heard the glory of the king and praising one another gladly went home. One, the

sixth spy, having seen the houses of artisans, went there desiring to hear (about) the glory of the king, the lord of the earth.

68-73. A washerman, with his eyes red due to anger and full of anger kicked his wife who had stayed at another's house, and despised her: "From my house, go to the house of him where you stayed for a day. I shall not accept you who violate my commands." Then his mother said to him: "Do not abandon her who has come (back) to (our) house, who has not committed any fault, and who is free from bad acts." The angry washerman said to his mother: "I am not as great as Rāma as to accept (my wife) who stayed in another's house. Whatever that king does, might be lawful; (but) I will not accept my wife who has stayed in another's house." He again and again said these words: "I am not king Rāma who protected Sītā that had stayed in another's house."

74-79. Having heard these words, the spy was full of anger. He took a sword in his hand and decided to kill him (i.e. the washerman). He (then) recollected Rāma's words: "None of my subjects should be killed." Realising this, he, of a noble mind, wrathfully withdrew (his sword). On hearing (the washerman's words), he was very much afflicted with grief, and being angry and breathing out and in repeatedly (i.e. repeatedly sighing) he went where the five spies stood. They met one another there, and told (one another) the deeds of Rāma honoured by all people without an exception, and heard by them. Having heard his words they told one another: "This censure uttered by a wicked man should not be reported to Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma)." Having thus spoken to one another, the eager ones went (home) and slept, after having mentally decided: 'In the morning, we shall tell the king'.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

*Rāma Seeks Bharata's Advice**Śeṣa said:*

1-9. Having performed the daily morning duties, having duly gratified the brāhmaṇas, the most learned in the Vedas, with presents of gold, he went to the assembly. All men went to the assembly to salute Raghunātha, the king looking after all the subjects like his own sons. Lakṣmaṇa had held an umbrella over the king's head. Bharata and Śatrughna had at that time held the chowries. Sages led by Vasiṣṭha attended there (upon Rāma). Ministers led by Sumantra who did justice, (were present) there. When the time moved on like this, the six well-adorned spies came to salute the king seated in the assembly. Seeing them desirous of speaking, the best king, being eager, entered the interior, private chamber in the assembly. The good-minded king asked all the spies in private: "O spies, O you who restrain your enemies, tell me correctly how people talk about me; how (they talk) about my wife; in what way do they talk about the acts of my ministers?" Hearing these words the spies spoke in a grave tone like that of the (thundering) clouds to the lord of the Raghus who was asking them.

The spies said:

10-17. O lord, now your fame purifies all people in the world. We heard it, being told by men and women in every house. You the Supreme Being, went to the earth to adorn the great family of Vivasvat. You have largely spread your fame. (In that family) many famous and very mighty (kings) were (born) but they did not have that fame as you have. You, the lord, have made blessed all the subjects that do not have an untimely death and trouble from disease. As the moon, or as the river Gaṅgā illumines the earth, your good fame illumines the earth. Having heard (about) your fame, Brahmā and others are very much ashamed. O lord, everywhere your fame now purifies the people. We all who are your spies, O lord, are most blessed, (since) every moment we see your charming face.

Having seen (i.e. heard) these words of the five spies, he asked the sixth one whose face was marked with abashment.

Rāma said:

18-21. O you very intelligent one, tell me truly what you have heard (being talked) in the commingling (i.e. crowd) of people. Tell all that to me as it is. Otherwise you are a sinner.

Again and again, and fast, Rāma asked him in detail. Yet he did not tell Rāma the words of the people (i.e. popular scandal). Then Rāma said to the spy with an abashed face: "I swear you with truth. Tell me everything properly." Then a spy slowly said (these) words to the spy: "You have to tell what was said by the artisans, even if it is not fit to be told."

The spy said:

22-30. O lord, except that your wife stayed in the demon's house, your fame due to your having killed Rāvaṇa has (spread) everywhere. But an artisan—a washerman—despising his wife who had stayed in another's house, beat her at night. His mother said to him: "Why do you beat this innocent one? Accept the woman (i.e. your wife); do not censure her; follow my words (of advice)." Then the washerman said: "I am not king Rāma who accepted Sītā that had stayed in the demon's house." O lord, (the washerman further said:) "Every act done by a king is proper. The act of others, even though they perform meritorious deeds, is improper." Again and again he said: "I am not king Rāma." I got angry. (But) just at that time I remembered your words (viz. 'Do not kill a human being'). (I also thought:) 'Cutting his head I (should) at that time knock him on the ground.' Then I thought: 'Where is Rāma and where is the washerman? (i.e. there is a great disparity between Rāma and the washerman). This wicked one is telling a lie. He is not speaking the truth'. O Rāma, if you order I (shall) kill him now. Due to your persistence, I told you about the analogy, though (really) it should not have been told. The king is the authority here (i.e. in this matter). Let him think (what is relevant).

Śeṣa said:

31-32. Hearing these words which were like the great thunderbolt, (Rāma) heaving and breathing repeatedly fell unconscious. Seeing the king (fallen) unconscious, the spies full of grief fanned him with the end of their garments to remove (Rāma's) grief.

33-40. The king who regained consciousness after some time, said to them: "Go and quickly send Bharata to me." The spies carrying messages and grieved, quickly went to Bharata's house and told (him) Rāma's message. The intelligent Bharata, having heard Rāma's message went to the assembly. Learning that Rāma was in the private (chamber), he quickly came to him, and the noble-minded one said to the door-keeper: "Where is that Rāmabhadra, (that) treasure of kindness, my brother?" The hero went to the house charming with gems, indicated by him. Seeing Rāma tired out, he became afraid in his mind: 'Is this Rāma angry? Or is it the grief of the lord?' Then he said to the king, heaving repeatedly: "O lord, how is that your face which is easily pleased, is hanging (like this)? Your face, due to the tears appears like the moon eclipsed by Rāhu. Tell me the full and true cause. What do (i.e. should) I do for you? O great king, give up your grief. How can you be the receptacle of grief?"

41-46. The righteous hero Rāmacandra, who was thus being spoken to by his brother, spoke to him in a faltering voice: "O brother, listen to my words. (Listen to) the cause of my grief. O very intelligent one, this morning remove it. In the family of Vivasvat no king was (ever) hurt by infamy. My fame today has become foul; Gaṅgā has been joined by Yamunā. The life of those kings only is good on the earth who have fame. The life of those who are wounded by infamy is like (that of) the dead. Those who would have fame on the earth, go to eternal worlds. Those who are bitten by the female serpent in the form of infamy, would go down. Today my fame, the divine river in the world, has become turbid. Listen to the words which the washerman said about me.

47-52. In this city a washerman today uttered certain censurable words about Jānakī (i.e. Sītā). Then, O brother, what

should I do on the earth? Should I abandon myself (i.e. should I commit suicide) today: or should I abandon my wife Jānakī? Which of the two should I do? Tell me what is proper." Speaking like this Rāma, the crest-jewel of Dharma shedding tears and with his body shaken with horripilation, fell on the ground. Seeing his brother fallen, Bharata, full of grief, having examined him carefully, slowly brought Rāma (back) to consciousness. Having seen Rāmacandra who was very much grieved, to have regained consciousness, he spoke very charming words to remove his grief: "Who is this washerman? Which censurable words did he utter? I shall cut off the tongue of him who censures Jānakī."

53-60. Then Rāma told the words that came out of the washerman's mouth (i.e. that were uttered by the washerman) and that were heard by the spy, to the magnanimous Bharata. Hearing them, Bharata said to his brother who was afflicted with grief: "Brahmā said: 'She is pure'. Your father Daśaratha also (said the same thing). (Then) how should she respected by the world, be abandoned merely on (the strength of) the washerman's words? Your fame praised by Brahmā and others, purifies the worlds. How will it be turbid today due to the words of the washerman? Therefore, give up the great grief due to the censure of Sitā. Look after the kingdom along with her—the very fortunate one—who is pregnant. How do you wish to abandon your charming body? Without you who remove our grief, we all are doomed today. That very glorious Sitā will not live without you (even) for a moment. Therefore, with (that) loyal wife enjoy ample glory." Hearing these words of Bharata, the righteous (king), the best among the eloquent, again spoke these words to him:

61-64. "O brother, whatever you say is all just. But by my order, carry out the words which I utter. I know that she is purified in fire, is chaste and is honoured by the world. (But) I am afraid of public scandal. (Therefore) I (shall) abandon my (wife) Jānakī. So, taking in your hand a sharp and very fierce sword, (either) cut off (my) head, or abandon (my) wife Jānakī in the forest." Hearing these words of Rāma, Bharata, with tremor in his body and tears (in his eyes), fell unconscious on the ground.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

The Washerman's Former Birth

Vātsyāyana said:

1-2. O you of a good vow, tell me how the lord received the utterance of the censure of Jānakī having pure, excellent fame in the world. O Śeṣa, do that by which my mind shall have very splendid happiness, so that I who drink the nectar coming out from your mouth, shall be satisfied, and by which my worldly existence will be cut off.

Śeṣa said:

3-11. In Mithilā, a great city, there lived a king by name Janaka. Pleasing his subjects, he ruled righteously. When that Sīradhvaja (i.e. Janaka) was ploughing the field, an extremely beautiful girl came out from the long, first furrow. Then king Sīraketu (i.e. Janaka) became extremely glad. He named her, the fascinating one, the glory of the world, Sītā. When she, extremely charming, was playing in the grove of the garden, she saw a pair of a male and a female parrot that delighted her mind. The parrots were extremely delighted and lustful, and affectionately talking to each other in pleasant words. That pair, enjoying (each other's company), quickly flew in the sky, settled on the lap of a mountain, and spoke (to each other): "On the earth, charming Rāma will be the king. His wife will be (a woman) by name Sītā. The intelligent, powerful king, vanquishing (his enemies), will rule (over the earth) along with her for eleven thousand years. Blessed is that queen Jānakī, and blessed is he, named Rāma, who having approached each other, will gladly enjoy."

12-16. When the couple of parrots was conversing in this way, Maithilī, observing their words and realising that this was a divine couple and thinking, 'this couple of parrots is telling charming tales about me, (so) I shall catch the couple, and will ask about all the words, the meaning of which is already expressed', she said to her friends: "Slowly catch this charming pair of the birds." The friends just then went to the mountain, and caught the excellent pair of the birds, and with a desire to

do what was dear to their friend (Sītā), reported it to her. Seeing the pair uttering many words in various ways, she comforted it, and said to it these words.

Sītā said:

17-18. Do not be scared. Who are you two, the charming ones? Where have you come from? Who is Rāma, and who is Sītā? Wherefrom did you have the information about them? Tell me all that quickly. Let your fear of me go away.

The pair of birds said:

19-26. There is a very great sage Vālmīki who is the best among those who know dharma. That sage made his disciples sing the future adventures of Rāma. He, engrossed in the well-being of all beings, everyday remembered its words. All those future adventures of Rāma, being sung repeatedly, were heard by both of us; they came to us (i.e. were mastered by us) due to repetition. Listen to them. In the end we shall tell who that Rāma is and who that Jānakī is and what will happen to her with Rāma of a playful nature. Glorious Viṣṇu, good stories about whom are sung by celestial women, will, having divided himself into four, come up at the sacrifice performed by R̥ṣyaśṛṅga. He, having a bow in his hand, will come along with Viśvāmitra and his own brothers to Mithilā. Then there seeing a bow difficult to be taken (i.e. wielded) by other kings, he will break it, and will obtain the very charming daughter of Janaka. O excellent one, we have heard that with her he will rule over a large kingdom. O you of a beautiful body, we who had flown there, heard this and other (things) about you, told by those who lived there. Release us who desire to go.

27-40. Grasping (i.e. hearing) these words very pleasant to the ears, she again spoke (these) words to that pair of birds: “Where would that Rāma be? Whose son (will he be)? In what way will he marry her? What form will the excellent man have? Tell me exactly all this that I have asked you. Later I will do all good things liked by you.” Hearing those (words), the female parrot, seeing Jānakī and realising in her heart that she was oppressed by love, then said to her: “There will be an intelligent mighty king having a line of chariots, and the scion

of the solar dynasty, having resorted to whom gods will be fully victorious. He will have three wives, having forms that will fascinate (even) Indra. On them (i.e. from them) four children (sons) lofty on account of might, will be born. Rāma will be the eldest of all. Bharata is said to be (born) after him. After him (i.e. Bharata) Lakṣmaṇa (will be born), and after him (will be born) Śatrughna, powerful everywhere. The large-minded one (i.e. Rāma) will go by the name Raghunātha. They will have endless names; O friend, the face of the powerful Rāma will be charming like the calyx of a lotus. His very long (i.e. large) eyes will have the beauty of lotuses. His nose will be raised, large and charming. His eyebrows will be lovely and charming due to their being harmonious. His lovely hands will be hanging up to his knees. His very small neck will be charming like a conch. His chest will be plain and expansive and charming. His chest will be pure and will have a mark. Endowed with the beauty of charming thighs and waist, he will have a pair of knees, pure and naturally adored. His lotus-like feet will always be worshipped by all his (votaries). The very charming Raghupati (will be like this). Rāma possess a form like this. Who am I to describe him? Even one having a hundred mouths cannot describe him. Then what about birds like me? Seeing his form, (even) Lakṣmī, charming and having a beautiful body, was enticed. (Then) which (lady) is there on the earth that will not be enticed? He has great power, great valour, and has a very enticing form. What power do I have to describe Rāma endowed with all glory and virtues?

41-53. Lucky is that queen Jānakī (i.e. Sītā), having a very attractive form, who will gladly enjoy with him for a myriad years. O beautiful lady, who are you? What is your name that you cleverly and respectfully ask me to narrate (the account) of Rāma?" Hearing these words, Jānakī, telling the couple of birds about the charming and enticing (story of) her birth, said to them: "I am that Jānakī, the daughter of Janaka, whom you mentioned. I shall truly release you when that very charming Rāma comes to me; not otherwise—being (just) allured by your words! I shall caress you. You, having (i.e. speaking) sweet words, stay happily (with me)." Hearing these words they trembled and were frightened. They were mutually (i.e. both)

afraid; (and) said this to Jānakī: “O good lady, we are birds, living in forests and resorting to trees. We wander everywhere. We would not get happiness (merely by staying) at home. I am pregnant. Having gone to my place and having given birth to sons (i.e. young ones) I shall come (back). I have told you the truth.” (Though) thus addressed by the female parrot, she did not release her. Then her husband (i.e. the male parrot), eager, and with his face hung down spoke to her: “Sītā, release my wife. How do you keep this my beautiful wife? We shall go to the forest and shall happily move in the forest. My charming wife would be (i.e. is) pregnant. Having performed her (i.e. after her) delivery I shall come to you, O lovely one?” Thus, addressed, she said to him: “O you very intelligent one, you can gladly go. I shall keep this happy one, doing what is dear to me, near me.” Thus addressed, the bird was unhappy; and full of tenderness, he said to her: “Those words which are uttered by the meditating saints are true: (The words are:)

54-56. ‘One should not speak, one should not speak. One should remain by resorting to silence. Otherwise, due to the blemish in one’s utterance, the mad one would be fettered.’ Had we not talked (to each other) on this tree, how would we have been bound? Therefore, one should resort to silence.” Saying so, he spoke to her: “O beautiful lady, O Sītā, I shall not live without this wife of me. Therefore, O you charming one, leave her.”

57-66. Though admonished with various words, she did not release her. The (parrot’s) wife, who was angry, and miserable, then cursed Janaka’s daughter: “As you are separating me from my husband, in the same way you will be, when pregnant, separated from Rāma.” When she, the afflicted one, was repeatedly saying like this, her life departed due to misery, full of the distress of her husband. For her who was repeatedly remembering Rāma and uttering (the name) Rāma, a divine car properly arrived. The female parrot became luminous when she had gone to heaven. When she died, her husband, that lord of birds, was extremely angry, and being distressed, fell into Gaṅgā: “In Rāma’s city, full of people, I will be born as (a śūdra so) that due to my words she will be dejected, and extremely unhappy due to separation (from her husband).” Saying so, he who was

distressed, angry, frightened and shaking due to separation from her, fell into the water of Gaṅgā graced with eddies. Due to his being angry, due to his being distressed, and due to his having insulted Sītā, he obtained very (mean) śūdrahood (as he was born as) a washerman named Krodhana. That best bird (or best brāhmaṇa) who, doing ill to the great, abandons his life through anger, obtains śūdrahood after he dies. That took place. Due to the words of the washerman she was censured and separated. On account of the curse of the washerman, she was separated (from Rāma), and she went to the forest.

67. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you what you had asked about (Sītā), born in Videha. Listen to the further account here (i.e. regarding Sītā). I (shall) narrate it.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Lakṣmaṇa Leaves Sītā in the Forest

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Seeing Bharata unconscious, Raghunātha who was very much afflicted, said to the door-keepers; “Bring Śatrughna quickly to me.” Hearing these words, (the door-keeper), in a moment brought Śatrughna where his brother Rāma remained with Bharata. Seeing Bharata unconscious and Rāma afflicted, he who was grieved, saluted (Rāma) and said: “What has this frightful (incident) come about?” Then Rāma, with his face hung down with a piteous voice and with his words faltering and with tremor, told Śatrughna, the servant of his feet, the words of the śūdra—the popular censure: “O brother, listen, and quickly and carefully do what I tell you, so that my fame will go (i.e. flow) like Gaṅgā on the earth. Having heard the words unequalled in the world, uttered about Sītā by the śūdra, I indeed decided to abandon my body or Jānakī.” Hearing these words of Rāma, Śatrughna, the killer of his enemies, being afflicted fell down with a tremor on the earth. Having regained consciousness after some time, he said to Raghunātha:

Śatrughna said:

9-13a. O lord, why are these horrible words being talked about Jānakī? Are the sacred texts, censured by the wicked-minded heretics, outcast from all religions, not to be accepted by the brāhmaṇas? Does Gaṅgā that destroys the sins of all the people and that removes calamities, not deserve to be touched by the good, since she is touched by sinful men? In the world the sun rises to give light to the world? What is lost if he is not liked by the owls? Therefore, you (please) accept this (your) wife, (though) censured by a śūdra. O Rāmabhadra, kindly do what I say.

13b-16. Having heard these words of the high-minded Śatrughna he again and again said what he had told Bharata. Hearing those words of his brother, Śatrughna, full of the flood of grief, fell unconscious on the ground like a tree with its roots cut off. Seeing his brother Śatrughna fallen (unconscious), he (i.e. Rāma), being very much afflicted, said these words to the door-keeper: ‘Bring Lakṣmaṇa near me.’ He, having gone to Lakṣmaṇa’s house, told him these words (i.e. this message).

The door-keeper said:

17-19a. O lord, Rāma has summoned you quickly.

Hearing that summons (made) by Rāma, the sinless one quickly and speedily went where his brother (Rāma) was. Seeing Bharata unconscious, also seeing Śatrughna unconscious, he said (these) words to Śrī Rāmacandra, who was afflicted with grief:

19b-23a. “O king, what is this frightful (scene) like swoon etc. Therefore, O sinless one, tell me the entire main cause.” To Lakṣmaṇa who was talking like this and was full of the flood of grief, the king quickly told the entire account from beginning. Hearing those words arising from the deserting of Sītā, he, sighing again and again, had his body as it were stupefied. Seeing his brother with his body stupefied, and repeatedly trembling, and not talking anything, he, afflicted with grief, said:

23b-27a. “Marked with infamy, what shall I do by being (i.e. living) on the earth? I, being afflicted, will abandon, through the fear of the world, this my glorious body. My brothers were always eager to do what I had told them; but, now unfortuna-

tely (for me) they are also doing opposite of what I tell them. Where should I go? Whom should I approach? Kings on the earth will laugh at me marked by infamy, as handsome men laugh at a leper. (When) formerly kings were born in Manu's race, they were born with superior qualities. (But) now when I am born that has become false."

27b-33a. Seeing Rāmabhadra speaking like this, he checked his profuse tears, and spoke in a weakened tone: "O lord, do not be dejected. How is it that you are deprived of your understanding? Who are you, learned one (i.e. How does a learned person like you) to abandon Sītā? I shall call the washerman, and ask him: 'How did you censure that Jānakī, the best among ladies?' In your country no small person is forcibly harassed. Therefore, act towards him as there is the conviction about him in your mind. Why do you (unnecessarily) abandon the timid one who is loyal to her husband (i.e. you)? The daughter of Janaka does not know anyone else (but you) mentally or by speech (i.e. she does not think or talk about anyone else). Therefore, accept her; do not abandon Jānakī. Having shown favour to me, resort to (i.e. do) it quickly."

33b-34. To Lakṣmaṇa who was speaking like this, Rāma, who was overpowered with grief and who was determined to abandon Sītā, advising Lakṣmaṇa with words of righteousness, said to him:

Rāma said:

35-41. How do you tell me: 'Do not abandon her?' Though I know her to be sinless, I am abandoning her due to public censure. For the sake of my fame I shall give up my unhappy body. I shall even forsake you, my brother, (if you are) condemned by public censure. Then how much more about other (member of my) family, sons, friends, and splendid wealth? For the sake of my fame, I shall give up everything, indeed Sītā also. To me my brother, my wife, my kinsmen, are not so dear as my beloved, spotless fame, known in the world. Certainly now the washerman is not to be questioned. In course of time the minds of people will be fully satisfied. A disease, as long as it is unripe (i.e. not properly developed), cannot be diagnosed on the earth, but goes away (i.e. is cured) after it has aggravated by means of

medicine. Similarly this will take place (i.e. people will be satisfied) in course of time. Now do not delay. Leave this chaste lady in a forest, or kill me with a sword.

42-44. Hearing these words uttered (by Rāma), the great one was pained. Lakṣmaṇa, overpowered with grief, thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'Jamadagni's son (Paraśurāma), killed even his mother by the order of his father. The order of an elderly person, whether it is proper or improper, is not at all to be disobeyed. Therefore, with a desire to do what is dear to Rāma, I shall leave her (in the forest).' Thinking like this in his mind (i.e. to himself), he said to his brother:

Lakṣmaṇa said:

45-47. What ought not to be done should even be done. An elderly person's order should not be violated (i.e. disobeyed). Therefore, I shall carry out your words that you speak to me, O you of a good vow.

To Lakṣmaṇa, who was speaking like this, he said: "Good, good, O very intelligent one, you have pleased my mind. Tonight only, under the pretext of (fulfilling) Sītā's cherished wish to see the female ascetics, put her into a chariot and leave her in the great forest."

48-54. Hearing these words, he, with his mouth fully parched, weeping, shedding tears, went to his own house. Having called Sumantra, he said these words to him: "Make ready my chariot, adorned with good horses." He, having heard these words, then brought the chariot. Seeing the chariot that was brought Lakṣmaṇa overpowered with grief, was very much distressed; and he, the servant of his brother (Rāma), got into the excellent chariot, and sighing, went to Sītā's abode, and having gone into the harem and heaving and full of grief, said (these) words to the daughter of Mithilā: "O mother Sītā, Rāma has sent me to you. To fulfil your cherished wish you (can) go the female ascetics." Having heard these words of (i.e. spoken by) Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā who was very much delighted, said to Lakṣmaṇa:

Jānakī said:

55-63. I, Maithilī, who remember Rāma's feet and to fulfil whose cherished wish he sent Lakṣmaṇa, am blessed. Today I shall salute the female ascetics living in the forest, and looking upon their husbands as deities I shall honour the charming ones with (presents of) garments.

Saying so, Raghunātha's wife (Sītā), in order to do what was dear to her, took (with her) charming garments, costly ornaments, gems, spotless pearls, camphor etc. having fragrance, so also various things like sandal in thousands. Repeatedly accepting these (things) from the hands of the female servants and then going to Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā tumbled at the threshold. Not minding it through curiosity, she said to Lakṣmaṇa who did good to her: "Where is the chariot in which you will take me (to the forest)?" Heaving her along with Sītā got into the golden chariot. He said to Sumantra: "Drive the horses having the speed of mind." At the words of Lakṣmaṇa he looking at Lakṣmaṇa's face full of tears called the chariot, well-yoked (with horses). The horses, struck by him with a whip, fell on the path. When the horses did not move, he said to Lakṣmaṇa:

Sumantra said:

64-78. O lord, though driven with effort, the horses do not move. What should I do? I do not realise the cause of their fall.

To him who was speaking like this, Lakṣmaṇa said in a faltering voice after mustering courage to the charioteer: "Strike these with whips etc." Hearing these words, the charioteer somehow drove them. Then Sītā's right eye, indicating trouble, throbbed. Just then in her heart grief, indicating misfortune, was produced. Just then only, auspicious birds turned round. Seeing these, Sītā said to her brother-in-law: "How is it that I have a desire to go to see the female ascetics. May well-being come to Rāma; so also to his younger brother, Bharata; so also to his subjects everywhere. Let misfortunes not come to them." That Lakṣmaṇa with his throat choked and full of tears, did not say anything to Sītā who was speaking like this. She (while) going saw deer turning to the left and causing multitudes of miseries.

She said (to Lakṣmaṇa): “It is laid down that since today the deer are turning to the left, it is not proper that I am going after abandoning Rāma’s feet. The highest duty of women is to serve their husbands’ feet. So, whatever would happen to me who am going after leaving him, (must be said) to be proper only.” When the queen (Sītā) was thinking like this on the way, she actually saw Gaṅgā which was resorted to by groups of sages only, in which waves of water resembling milk were seen, in which waves having the form of a staircase to heaven were seen. By the touch of the drops of her water the heap of great sins not finding any place all around, runs away. Having reached Gaṅgā, Lakṣmaṇa shedding tears said to Sītā, seated in the chariot: “Sītā, come down to the ground from the chariot.” Having heard his words Sītā with her arms held by him, in a moment got down and on the way tumbled on thorns.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

The Birth of Kuśa and Lava

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Then Lakṣmaṇa, having made Sītā cross Gaṅgā in a boat to the other bank, took her by hand and went to the forest. On the way she who was marked with her face parched up, walked. Her good (i.e. delicate) feet were hurt with thorns. She tumbled at every step. At that time Lakṣmaṇa carrying out the order of Rāghava took her into the very fearful forest causing misery, in which there were fierce dense trees like barbula, khadira, śleṣmātaka, ciñciṇika, which were dry due to wild fire. Serpents living in the hollows of trees and getting very angry, hissed. Owls causing fear to the minds of people, cried. (In the forest) artless, very wrathful, tigers, lions, foxes, and elephants, eaters of human beings were noticed. Buffaloes, hogs which were wicked, which were marked with two fangs, afflicted the minds of beings. Sītā seeing such a forest suffered from grief through fear. With her feet pricked by thorns she said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa.

Jānakī said:

9-12. O hero, I do not see (here) hermitages resorted to by sages and giving joy to the eyes. Nor do I see their wives having a great treasure of penance. I am only seeing fearful birds and dry trees. This entire forest is being burnt by wild fire. I notice you too with your eyes full of tears. At every step I am experiencing a thousand ill omens. Therefore, O best hero, tell me whether I of a wicked heart, am abandoned by the noble Rāma. Tell it to me quickly.

13-18. Hearing these words, Lakṣmaṇa, overpowered with grief, and with tears (flowing) on his face checked, then said nothing. She, afflicted with grief and moving with Lakṣmaṇa in that forest only looked at his face and again spoke to that hero; yet, he, desiring to see something, did not say anything to her. Then, (when) she asked him, she very much insisted (on getting a reply). When Lakṣmaṇa was asked by Sītā persistently, he with his throat choked and repeatedly repenting, told her the reason why she was deserted. Hearing those words like (the fall of) the thunderbolt, she, (though) free from any disease, became like a good creeper with its roots cut off. Just then the Earth did not take (back) this daughter (i.e. Sītā) of her, since she believed that Rāma would not abandon sinless Sītā.

19-24. Seeing Sītā fallen down, Lakṣmaṇa, eager (to revive her) revived her by means of breezes produced by (the movements of) the tips of sprouts. Having regained consciousness, she said, “O brother-in-law, do not joke. How does the descendant of Raghu abandon me who am sinless?” Having thus moaned much, she, having seen Lakṣmaṇa full of grief, being fully distressed, fell unconscious on the ground. Having regained consciousness after a while, she full of grief and hurt by sorrow, (and) remembering Rāma’s feet, said: “How does that very intelligent, great Raghunātha who along with the monkeys restrained the ocean for my sake, abandon me? How will that great hero abandon me by (relying) upon the words of the washerman? Now, my destiny is unfavourable.”

25-32. Saying so the daughter of the Videha(-king) again swooned. Seeing her unconscious he wept in a tone affected by emotion. Having regained consciousness she who was very much

distressed, looked at Lakṣmaṇa who was afflicted with grief and whose throat was choked, and said to him: “O Lakṣmaṇa, go to Rāma, the (very) image of Dharma and the treasure of glory, and tell him these my words in the presence of the treasure of penance: ‘Even knowing me to be sinless, you abandoned me. Does it behove your family, or is it the fruit of your knowledge of the sacred texts? You abandoned me who was always attached to your feet, who always ate what was left over by you. For all that my destiny is the cause (i.e. is responsible). O best among excellent warriors, may you have welfare everywhere. Remembering you mentally, in deeds and speech, I shall just hold my breath (i.e. live) in the forest. All others were mentally abandoned by me, O you born in the family of Raghu. O lord of the earth, you alone should be my husband in every birth: I who remember your feet, have all my sins destroyed and have become the best chaste lady.’

33-39. O best of the Raghus, convey all my message to my mothers-in-law. ‘I (though) sinless, have been abandoned in the very fierce forest. I remember your feet in the forest, full of herds of deer. The very noble Rāma abandoned me (though) pregnant in the forest.’ O Lakṣmaṇa, listen to my words. May well-being come to you. Now preserving well Rāma’s semen (in my womb), I would give up my life. As you are proving true Rāma’s words, you will have prosperity. One serving the lotus-like feet of Rāma, and depending upon another, has to do it. I should be favoured, and be remembered at times.” Saying so, she fell unconscious on the ground in front (of Lakṣmaṇa). Seeing Jānakī unconscious, Lakṣmaṇa became afflicted. Saumitri (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) fanned her with the ends of his garment, and having saluted her who had regained consciousness, he repeatedly consoled her with sweet words.

Lakṣmaṇa said:

40-43a. This I (i.e. I Just) go to Rāma; and will tell him everything. Near you, there is the great hermitage of the sage Vālmiki.

Speaking thus to her, he being afflicted and full of tears, turned round, and shedding tears, sorrowfully went to king

Rāma. Seeing her brother-in-law going, Jānakī with amazed eyes (said): “This my noble brother-in-law is joking. How (is it that) Rāghava abandoned me who was dearer to Rāma than his own life!”

43b-50. Thinking like this, she looked at him with unwinking eyes. Realising on his having crossed Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) that her desertion by Rāma was a fact, she fell down, was in a very great peril, and fainted. At that time swans brought water from all places and sprinkled (it over her). Sweet fragrant breezes blew. Elephants with the tips of their tongues full of (i.e. wet with) water, washed as it were, her body covered with dust. Deer came near her with their eyes full of wonder. At that time, trees were full of flowers, without the spring (i.e. though it was not the spring season). When this was the time (i.e. when so much time passed), the chaste lady regained consciousness and being very much afflicted with grief, and saying ‘Rāma, Rāma’, moaned. “O lord, O friend of the poor, O good treasure full of pity, how do you abandon me in the forest without my fault?” She talked like this; she wept again and again. She looked here and there; and she again and again became unconscious.

51-55a. At that time revered Vālmiki had come to the forest. At that time he heard weeping with piteous words. He then said to his disciples: “Find out from the interior of the forest who is weeping in a distressed tone in the forest.” Ordered by the sage, they went to the place where Jānakī saying ‘Rāma, Rāma’ and full of a flood of tears, was sitting. Seeing that they eagerly came back to the sage Vālmiki. Having heard the words uttered by them, the sage then went (there). Seeing that heap of penance (i.e. Vālmiki), Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity, (said):

55b-58. “My salutation to the sage, the image of the Vedas, the ocean of religious acts of austerity.” He greeted that Sītā who was saying like this with blessings. “Live long with your husband; obtain two bright sons. Who are you? Why have you come to the fearful forest? Why are you like this? Tell me everything, I would (like to) know the cause of your sorrow.” Heaving and with tremor produced in her body, Rāma’s wife then spoke with piteous words to the sage:

59-63. “Listen to my significant words—the cause of all my sorrow. Know me to be the servant of king Raghunātha. I have been abandoned without a fault. I do not know the reason for that. By Rāma’s order Lakṣmaṇa left me here and went (back).” Vālmiki, consoling Sītā having lotus-like eyes and lotus-like face full of tears, and who had said like this, spoke to Sītā: “Know me to be the sage Vālmiki who is your father’s preceptor. O Vaidehī, do not be afflicted, come to my hermitage. O you who look upon your husband as a deity, suppose that your father’s house is (situated) at a different place. In such an act (i.e. when such an act is done), let me be angry with the king (i.e. Rāma) (i.e. I would be angry with Rāma, and not with you).”

64. Hearing words like these, Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity, who was full of affliction, and whose face was full of tears, was a little happy.”

Śeṣa said:

65-68. Having consoled her whose eyes were full with the flood of grief, Vālmiki took her to his auspicious hermitage full of the groups of female ascetics. She, going after Vālmiki, the treasure of penance, shone like a charming star going after the moon. Having reached his hermitage full of sages, Vālmiki told the female ascetics about Jānakī who had come to his hermitage. Vaidehī, of a noble mind, saluted all the female ascetics. Being very much delighted, they embraced one another.

69-72. That treasure of penance, Vālmiki, said to his disciples: “Construct a beautiful hut of leaves for Jānakī.” Hearing these very pleasant words of Vālmiki, they constructed an attractive hut with leaves and (pieces of) wood. Waiting upon Vālmiki and eating (i.e. subsisting upon) fruits, Vaidehī, a chaste wife, lived in it. Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity muttering ‘Rāma, Rāma’, (both) mentally and in words, passed her days there.

73-80a. At (the proper) time Jānakī gave birth to two sons, having charming bodies, and having the likeness of Rāma and like (the two) Aśvins. Hearing about the birth of the two sons of Jānakī, the sage was delighted; he who knew the sacred prayers, performed the purificatory rites like the ceremony performed at the time of the birth of a child. Vālmiki performed (these)

rites with darbhas and the hair of a cow's tail. So the two sons have well-known names Kuśa and Lava. Vālmiki also performed the auspicious rites where she free from menstrual excretion (i.e. who had given birth to a child) remained, in such a way that she having lotus-like eyes, was very much delighted in her heart. The same day, Śatrughna, with a few soldiers, had, after killing Lavaṇa, come to Vālmiki's pleasant hermitage at night. At that time Vālmiki had directed Śatrughna: "Do not tell Rāma about Jānakī's sons. I shall (later) tell it (to him)." The attractive sons of Jānakī grew there (i.e. in Vālmiki's hermitage). Vālmiki brought up the two joyful excellent (boys) with bulbs, roots and fruits. The two, very charming like the moon of the first day of the bright half (of a month), were purified (with rites) in due course.

80b-86. The two charming ones were initiated into sacred study (by Vālmiki). Having initiated them into sacred study, the sage taught the two boys the Vedas with their six limbs. He taught them the science of archery with its secrets and Rāmāyaṇa. Vālmiki gave them two bows well adorned with gold; (the bows were) unbreakable, had strings, and were best in warding off the groups of enemies. (He gave them) two inexhaustible quivers full of arrows, and two swords. He (also) gave to Jānakī's two sons, shields that could not be pierced through. The two archers who had mastered the Vedas, gladly moving in the hermitage, shone like the two bright Aśvins. Seeing (her) two excellent sons holding swords and shields, Jānakī was very much delighted and gave up (the grief) due to her desertion (by Rāma). O brāhmaṇa, I have told you this account of the birth of Jānakī's sons. Hereafter listen to the cutting off of the arms of the soldiers that took place.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Lava Defeats the Army and Kills the General

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing his soldiers with their arms cut off, Śatrughna getting very angry and biting his lower lip with anger, said to them: "O you, which hero has cut off your arms? I shall cut off both the arms of him, (even though he is) protected by gods, O soldiers. The great fool does not know (anything about) the great might of Rāmacandra. Now through my valour I shall show (him) my might. Where is that hero? Where is the charming hero? Which fool, not knowing the valour, would seize sleeping serpents?" When the heroes were told (like this) they were amazed and much afflicted.

5-10a. They told (him) about the child that had the likeness of Rāmacandra. He on hearing the seizure of the horse by the boy, had his eyes red due to anger and willing to fight he ordered his general Kālajit: "O general, by my order array the entire army. We have to encounter a very mighty and brave enemy. This is not a child who has seized the horse. He might be Viṣṇu or he might be Śiva. My horse could not have been taken away in any other way. Certainly a great destruction of the mighty army will take place. The boy with a fearless mind, is playing (doing) acts according to his own will. We difficult to be conquered by our enemies, should get ready and go there."

10b-14a. Hearing these words of Śatrughna, that general of the army made ready that army which was arranged in (such) a way that it would be hard (for the enemy to dislodge it) and which had four divisions. Śatrughna, having seen that excellent (complete) army with four divisions made ready, ordered it to go to that place where the boy who had seized the horse, stood. Then the army moved with the four divisions causing that part of the earth to quake and scaring by its might the enemies. The general saw that boy having a form (like that) of Rāma. Thinking (i.e. finding) him to be the likeness of Rāma, he spoke to him beneficial words:

14b-21a. "O boy, leave the best horse of the powerful

Rāma. I am the ferocious general, named Kālajit, of the king. Seeing you resembling Rāma, pity is produced in my heart. Otherwise, you will not live due to the suffering caused by me.” Having heard these words of the warrior of Śatrughna (i.e. of Kālajit), the boy laughed a little, and with a little wrath said (these) wonderful words: “Go, you are free; report to that Rāma the seizure of the horse. O brave one, I am not afraid of you by means of (i.e. though you have uttered) words of political wisdom. I do not care (even) if crores like you (encounter me). Due to the grace of my mother’s feet, they are to me (as light) as cotton. That your name which your beautiful mother gave to you, is only due to complexion and not due to valour, like the ripe bimba fruit (having red colour but no efficacy). Now, characterised by (i.e. on) the strength of your name (Kālajit), show me your valour. You will prove your name to be true vanquishing me who am your death.”

Śeṣa said:

21b- 25a. He, the crest (i.e. the best) of excellent warriors, disturbed by the words like thunderbolt, got very angry in his mind, and again said (these) words: “O boy, in which family are you born? What is your name? I do not know your name, so also your family and your virtue. How can I, being in a chariot, conquer you who go on foot (i.e. are a foot-soldier), by following the prescribed course of conduct?” Then, he got very angry, and again said these words: “O warrior, what is the use of (your knowing) my family, my virtue, or my name? I am Lava and will in a moment vanquish all the soldiers of my enemy. Now I shall even make a warrior like you (seated in a chariot) go on foot (i.e. a foot-soldier).”

25b-33. Speaking like this, that mighty Lava made ready his bow; he made the twang-sound (of the bow) and scared the soldiers at heart. Having recollected Vālmiki first and (then) his mother Jānakī, Lava discharged sharp arrows which instantly took away the life (of his enemies). Kālajit who was angry, made his bow ready and he who was quick and proficient in fighting, struck Lava. The younger brother of Kuśa (i.e. Lava) in a moment quickly cut off his arrows into hundred (pieces) and deprived the general of his chariot by means of bright, excellent

arrows. He who was deprived of his chariot, mounted upon an intoxicated, very speedy elephant which (i.e. whose ichor) was flowing in seven ways (i.e. streams) and which was brought by his soldiers. The victor (i.e. Lava), seeing him mounted upon an elephant, laughed, and pierced all the hosts of the enemies with ten arrows fixed on his bow. Kālajit, seeing his valour, and with his mind amazed, threw (at him) a big mace made of great (i.e. strong) iron. (Lava), the younger brother of Kuśa, seeing the mace, made with (i.e. weighing) a myriad of bhāras coming to him speedily, cut it off quickly into three pieces with arrows having sharp, horse-shoe-shaped heads.

34-40. He then discharged (at Lava) a sharp, fierce iron club, out to take away his life. Lava, full of speed, cut it off. Having cut off the fierce iron club, he, with his eyes red due to anger, observing him to have mounted upon the haunch of an elephant, became angry. At that moment (only) he cut off with his sword the trunk of that elephant. Supporting his feet with (i.e. standing on) the tusks of the elephant, he mounted on his head. Having cut off the general's crown into a hundred pieces, and his armour into a hundred pieces, and having dragged the general with (i.e. by seizing) his hair he knocked him down on the ground. The general knocked down from the haunch of the elephant, again got angry. He struck him on his chest with his thunderbolt-like fist; he, struck with fists, having bent his bow, quickly discharged arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows at his chest. He who had bent his bow and who had put on a helmet and an armour unbreakable even by crores of arrows, shone on the battlefield. He pierced by sharp arrows, took a sword to kill him.

41-48a. Lava, gnawing his teeth through anger, and repeatedly heaving and breathing, cut off the centre of the arm of the general who was coming with a sword in his hand. He, with the sword in his hand fell down. The general, seeing that his (right) hand holding the sword was cut off, angrily went to strike him with a mace (held) with the left (hand). That arm of him along with the armlets was also cut off with sharp arrows. Then the hero, getting extremely angry struck Lava with his feet. Lava, (though) struck by his feet, did not move on the battlefield. He bore up the cutting off of the feet

like an elephant struck with a garland. Even then he started striking him with his head. Then Lava, looking upon the general as having superior valour, took a sword resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world in his hand, and cut off his head adorned with a large crown. When the general was struck down, there was a great wailing. The angry soldiers came (forward) to kill Lava.

48b-57a. By striking them with his arrows, Lava made them intent on fleeing. Some were broken; some were pierced; some went (away) from the battlefield. Having warded off all soldiers, he gladly penetrated the army, as the hog, having heaved, plunges into the great ocean at the time of the deluge. The elephants were pierced and cut into two, and the earth was filled with pearls, and became inaccessible for the great warriors (when) it is covered with mountains. Horses, shining with power, having golden saddles, charming, and decorated with gems, fell into the pool wet (i.e. full) with blood. The warriors fighting from chariots, who looked lovely on account of the bows in their hands, fell into the interior of the chariots like gods going to heaven. Warriors skilled in fighting, who bit their lips, marked with charm revolving round their faces, were seen to have fallen there. A river of blood, with the tortoises in the form of horses' heads and charming due to its great stream and causing fear to the enemies, flew (there). The arms of some were cut off; the feet of some were chopped off. The ears and noses and armours and earrings of some were cut off. When the general fell in the battle, such (was the) destruction (that) took place. All heroes fell down. None survived then.

57b-67. Lava, having got victory in the battle and having vanquished the host of his enemies, thinking that someone else might come, looked (everywhere). Some who were spared from the battle, did not die on the battlefield. They went near Śatru-ghna to tell him (about) the wonderful account. Having gone (to him), they told him (the account) as it took place on the battlefield—the death of Kālajit from (i.e. at the hands of) the boy, and his wonderful effort in the battle. Hearing that, Śatru-ghna who was amazed, laughed, and remembering the seizure of the horse by the boy, gnawed his teeth in anger, and said to them: “O heroes, were you intoxicated, or were you cheating

imps? How did incompetency overcome you? How did Kālajit die? How would a boy vanquish him who was fearful to the hosts of enemies in the battle, who was (always) victorious in a battle, and who was invincible even for Yama?" Hearing the words of Śatrughna, the warriors, wet with blood, said: "We were not under the influence of intoxication etc. There was no fraud, nor gambling. O king, know that Kālajit had his death from (i.e. at the hands of) Lava. The boy having matchless skill, shook the entire army. (Now you decide) what is to be done hereafter, or which excellent men should be sent (against Lava). Thinking him to be a child, you should not use your force rashly." Then Śatrughna, having heard these words of the warriors, spoke to Sumati, the best intellect, about the waging of the war.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Hanūmat Falls Unconscious

Śatrughna said:

1. O great minister, do you know who is the boy that took away the horse and who destroyed all my army like an ocean?

Sumati said:

3-5. O lord, this is the great hermitage of the best sage Vālmīki. O you who torment your enemies, kṣatriyas do not at all live here. It might be that Indra became (i.e. took the form of) the great sage and snatched the horse, or it might be Śiva. Otherwise, who else would take away your horse? O great king, who else but Puṣkala can go to (i.e. march against) him who killed the very fearful Kālajit? O you destroyer of your enemies, go there surrounded by all your brave warriors, kings, and your great army.

6-8. Having gone there, having bound the hero, I shall show it to Rāma, who has a curiosity. This is my careful (i.e. well-considered) view.

Hearing these words, he ordered all his warriors: "Go with a great army. I (shall) come after you." In a moment the soldiers went there where the mighty one (i.e. Lava), stretching his very strong bow furnished with a string, stood.

9-11. Having seen that very mighty army full of warriors, coming, the powerful Lava was not at all afraid in his mind. Lava, looking upon all the warriors as deer, angrily stretched his bow, and discharging arrows in thousands, stood up like a lion. They, being afflicted by the arrows, and full of great anger, looking upon the hero as a boy, then rushed to him.

12-14. Seeing thousands of warriors arrayed in a circular arrangement of the troops, Lava, full of anger, quickly fixed arrows (on his bow). The first circular arrangement had a thousand (soldiers). The second had ten thousand as the number (of soldiers). The third had twenty thousand; the fourth had fifty thousand; the fifth had a lakh of soldiers; the sixth had ten thousand more; and the seventh had a couple of lakhs. He was surrounded by seven (such) circular arrangements of the troops.

15-16. In the midst was Lava, surrounded by the circular arrangements of the troops; and moving like fire he burnt (i.e. destroyed) all the soldiers forming the circular arrangements. The noble one destroyed all the arrangement(s)—some with swords, some with arrows, some with barbed missiles, some with lances, (some) with spears having sharp edges, and some with clubs tipped with iron.

17-21. The younger brother of Kuśa, freed from the seven circular arrangements of the troops, shone like the moon freed from the group of clouds at the advent of the autumn. He with his disc cut off many trunks of elephants and mighty heads of warriors, and completely struck (down) the warriors. Afflicted by Lava's arrows many fell and fainted on the battlefield; others, very timid, fled away. Seeing the army afflicted by Lava's arrows, intent on fleeing, the hero named Puškala went to the battlefield to fight. The mighty one, seated in his chariot, charming due to good horse, saying, 'Wait, wait' and with his eyes full of anger, went to (i.e. marched against) Lava.

22-23a. That Puškala knowing the (use of) great missiles, said to Lava: "Stand in the chariot adorned with good horses in

the battle. How shall I fight with you—a foot-soldier—in the battle? Therefore, stand in the chariot, and then I shall fight with you.”

23b-26. Hearing these words, Lava said to Puṣkala: “If I standing in your chariot, fight in the battle, then my victory would be doubtful. O hero, we are not brāhmaṇas given to receiving (gifts), but we are kṣatriyas, always engaged in acts of charity. Now, through anger I shall break your chariot. Then you will (also) be fighting on foot. Then you will fight (with me).”

27-29. Puṣkala having heard these words full of righteousness and courage, was amazed in heart for a long time and made ready his bow. Lava seeing him having taken a bow, got angry and cut off the bow in his hand, and took an aim with his arrow. The powerful one, laughed and being excited broke his chariot in the battlefield, while he was stringing his bow.

30-35. Seeing his chariot broken and his bow cut off by the noble one, he regarded him as a great hero, and the fighter on foot ran away in the battlefield. Both heroes were heroes; both had raised their arrows; both were wet with blood; both had their armours cut off. Both were seen to have their bodies shattered with the strokes of arrows of each other; both desired victory; both desired to kill each other like Jayanta and Kārtikeya or Śiva and Indra. In this way they fought with each other on the battlefield. Puṣkala said to the boy: “O crest-jewel of the brave, I have not seen a crest-jewel (i.e. best) of the brave like you. Today I shall knock down your head with arrows having sharp, fine joints. Do not run from the battlefield. Being restrained, protect your life.”

36-39. Saying so he put brave Lava in the cage of (i.e. formed by) arrows. Puṣkala's arrows settled on the ground after having pervaded the sky. Lava, being in the cage of (i.e. formed by) arrows, said to Puṣkala: “O hero, you have done a great feat that you harassed me with arrows”. Saying so, the hero skilled in taking aim with an arrow and cutting off the volley of arrows, said to Puṣkala: “Take care of yourself (while) standing in the battle. Afflicted by the strokes of my arrows, you will fall covered with blood, on the earth.”

40-45. Having heard these words, Puṣkala, full of anger, fought with the very strong hero in the battle. Lava, getting angry in a moment angrily took out a sharp arrow (capable of) killing the enemy and resembling a serpent from the quiver. That blazing arrow discharged from Lava's bow and ready to pierce his chest was quickly cut off by Bharata's son (Puṣkala). When Bharata's son cut off with his fatal arrow (the arrow of Lava), he got very angry and took another fierce arrow. The sharp arrow discharged from the bow drawn up to the ear, pierced the chest of that Puṣkala in the great battle. The crest-jewel of the very brave, pierced in the chest by that fast going arrow, fell on the ground.

46-54. Seeing Puṣkala fallen, the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) took him who was unconscious and handed him over to (Śatrughna) brother of Rāghava. Seeing him unconscious, he, with his mind overcome with grief and full of anger, ordered Hanūmat to kill Lava. Hanūmat, burning with rage, uprooted a śālmali tree and quickly went (i.e. rushed) to vanquish in the battle the very powerful Lava. The mighty Hanūmat struck on Lava's head with the tree. Lava, seeing it falling upon (him), quickly cut it off into hundred (pieces). When the tree was cut off, the very mighty one again angrily uprooted trees from the root and struck them on his chest and head. The mighty one speedily cut off with his arrows of sharp joints those trees which Wind's son (i.e. Hanūmat) took, and with which he struck him. Then the monkey, Wind's son, having uprooted rocks like high rocks thrown down by an earthquake, speedily threw them on the head (of Lava). Struck by those multitudes of rocks in the battle, he raised his bow and powdered them with his arrows as particles with turners' wheels.

55-62. Then, in the battle the angry blessed Hanūmat encircled the mighty Lava with his tail. Seeing himself tied up with his tail, he the powerful one, remembering his mother in his heart, struck with his fist Hanūmat's tail. Distressed by the strokes of the fist, Hanūmat freed him. He the powerful one, freed from the tail, discharged arrows in the battle. The monkey with his body afflicted by the unavoidable strokes of arrows, looking upon the shower of arrows as very unbearable thought: 'What should we do here? If I run away then it is

shameful for my lord; (If I stay here), the boy would strike me. Due to the boon given to me by Brahmadata, I had neither a swoon, nor did I die. The affliction caused by the arrows is unbearable. Let Śatrughna go to (i.e. march against) Lava in the battle and get victory over the boy. I desiring victory, shall lie in false swoon!' Thinking like this in his mind, he fell on the battlefield, fraudulently unconscious when all the heroes were seeing (i.e. in the presence of all the heroes). He, skilled in discharging arrows, knowing that the very mighty Hanūmat was unconscious, struck all the kings (with arrows).

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Lava Becomes Unconscious

Śeṣa said:

1-14. Hearing that Hanūmat was unconscious, Śatrughna was distressed: 'What should I do in the battle? This boy is very powerful.' Himself seated in a golden chariot along with excellent heroes he went where Lava, skilled in fighting in a wonderful way, stood. He saw Lava, as if Rāma reduced to childhood had come on the earth, having a bow and arrows in his hand and discharging (arrows) in the battle. At that time he thought: 'Who is this having Rāma's form and having a charming body dark like the petals of a blue lotus? This must be the son of (Sitā) the daughter of (the king of) Videha; not otherwise (i.e. none else), (who) having vanquished us in the battle, will go like the lord of beasts. There is no possibility of the victory of us who are void of power. What shall we, (though) proficient in fighting, (yet) being weak, do?' He, having thought like this, said (these) words to the boy who fought with vehemence, knocking down crores of heroes: "O boy, who are you that are knocking down our heroes on the ground? You do not know the power of Rāma who killed the demons. Who is your mother? Who is your father? Being very lucky, you got victory. O you very mighty one, what is your name well-known in the world? Release

(the horse); how (i.e. why) have you caught the horse? (Since it is) due to your being a child, I forgive you. Come, see Rāma, he will give you large (wealth).” The boy who was addressed like this, said (these) words to Śatrughna: “What have you to do with my name, or my father, or my family, or my age? O hero, if you are endowed with power, then fight (with me) in the battle; otherwise, salute the hero Kuśa (by falling) at his feet; otherwise you cannot go. You are the brave brother of Rāma; (but) for us you are not the best among the mighty. If you have power, then forcibly release the horse.” Saying so, the mighty warrior, taking aim with his arrow, struck him on his chest, head and arms on the battlefield.

15-27. Then the king (Śatrughna) got angry, and making a grave sound like that of the clouds, and as it were scaring the boy (i.e. in order to scare the boy) made his bow ready. The best among the mighty discharged innumerable arrows. The boy powerfully cut off all those volleys of arrows. The surface of the earth was pervaded by the arrows discharged by Lava in many ways. They became inexhaustible (i.e. did not fail) like gifts given on a day of a great portentous calamity. Those arrows fixed (on his bow) by Lava pervaded the entire sky. Having reached the sun’s orb, they proceeded uninterruptedly everywhere. Even the wind did (i.e. could) not enter the cage of his arrows. Then what can be said about human beings said to live for a moment? Seeing these arrows spreading on, Śatrughna was amazed. Skilled in discharging arrows he cut off a hundred thousand (arrows). Seeing all his arrows cut off, the younger brother of Kuśa (i.e. Lava) quickly cut off the bow of king Śatrughna. When, having taken another bow, he discharged his arrows, he shattered the chariot with arrows having sharp joints. He cut off, the very strong bow in his hand, that had a string. The heroes remaining on the battlefield, appreciated that feat. He, with his bow cut off, deprived of his chariot, with his horses killed, with his charioteer killed, resorted to another chariot, went to fight forcibly with Lava. Pierced with many arrows, with blood flowing from his body, he shone in the battle like a *kimśuka* tree with flowers. Struck by the arrows of Śatrughna, he, skilled in aiming with an arrow, and having bent his bow became very angry. He made Śatrughna’s body such that its

armour was shattered, that the head was bereft of the crown and wet with the flowing blood.

28-38. Then Rāma's younger brother (Śatrughna) got angry; and he who was extremely angry discharged ten fatal arrows having sharp tips. Having reduced them to very small pieces like the sesamum seeds with his arrows having sharp joints, he struck on Śatrughna's chest with eight arrows. Very much afflicted with (the strokes of) the arrows and thinking of the mighty Lava and regarding him to be invincible, he discharged arrows at that time. Then Lava pierced him in his large chest with an arrow resembling the crescent moon and looking charming in the joints. Pierced in the chest, he received a terrible affliction. He, having a bow in his hands and well-adorned, fell into the interior of the chariot. Seeing Śatrughna unconscious, Suratha and other kings, eager to get victory in the battle ran to Lava. Suratha, the brave Vimala, so also king Vīramaṇi, Sumada, Riputāpa and others surrounded him in the battle. Certain kings struck him all round with arrows having sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads, pestles; some with very fierce arrows; some with darts and hatchets. The crest-jewel among the fighting heroes, seeing them eager to fight unjustly, struck them (each) with ten arrows in the battle. They, struck with showers of arrows in the battle, were very angry. Some fled away and some fainted on the battlefield. Just then, king Śatrughna, full of might, gave up his unconsciousness (i.e. regained consciousness) and went to fight with the great warrior Lava.

39-47. Having come (to him), he said to that Lava: "You who are like a boy, are lucky. You are not a boy; you are a god; you have come to outwit (us). I was never vanquished by any hero in battle. You have made me unconscious, when I am seeing (i.e. under my very nose). Now see my valour. I shall knock you down in the battle; put up with (at least) one arrow; O boy, do not run away." Saying so, he who had destroyed Lavaṇa, fierce like Yama's face, took an arrow in the battle. (Then) he fixed a blazing arrow and decided to strike on the chest of Lava who was like fire burning everything, all the heroes. Seeing that blazing arrow illumining the ten quarters, he remembered Kuśa who knocked down his enemies. 'If at this time my strong, brave brother were here, I would not have

been humbled by Śatrughna, and there would not have been excessive fear.' When the noble Lava was thinking like this, a mighty, fierce arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, stuck to (i.e. struck) his chest. At that time the hero, struck by the king's arrow became unconscious in the battle adorned with the heads of all heroes.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Kuśa's Victory

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Seeing Lava, the destroyer of his enemies, unconscious, Śatrughna, the very mighty one, obtained victory in the battle. Putting Lava, the boy adorned with a helmet etc. and the likeness of Rāma in form, in the chariot he desired to go from there. Seeing that their friend was arrested by the enemy, the boys who were full of grief, quickly reported it to his mother, Sītā.

The boys said:

4-9. O mother Jānakī, your son forcibly snatched the horse of some proud king endowed with power. Then, O Jānakī, the great brave boy vanquished all the army. Later also he got victory. Having made that king unconscious, he obtained victory in the battle. Then the very fearful king, having given up the swoon (i.e. having regained consciousness), got angry and knocked down your son on the battlefield. We had in the beginning warded him off (saying): "Do not seize this excellent horse." Despising all of us, the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas, (he seized him)."

Hearing these very terrible words of the boys, she fell on the ground and full of grief she wept.

Sītā said:

10-20. How is the cruel king fighting with the boy? He who

has vanquished my son, has a wicked mind as a result of impious deeds. O hero Lava, where are you, full of great power? How (is it that) you seized the excellent horse of the unkind king? You are a boy, they are invincible and proficient in (the use of) all weapons. They were in their chariots, (while) you were without a chariot? How can the fight (be said to) be (between two) equal (parties)? With you (i.e. in your company) I gave up (i.e. did not mind) the unhappiness due to Rāma's having abandoned me. Now without you, how shall I live in the forest? Come to me; release the sacrificial horse; let this king go. You who wash away (i.e. remove) my sorrow, do not realise my sorrow. Had Kuśa, the crest-jewel of the brave, been here today, he would have (by) now freed you from the vicinity of the king. Due to my (bad) luck he too is not nearby. Now what shall I do? It is just my fate that is the cause for the rise of (this) sorrow.

The glorious one scratching the earth with the toe of her foot and with tears in both her eyes, wept much like this. She said to the boys: "This one (i.e. Lava) is a child, and he (i.e. Śatru-ghna) is a king. How and where will he go on having vanquished my son in the battle?" When this Jānakī who looked upon her husband as her god was speaking like this, Kuśa along with great sages came (back) from Ujjayinī. After having worshipped Mahākāla on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Māgha and after having secured many boons from him, he came in the vicinity of (i.e. to) his mother.

21-28a. Seeing Jānakī afflicted and overcome with fear and with tears produced in her eyes, and helpless due to being overcome with grief, he, being anxious, said. At that time, his (right) arm, throbbing and indicating fight, said (to him). In the heart of the mighty warrior there was great enthusiasm to fight. He spoke to his mother, speaking piteously in a faltering voice: "When I, your son, have stood by you, your affliction has gone. When I am alive, tears should not fall from (your) eyes." He, of a courageous mind, said to his mother who was sad with tears, who was speaking in a piteous and faltering voice, who was instantly unhappy due to Lava's being bounded by grief. "Where is my brother, the destroyer of his enemies, who having come to have known that I have arrived, would always come near me?"

How (is it that) the hero is not seen? Where has the hero gone to play? Or with whom has he, due to his being a child, gone to see (i.e. look for) me? O my mother, why do you weep? Where is that Lava (now)? Tell me all that is the cause of your grief."

28b-32. Hearing those words of her son, she who was afflicted, said to Kuśa: "Some king, protecting a horse, has seized Lava. My boy bound here the horse fit for the sacrificial rite. The mighty one, all alone vanquished many guards (of the horse). The king, having made him unconscious, bound him in the battle. The boys who had gone with him, told me like this. Then having heard that Lava was arrested, I became distressed. (Now) you who have come in time (should) forcibly release him from the excellent king." Having heard his mother's words, Kuśa, full of anger, biting his lips and gnawing his teeth, said to her:

Kuśa said:

33-38. O mother, know that Lava is (surely) freed from the binding by the noose. With my arrows I (shall) now kill him with his entire army and horses (and elephants). Even if a god or a deity comes, or even Śiva comes, I shall free him with arrows having sharp joints. O mother, do not weep; vigorous fight here (i.e. in this world) leads to fame; (but) running away leads to infamy. O mother, give me a divine armour, and a bow with a string, so also a helmet and a sharp sword. Now I shall go to the battlefield; I shall vanquish the mighty army; I shall free my brother fainted on the battlefield. If, O mother, I do not today release your son from the great battle, then let your feet be angry with me on the earth.

Śeṣa said:

39-44a. With these words Jānakī, of auspicious characteristics, endowed him with blessings and gave him all the multitude of missiles: "O (my) son, go to fight, and free the unconscious Lava": Thus ordered, Kuśa who had put on an armour, who was decorated with ear-rings, who was powerful, who had worn a crown, who had a sword, who had a shield, who held a bow after putting the inexhaustible quiver on his shoulders powerful

like those of the lion, and who was the best among the warriors, saluted his mother's feet, and quickly went (to fight). When he speedily and quickly went to fight, he saw his (brother) Lava, the destroyer of hosts of enemies. The very great warriors saw Kuśa coming like Yama approaching to destroy the entire universe.

44b-51. Lava, seeing his very mighty brother Kuśa resembling wind, coming, shone very much like fire. Having freed himself from the chariot, he went out to fight. Kuśa threw all the heroes on the battlefield into the eastern direction. Lava, through anger, urged on (i.e. made flee) all of them into the western direction. O sage, the men in the army, pervaded by affliction caused by Kuśa's arrows and troubled by Lava's arrows resembled the eddies in the ocean with the waves rising. The entire army, troubled by the volleys of the arrows of Kuśa and Lava, did not get happiness. The frightened army repeatedly scattered here and there. No one endowed with might remained anywhere on the battlefield and desired to fight. At this time Śatrughna who tormented his enemies went to fight with the hero Kuśa resembling Lava. The killer of the heroes of his enemy seated in a golden chariot, seeing Kuśa full of power and resembling Rāma's form, said:

Śatrughna said:

52-56. Who are you, very mighty one, and resembling your brother Lava? O great hero, what is your name? Who is your father? Who is your mother? O best of men, how (is it that) you are staying in the forest resorted to by brāhmaṇas? O very powerful one, tell me everything so that I shall fight with you.

Hearing these words, Kuśa, filling with noise the battlefield with his voice grave like that of the clouds, spoke to the king: "(I know) only (that) Sītā, devoted to her husband, gave me birth. Devoted to worshipping the feet of Vālmiki, we two live in the forest. O sinless king, we are engaged in serving our mother, are proficient in all lores (sciences and arts); we are known as Kuśa and Lava.

57-65. Who are you, the hero, desiring to fight? Why is the excellent horse let loose? Today in the fight, you, possessing

power, are the victor. O king, if you are a warrior, fight with me. Now I shall knock you down in the battle." Śatrughna, knowing him to be the son of Sītā from Rāma, was amazed in his heart and angrily took his bow. Seeing him having taken a bow, Kuśa, full of anger, stretched his own very strong and excellent bow. Śatrughna who knew (the use of) all weapons discharged sharp arrows. Kuśa, laughing, easily cut them off in the battle. O sage, hundreds and thousands of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) Kuśa and the king (i.e. Śatrughna) pervaded the entire world. It was a wonder. The mighty Kuśa quickly burnt all of them with the missile presided over by the Fire. The brave king quelled it with the missile presided over by Rain. The king who was very brave, put it down with the missile presided over by Vāyu. Then everywhere on the battlefield strong wind blew. He covered the wind that disturbed (everything) with the missile presided over by Mountain. The king cut off the mountain-stones with a thunderbolt-like missile. Then that very great warrior Kuśa discharged the missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). That missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa, was not able to hurt the king.

66-79. Then Kuśa got very angry. He, given to anger, spoke to Śatrughna having great might and valour: "I think you are a great hero, getting victory in the battle, as my fearful missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa, did not hurt you. O king, today with three arrows I shall knock you down on the ground. If I do not do this, hear my solemn declaration. I shall have in this world the sin of the man who, having obtained human body (i.e. birth) due to crores of religious deeds, does not honour it through delusion. On this battlefield you should be attentive. I shall instantly knock you down on the ground." Saying so, he fixed on his bow a fierce arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world after aiming it at the great expansive, hard chest of the enemy. Seeing that arrow fixed, Śatrughna, full of anger, discharged sharp arrows piercing the skin of Kuśa. The arrow of a terrible form, resembling fire, and hissing like a serpent, went forth to pierce his chest. The best king, remembering Rāma, quickly noticed the arrow. He cut off that arrow having sharp joints and discharged by Kuśa. Then, Kuśa who was very angry due to his arrow being cut off, fixed on his bow an-

other arrow with sharp joints. While he, full of power decided to pierce his chest (with an arrow), he cut off his arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world. Then Kuśa, full of anger, remembered his mother's feet, and fixed on his arrow a third wonderful arrow. Śatrughna too, quickly took an arrow to cut it off. Just then, he, pierced by the arrow fell on the ground. When Śatrughna fell, there was a great wailing. Kuśa proud of his might, obtained victory then.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Rāma's Army Revives

Śeṣa said:

1-5. Seeing Śatrughna fallen, the excellent king Suratha getting into his very wonderful chariot fashioned with jewels went (to fight). Realising that Puṣkala was formerly defeated in battle, he went to fight with Lava, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of the great heroes. Suratha, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of the great heroes, having reached Kuśa and discharging arrows in various ways, troubled him. With ten arrows with rising flames he deprived Suratha of his chariot. He speedily cut off his bow, strong and strung. The battle between the two heroes (fought with) destruction of missiles and counter-missiles and throwing and counter-throwing of missiles was fierce and thrilling.

6-11. When the invincible king Suratha was very much exerting in the battle, Kuśa thought: 'What should I do (now) in the battle?' He, possessing great power, having thought, took a sharp, fierce arrow to kill the king. Seeing the arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, coming (towards him), he decided to cut it off. Just then the great arrow struck him. Then the very brave hero fainted in the battle, and fell in the interior of his chariot. The charioteer took him (away). Seeing on the fall of Suratha Kuśa getting victory and scaring the hosts of heroes, (Hanūmat), the son of Wind, went (to fight with him).

Seeing the powerful monkey, the son of Wind, coming (to fight), he grinned, as it were provoking him to become wrathful.

12-17a. He said to Hanūmat: "Come face to face with me. I shall pierce (you) with a thousand arrows. You will go to (i.e. fall on) the ground dead." Hanūmat, who was addressed like this, realising that Rāma's son was very powerful and that the duty for the master should be done, ran (to him). The very powerful one, having quickly uprooted a lofty śāla-tree having a hundred branches and aiming at Kuśa's chest, went to fight with him. The mighty one, seeing Hanūmat with a śāla-tree in his hand coming (to him), pierced him on his chest with three arrows having sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads and resembling the (crescent) moon. The son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat), being quickly pierced by the powerful Kuśa, gnawing his teeth struck him on his chest with the śāla-tree. The boy (though) struck with the śāla did not shake a bit.

17b-22. Then the heroes through amazement (i.e. being amazed) praised him on account of his being a child. That hero Kuśa, knowing (the use of) great missiles (and) being struck with the śāla-tree, took through anger a destructive missile to kill his enemy. Seeing the invincible destructive missile discharged by Kuśa, (Hanūmat) mentally meditated upon Rāma, the destroyer of the difficulties of his devotees. Then that missile causing great pain, which was discharged by Kuśa, stuck to (i.e. struck) the chest of Māruti and he again swooned. Seeing the monkey (fallen) unconscious, the powerful one (i.e. Kuśa) pierced with sharp arrows that entire huge army. That entire army consisting of four divisions, shattered with myriads of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) him on the battlefield took to fleeing.

23-28. Then Sugrīva, the lord of monkeys and a great protector uprooted many trees and ran to the great warrior Kuśa. Kuśa, laughing, easily cut off all (those) trees. The mighty one again speedily cut off the trees that came to him. Afflicted by many arrows on the battlefield, Sugrīva took a fearful mountain (to hit it) on the head of Kuśa. Seeing the mountain coming (to him) Kuśa pounded it with arrows (discharged) in many ways and quickly rendered it fit for Mahārudra's body (i.e. converted it into ashes). Seeing that great feat performed by the boy, Sugrīva was averse to the hope of (i.e. was disappointed towards) victory on the

battlefield. Seeing in the battle invincible Kuśa striking (Hanūmat's tail) and becoming very impatient and overpowered with anger, he took a mountain to strike him (with).

29-36. Seeing Sugriva eager to strike him, he carefully struck him with many arrows with sharp joints. He, struck with arrows of different kinds, and being afflicted, was exasperated to kill Kuśa, (and) went, (and) took a śāla-tree. Then also that hero Kuśa took a missile presided over by Varuṇa and he, the elder brother of Lava, bound him with that strong noose. He being (thus) bound with soft nooses by the powerful Kuśa, fell on the battlefield adorned by great heroes. Seeing Sugriva fallen, the warriors fled everywhere. Lava's brother, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of great heroes, got victory. Just then, Lava, having vanquished warriors, also Puṣkala, Aṅgada, Pratāpāgrya, Vīramaṇi, and also other kings, got victory in the battle, and came to his brother who got victory in the battle and who destroyed crores of enemies. O sage, pleased with each other, they embraced each other. They obtained victory. Then, being elated they talked (to each other).

Lava said:

37-42. O brother, because of your grace, the ocean of the battle has been crossed (by me). Now we shall cleanse the well-adorned battlefield.

Saying so the heroes, Kuśa and Lava, went (to the battlefield). (Lava) took the beautiful crest-jewel of the king which was decked with gold; so also the hero Lava took the auspicious crown of Puṣkala. He also took the very costly armlets of Śatrughna, and of someone else. Seizing the heap of weapons and also Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, they went near Sugriva and tied both (Hanūmat and Sugriva). The younger brother of Kuśa held the tail of the son of Wind and said to his brother: "I shall take (him) to my (i.e. our) abode holding him by his tail, to please our mother, for the sages' sons to play (with) and for (satisfying) my curiosity."

43-49. Hearing these words, Kuśa then spoke to Lava: "I shall seize this strong, powerful monkey." Speaking like this, the two, best among the mighty, having bound the two at

their tails and holding the two powerful ones, went to their hermitage. The two best monkeys (i.e. Hanūmat and Sugrīva) seeing them going to their hermitage, trembled and said to each other in frightened words (i.e. words full of fear). Hanūmat, with his mind soft through fear, said to the lord of monkeys: "These two sons of Rāma will take us to their hermitage. Formerly I who had gone to Jānakī, had done a (good) act for Jānakī. At that time the lovely queen Jānakī was (well) disposed to me. That Vaidehī will see me bound with a noose by my enemy. The excellent one will then laugh (and) I shall be ashamed. What should I do now? My life will end. A great misery has befallen. What will that Rāma do."

50-52. Hearing his words (Sugrīva said): "O great monkey, my (condition) is the same. If he will take me like this, I shall die." When the two who were very much frightened, were telling like this to each other, Kuśa and Lava energetically reached the house of their mother. Seeing them to have come, their mother was delighted. With great affection she embraced her two sons, one by one.

53-57. Jānakī, having seen the two monkeys, Hanūmat and Sugrīva, the best among the heroes and the lord of monkeys, held by the two (i.e. by Kuśa and Lava) by their tails, laughed. The excellent lady, seeing them tied with nooses, speaking for their release, said these excellent words: "O my (two) sons, free these very brave and very powerful monkeys. If the two big ones see me, they will cast their life. This is the hero Hanūmat, who burnt the city of (the son of) Danu (i.e. the demon Rāvaṇa). This also is the lord of bears, the king of all monkeys. Why have you, and where have you arrested them? What have you done (to them) through disrespect? That (you) two young ones have seized them by their tails makes me wonder."

58-66a. Hearing these soft words of the mother, the two sons, best in politeness and possessing great power, then said: "Mother, there is a strong king (named) Rāma, the son of Daśaratha. He has released a horse, well-adorned and having a golden note on his forehead. O mother, this is what is written there: 'My mother has given birth to one brave (son only).

Those who are (i.e. call themselves) kṣatriyas, may seize (the horse); otherwise, they should worship the soles of (my) feet.' Then, O you chaste lady, I thought in my heart: 'Are you not a kṣatriya lady? Would you not be the mother of heroes? (i.e. Have you not given birth to heroes?) Seeing the arrogance of the king, I have forcibly seized the horse. (Our) hero Kuśa has conquered and destroyed his army in the battle. O you who look upon your husband as a deity, know this to be the crown of the king. This also is the crown of another hero, the noble Puṣkala. Know this to be another crown, adorned with gems and pearls. O excellent one, know this to be the king's attractive horse, going at will, which is for my strong brother to ride upon. I have brought these two monkeys, the best among the strong, to play (with). They, who fight, are (brought here) for (i.e. to satisfy) your curiosity?'

66b-67a. Hearing these words, Jānakī, who looked upon her husband as a deity, repeatedly said to her brave sons: "Release them".

Sītā said:

67b-69a. You have done injustice. You have snatched Rāma's great horse. You have knocked down many soldiers. You have bound these lords of monkeys. The brave horse of your father is let loose by him for a sacrifice. You have snatched his horse too (which is to be used) in the best sacrifice.

69b-75a. Release these two monkeys; release this best among horses. Apologise to the very angry Śatrughna, the brother of the king.

Hearing these words of their mother, the best among the mighty, said: "We have conquered that king possessing might in the manner of kṣatriyas. Unfairness is not possible in the case of us who fight in the manner of kṣatriyas. Formerly Vālmiki said to us who were learning (under him): 'In the hermitage a horse fit for a sacrificial rite was seized. Therefore, a son would (i.e. could) fight with his father, or a younger brother with his (elder) brother; or a disciple with his teacher. By that no sin accrues.' By your order now we shall give (back)

the excellent horse. We shall release these two monkeys. We shall do (i.e. carry out) your words (i.e. your order)."

75b-80. Saying so, the two went to the battlefield. released the lords of monkeys, so also the horse fit for the horse-sacrifice. Queen Sītā, having heard from her sons about the destruction of the army, reflecting in her mind upon Śrī Rāma, looked at the sun, the witness. "If by mind, words or deeds I worship Raghunātha and none else, then let this king revive. O you lord of the worlds, due to my truth (fulness) let the entire big army, forcibly destroyed by my sons, revive." While Jānakī who looked upon her husband as her deity, was talking like this, the entire army revived on the battlefield.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Sumati Describes the Adventurous Events to Rāma

Śeṣa said:

1-4. In a moment Śatrughna, the hero, gave up his swoon on the battlefield. Other mighty warriors also, who had fainted, revived. Śatrughna saw the best among the horses, standing before him, and saw (i.e. found) himself to be without the helmet and the army revived. Seeing this he wondered in his mind and spoke to Sumati, the best among ministers, who had then revived: "Having shown pity, the boy has returned the horse for the completion of the sacrifice. We (shall) quickly go to Rāma desiring (i.e. waiting for) the horse's arrival."

5-11. Saying so, he, having got into the chariot and without (the sounds of) kettle-drums and conches, quickly went to Rāma far away from the hermitage. After him moved the great army full of four divisions and making the lord of serpents broken down due to (i.e. under) its load. Having quickly crossed Gaṅgā, full of water having waves, he went to his own country adorned with his own men. The king was accompanied by Puṣkala and Suratha; he, holding a bow, was seated in a jewelled

chariot; he had put the horse in front; the horse was adorned with jewelled necklaces; and on his head only shone the white umbrella. Surrounded by thousands of chariots and mighty kings who were adorned with heroic cries, he in due course reached the city, adorned by the solar dynasty, decorated with many excellent flags, and shining with citadels.

12-18. Rāma, having heard that the army along with this Śatrughna and with the brave Puṣkala had reached the city, was delighted in many ways. Showing Lakṣmaṇa the great army with four constituents, he sent him, his brother, best among the mighty (to receive it). Lakṣmaṇa having along with the army gone to his army, and being beside himself due to joy, embraced him whose body was adorned with wounds. Being asked about the safety everywhere, he told him the news. Śatrughna became very joyful and met with happiness. The brave and noble-minded son of Sumitrā, being seated along with his brother (Śatrughna) in his own chariot, went along with the great army to the city. Sarayū had sacred water, had purified the three worlds, was purified by the dust of Rāma's feet, was bright like the autumnal moon, was crowded with swans and ducks, was adorned with the ruddy geese, and was very much resounding with birds, having very strange colours.

19-33. Rāmacandra had abundantly got constructed there pavilions resounding with the separate recitals of brāhmaṇas knowing the Vedas. There were many kṣatriyas with their hands well-adorned with bows, and filling the earth with the noise of the various twangs of their bow-strings. There brāhmaṇas enjoyed (i.e. ate) charming and various kinds of food. Praising one another, they talked about (i.e. discussed) interesting news (topics). There were foods like rice boiled with milk, which were white and resembled the moon. They were full of (i.e. mixed) with profuse milk and ghee and were mixed with sugar. There were many small round cakes resembling the orb of the moon in beauty. They were very lovely and were made fragrant with perfumes of camphor etc. There were soft components of macaroni having hundred holes or no holes. With sweet food there were baked thin cakes that were dressed. There was boiled rice which resembled lotuses, which was mixed with kidney-bean-seeds, which was having a perfume, and which gave delight. The

boiled rice was (mixed) with curd, and accompanied by (i.e. mixed with) camphor. It was prepared by cooks cooking tasty food, and served by waiters. There, certain brāhmaṇas on seeing the rice boiled with milk put (i.e. served) in their dishes, said to one another: “What is this wonder that is seen (here)? Is it the orb of the moon fallen from the sky through the fear of darkness? Here there is the wonderful nectar which puts an end to death.” Hearing that, another excellent brāhmaṇa, with his eyes red through anger, said. “The orb of the moon is not at all wet with nectar. The form of the moon is one (only). Then how can it be seen to be similar in every individual dish of a thousand of brāhmaṇas? Therefore, know that it may be a lotus or camphor. Do not regard it to be the moon’s orb endowed with white lustre.” Just then another (brāhmaṇa) overcome with anger, shaking his head (said): “These foolish brāhmaṇas, not proficient in the knowledge of tastes, do not know: This is cooked with the bulb of campaka. They are sweet lotuses.”

34-40a. O sages, brāhmaṇas who (generally) ate bulbs and roots, were pleased and were very eager to know the tastes and thus conjectured among themselves. Just then another brāhmaṇa said: “The existence of the kṣatriyas is excellent. They will enjoy food like that served on account of their great religious merit.” To him a brāhmaṇa said at that time: “Such is the fruit of charity. Those who give to brāhmaṇas, obtain what is desired. Such food will never be seen by them who have never repeatedly worshipped Viṣṇu with various offerings of eatables. Those men who feed brāhmaṇas with (foods of) various tastes, enjoy (food of) sweet taste abandoned by (i.e. kept away from) the sight of the sinners. Those best brāhmaṇas, proficient in the Vedas, thus fed with (foods of) desired tastes, recited (the Vedic texts) in the pavilion. Being delighted, some danced, some laughed and some cried. A great festivity took place there.

40b-52. Then Śatrughna came there. Rāma, seeing Śatrughna coming along with Puṣkala, could not contain the joy rising (in his heart). Then Rāma got up (to greet his) brother stuck to (i.e. fallen at) his feet. Seeing his brother fallen at his feet, Rāma firmly embraced him who was full of politeness, and whose body was adorned with wounds. Shedding tears in various ways (i.e. profusely) on his head, Rāghava got great delight which is far

away from (i.e. which cannot be expressed in) words. He, overcome with (Puškala's) modesty, took polite Puškala who had bent at his feet, between his arms, and embraced him much (i.e. closely). Raghunātha himself closely embraced others also like Hanūmat, the hero Sugrīva, so also Aṅgada, Lakṣmīnidhi, the son of Janaka, Pratāpāgrya, conquering his enemies, Subāhu, Sumada, the hero Vimala, the gem(-like) Nīla, Satyavat, Viramaṇi, and Suratha, the servant of Rāma—who were affectionate and had bowed at his feet. Sumati, the lofty one, being pleased and standing in front of Rāma, closely embraced Śrī Raghupati favouring his devotees. Then Rāma, the best among the eloquent, seeing his minister come near him, spoke with great delight to him: “O Sumati, O best among speakers, O best among ministers, tell me who are these kings. How (i.e. for what reason) have all of them come here? Where (i.e. to which places) did the horse go? By whom was he arrested? How was he released by my brother having great might?”

Śeṣa said:

53. Thus addressed that very intelligent Sumati, the best among ministers, laughed and spoke in a voice grave like the (sound of the thundering) clouds.

Sumati said:

54-59a. How should I speak before you, the omniscient one? You are asking in the manner of the world. You who are everything, know all. Yet, O crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of all kings, always holding your order on my head (i.e. obeying your order), I shall speak; today (i.e. now) listen to it. O lord, by your grace, your horse, adorned with a note on his forehead, wandered on the surface of the earth. No one, proud (through the pride) of his name and power, seized him. (On the contrary) having given their kingdom (to you), they saluted your lotus-like feet. Who, desiring victory (and) free from old age and death, seized (i.e. would seize) the best horse of the killer of Rāvaṇa, the lord of demons? Your lovely horse had just gone to Ahicchatra (city).

59b-62. The king of that city, Sumada, heard that your horse had come; and the very powerful one, with his sons, and surro-

unded by his entire mighty army, offered his entire kingdom in which the elements causing nuisance were destroyed, O lord, That king Sumada who having propitiated the mother, the leader of the worlds, Jagadambikā, obtained a long life and a kingdom free from bad elements, salutes you, served by lords. Accept, with a favourable eye, him who desires to see you for a long time.

63-71. Then in king Subāhu's city, full of army, his son Damana seized the best horse. With that Damana a great battle took place. Having caused (Damana,) the son of Subāhu, to faint, Puškala obtained victory. Then Subāhu, getting angry, fought, in the battle with (Hanūmat,) the son of Wind, the servant of your lotus-like feet, and best among the mighty. Being struck by his foot, he obtained the knowledge covered due to the curse. Having dedicated everything to you, he has become the protector of the horse. This king Subāhu, of a lofty body, salutes you. Sprinkle with a favourable glance king Subāhu, proficient in political wisdom. Then the horse that was let loose, plunged into the puddle in Revā. There the mighty Śatrughna obtained the deluding missile. Then the horse went to Śivapura, adorned with the residence of Śiva. You know what happened there, as you yourself had come there. The demon Vidyunmālin was killed; Satyavat then joined (us); O you highly intelligent one, you know about our battle with Suratha. Then the horse, released from Kuṇḍalaka, roamed everywhere. Nobody proud of his might, seized him.

72-80. Then the horse reached Vālmīki's hermitage. O best among men, listen to what curious thing took place there. Then a strongest boy, sixteen years old and having resemblance with you, seeing the horse marked with a note, seized him. Then O best of men, a great battle with Kālajit took place. He was struck by the hero with a sharp missile. Many very mighty ones like Puškala were killed in the battle. The crest-jewel of the heroes made even Śatrughna unconscious. Then the brave king, the best among the mighty, feeling great pain in his heart, angrily made him unconscious. When he was made unconscious by the king, another (warrior) came (there). He and this one, having revived, destroyed your army. Having seized the weapons and ornaments of all that were unconscious, and taking (with) them

the two monkeys that were bound, the two (i.e. Kuśa and Lava) went to their own hermitage. Having favoured (us) he gave (back) the great sacrificial horse. The entire army that was dead was brought back to life. Having taken the horse, we have come to your vicinity. I have told you these words (since) I knew this only.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Singing of Rāmāyaṇa by Kuśa and Lava

Śeṣa said:

1. Having come to know that the two boys in Vālmīki's hermitage were his sons, he (i.e. Rāma) went to Vālmīki.

Śrī Rāma said:

2-5. Who are the two boys having my resemblance and the best among the mighty? Why do the two, skilled in archery, live there? Having heard what the minister told about them who easily bound Śatrughna and Hanūmat, I am amazed. Therefore, O sage, tell me all the deeds of the two boys, since a great, desirable delight thus comes to me.

Hearing those words of the intelligent king of kings, he (i.e. Vālmīki) spoke important words, with clear syllables.

Vālmīki said:

6-11a. How is it that you who live in the heart of men, would not have the knowledge (of the deeds)? Yet, to delight you I am telling it now. O king, these two boys, the best among the mighty, who resemble your form, and have charming bodies like yours, (live) in my hermitage. When you abandoned in the fierce forest the pregnant, innocent Jānakī, afflicted with grief and repeatedly crying like an osprey, I saw the daughter of Janaka and brought your righteous wife to (my) hermitage. The sages' sons constructed a lovely hut of leaves for her. In it

she gave birth to the two sons illumining the ten quarters. It is clear that I named them Kuśa and Lava.

11b-15. As the moon waxes in the bright half of the month, they grew there continuously. In due course I performed all (sacraments) like the thread-ceremony. O king, I made them grasp (i.e. taught them) all the Vedas with their limbs. From my mouth they learnt all the Upaniṣads, so also Āyurveda, archery, science of (the use of) weapons, so also the lore of magic; I made them skilled in music. The two, unsteady and fickle of heart, skilled in all lores, sang on the bank of Gaṅgā and in the bowers of creepers and in groves. Then, O best of Raghus, I got the highest delight.

16-21a. Having given them all the missiles, I put my hand on their heads (i.e. I blessed them). Seeing them extremely skilled in singing and proficient in knowing the difference among the notes like the first, the fifth and the third (notes of the gamut), people were wonder-struck. Seeing them like that I made them sing charmingly. Due to my knowledge of the future, I composed the holy Rāmāyaṇa. The two, skilled in (playing upon) the tabor, musical instruments, lutes, sang in every forest and infatuated the beasts and the birds. O Rāma, the sweetness of the singing of your sons is wonderful. One night Varuṇa took the two boys to hear them. By the order of the god the two boys who have a charming age and form, who have crossed the ocean of the science of music, sang sweetly there.

21b-28a. Varuṇa along with the members of his family and singers, heard your highly sweet, charming pure deeds. Having heard with Mitra your deeds sweeter than even nectar, O Rāma, Varuṇa was pleased. With the functions of his life and senses taken away by the joy of music, he did not direct (i.e. allow) your sons to come back (to the earth). The two boys, though enticed by charming, great pleasures, did not swerve, as a result of (their) remembering the feet of their teacher and their mother. I too then went to the excellent abode of Varuṇa. O lord, Varuṇa, having affection (for me), worshipped me. To Varuṇa who, though he knew everything about the birth and deeds of the two boys, too asked me (about them), I told everything about the birth of the boys and their acquisition of knowledge.

Hearing that they are Sītā's sons, he (presented them) with garments and ornaments. To honour my words 'the (articles) should be accepted, as they are given by a god,' the two princes accepted whatever was given by Varuṇa who was pleased with their musical instruments, singing, knowledge, age and virtues.

28b-36. Then the fortunate Varuṇa asked me with reference to (i.e. about) Sītā: (He said:) "Sītā is at the head of chaste ladies; she is endowed with beauty and good character; she has brave sons; she is noble; she does not deserve to be abandoned. O descendant of Raghu, there is a great loss (to Rāma) in (i.e. due to) abandoning her. She is the greatest well-being of all well-beings, which never perishes. O Rāma, the hearing about and narration of the account of whom is holy, what loss is thereby if the stupid sinful persons do not realise her greatness? Her purifying behaviour is always before us. Those who reflect upon Sītā's feet, instantly attain perfection; by the mere thought about her, these divine functions of the worlds like origin, maintenance and destruction, take place. Sītā is death; is nectar; (it is) she (who) gives heat; she sends down rain. Your Jānakī is heaven, salvation, penance, deep abstract meditation and charity. None else but your dear Sītā alone creates Brahmā, Śiva and other gods like me. You are the father of all the worlds, and Sītā is the mother. Therefore, your erroneous view about her is not at all proper for (i.e. will not at all lead to) happiness.

37-43. You, the omniscient one, the lord, yourself know that Sītā, the daughter of the Earth, who is dearer to you than your own life, is ever pure. Therefore, you should respect Jānakī who is pure and dear to you. (If you do this,) there will be no mortification of the curse for Sītā or for you. O Vālmīki, O best sage, you should actually tell these words of (i.e. uttered by) me to Rāma, the lord of the worlds." O lord, thus was I told by Varuṇa about your receiving Sītā. I was also told in the same way by all other gods. The gods, demons, all the gandharvas also, with minds full of curiosity, have heard the recital of Rāmāyaṇa done by your two sons. All of them were pleased, and they praised your two sons. By means of their form, singing, age and virtues, they have enticed the three worlds. Whatever was given by the gods to your two sons, has

been accepted. Sages (gave) them blessings; and from others they (received) fame.

44-51. Formerly the sages saw the world to be full of one Rāma (only). Now the entire world has become full of three Rāmas on account of your two sons. Formerly in the world only one form of Cupid was seen; but now with four Cupids (i.e. Cupid, Rāma, Kuśa and Lava), he will be born (i.e. will have four forms). O lord of kings, everywhere else Kuśa and Lava are declared to be Rāma's sons. Then why do you, a learned man, shrink (from accepting it)? O you crest-jewel among those having an auspicious fame, except in the case of your having abandoned Sītā, praise about all your deeds is heard. O Rāma, you who are the lord of the three worlds and are following a householder's life, should accept these two sons who are endowed with knowledge, good character and virtues. They will not leave their mother and stay with you. Therefore, you should invite your sons with their mother. Now by reviving the army, she has given a pious, convincing proof to all the people—even the sinking ones (i.e. sinners) (of her purity). O you who cut off the pride (of your enemies), it is, therefore, not unknown to us or to gods. In her purity (being established), what was (supposed to be) lost for the people, is indeed (proved to be) eternal.

Śeṣa said:

52-54. Thus Vālmīki enlightened Rāma, though he was omniscient. Praising and saluting Vālmīki, he spoke to Lakṣmaṇa: "O deer one, go, resorting to a chariot with Sumantra to bring Sītā, (my) virtuous wife, along with (our) sons. Telling her these my words and also the words of the sage and having (thus) enlightened her, quickly bring her back."

Lakṣmaṇa said:

55-59. O supreme one, O lord of all of us, by your order I shall go. If the queen will come, then my journey will be fruitful. If the chaste one, being displeased with me for my former fault (of having abandoned her in the forest), does not come, then I, coming (back alone) should be forgiven.

Speaking thus to Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa getting with Sumitra and a disciple of the sage into the chariot by the king's order, went to Sītā's hermitage. 'How should I propitiate Sītā who would know (i.e. remember) the former fault of me who always depend upon Rāma?' Thinking like this and (oscillating) between joy and fear, Lakṣmaṇa reached Sītā's hermitage, destroying fatigue.

60-69. Having got down from the chariot, he with his eyes (i.e. sight) checked by tears, repeatedly addressing her 'O noble one, O revered one, O respected one, O auspicious one', and with his entire body trembling, fell at her feet. She who was beside herself by love, caused him to rise (and said): "O dear one, why have you come to the forest dear to the sages. Is the king, the pearl from the pearl-oyster (in the form) of Kauśalyā, all right? Carried away merely by his fame, is he without anger towards me? By all he is called the ocean of auspicious virtues. Entering into the fear of infamy, he appointed you to abandon me. If after that his fame has become spotless, then the fame of me who, even by dying, spread his good fame, will be very firm. O brother-in-law, let me quickly have the proximity of my husband. Though he has abandoned me, I have not, in the least, forsaken him. The fruit (effect) depends upon the means (cause); but the cause is not dependent upon the fruit. Is Kauśalyā whose son is the protector of the three worlds, who is free from heart-rending grief, and who has always been full of compassion for me, all right? Are all kinsmen like Bharata all right? Is the noble Sumitrā, to whom I am dearer than her own life, all right? Have you also been abandoned like me (by the king) for his fame? What is difficult for the king, to whom his own self is not dear, to abandon (anything)?"

70-86. In this way she asked Rāma's younger brother in many ways. He said to her: "The king is all right. He is asking about your well-being. O queen, Kauśalyā, Sumitrā and other royal ladies that there are, have with love and with blessing asked about your well-being. O you auspicious one, I report to you the salutation, preceded by a question about your well-being, offered to you by Śatrughna and Bharata. O Jānakī, the preceptors, and all their wives, have given you blessings and O

auspicious one, have enquired about your well-being. The self-possessed one, not finding delight in anything else but you, is, truthfully inviting you, O beautiful lady. O daughter of Janaka, the lord, finding all the quarters vacant without you, weeps and makes others (us) also weep. O you born in the Videha country, he always remembers the place where you have stayed and looks upon it as occupied (by you), and says: "This hermitage of Vālmiki where Jānakī spends her time in (talking about) tidings about me, has become blessed." Our lord, while weeping, said something more to you. Listen to it: "There is no doubt that whatever is in the heart of the speaker does find an expression. People call me alone the lord of their lord; but I say that for them the unseen (destiny) is the independent cause. Even the lord of everything follows destiny in all his acts. Then, would not those that are ruled (by him), follow it in (times of) happiness or of misery? That inevitable cause which bore fruit at the time of bending the bow (of Śiva), the frenzy of Kaikeyī, the death of my father, going into the forest, your being kidnapped there, crossing of the ocean, killing of the lord of demons, at the time of receiving you (back), the truthfulness of my pledge, at the time of the murmur about (you, my) chaste wife, at the time of my again being connected with my relatives, my acquiring the kingdom, O beautiful lady, again at the time of separation from you, is again succeeding at the time of our re-union. Due to that (destiny) which falsified the Veda, due to which I followed (the ordinary) people (in abandoning you), I have become the first cause. The wise people follow destiny. Destiny wears out by fruition (enjoyment and suffering). That you (have exhausted) in the forest.

87-92. O Sītā, O you not seen by people (or by light), my causeless love for you, which is growing, having abandoned you (now) invites you respectfully. The merging of the purity of love takes place (i.e. the purity of love disappears), even if a fault is suspected (to be present in an individual). The wise ones should always enjoy that (pure) love. O good one, I have purified my love for you. It is not otherwise. It should be thought (i.e. borne in mind) that by me, following eminent persons, has been protected even this world in all conditions for the sake of purity, (even) through our censure, O queen;

for due to the acts of the great this confused world would perish. The fame of both of us is bright; the love of us is splendid; the families of us are bright; the acts of us are splendid. On the earth there would be bright singers of the fame of us. Those who are the devotees of us go to the end of (i.e. cross) the ocean of the worldly existence.”

93-100. Being pleased with your virtues you were thus addressed by him. Make your mind compassionate to see the lotus-like feet of your husband. For you are prepared lovely garments, great ornaments, fragrant unguents, charming scents. For your delight Rāma has sent chariots and female servants; so also an umbrella, white chowries, elephants and horses, O beautiful one. Followed by me and praised by best brāhmaṇas and by bards and panegyrists, saluted by the ladies in the city, served by warriors, covered with flowers by celestial ladies, giving wealth to brāhmaṇas as desired by them, having put in front the two sons mounted on elephants, you the queen, the ruler of men, (should) go to Ayodhyā, your city. When you have gone there and are united with your husband, today there will be songs (sung) for all royal ladies and all the wives of sages that have come from all (places), so also for those (that have come) from Kosala.

Śeṣa said:

101-104. Hearing this request that respectable Sītā said to him: “I have not been the cause of the king’s fame; on the contrary I myself am infamy. Void of good *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha*, what can I accomplish for him? Under the circumstances who would have faith in your autocratic king? By one like me born in an auspicious family the faults of my husband that are in my mind should never be told directly or indirectly. He does not move away from my heart in that form in which he settled in my heart at the time of (our) marriage.

105-109. O Lakṣmaṇa, these two sons of me are born from the portion of his lustre. They are the sprouts of his family; they are very brave; they are skilled in archery. Take them to their father and carefully fondle them. Staying here at will I shall propitiate Rāma by means of penance. O noble one, you should tell (i.e. convey) my salutation to the feet of the revered ones;

so also (you should tell) all after going from here about my well-being." Sītā directed her sons (as): "Go to your father. You have to serve him only, who would give you his position." The two boys, Kuśa and Lava, though thus ordered, were, unwilling (to go), (but) went there with Lakṣmaṇa due to the words of (i.e. due to being ordered by) Vālmiki.

110-111. The two sons went near the lotus-like feet of Vālmiki. Lakṣmaṇa also, going along with the two boys, saluted him. These i.e. Vālmiki, Lakṣmaṇa, and the two boys—gathered, and knowing Rāma to be in the assembly, they, being eager (to see him), went (there).

112-120. The very intelligent Lakṣmaṇa, full of joy and sorrow, having saluted (Rāma), reported to Rāma all the words of (i.e. uttered by) Sītā. By the words of Sītā's message Rāma fell into a swoon (i.e. he became unconscious). Having regained consciousness he said to Lakṣmaṇa who knew the way of life: "O friend, go there again and having told her my words bring her quickly by making great effort; well-being to you. (You should say to her:) 'Have you, practising penance in the forest, thought of, heard of, or seen any other course than (coming to) me, that, O Jānakī, you are not coming (to me)? By your own desire you went from here to the forest, dear to sages. You honoured those wives of the sages and saw the groups of sages. O beautiful lady, your desire is fulfilled. Then why no you not today come (back)? Taking note of (i.e. considering) your own desire you would not find fault with me. O you lady of beautiful thighs, to a lady, whether she goes or does not go (away from her husband), her husband alone, whether he is without virtues or is an ocean of virtues, is the recourse. Then what about him who is desired by her mind? Whatever act is done by a noble woman, is (done) for pleasing her husband. I was pleased with you formerly; now I am extremely pleased (with you). Sacrifice, muttering prayers, penance, charity, vows, (visits to) sacred places, (showing) pity etc., all become fruitful and deities are pleased, when I am pleased. There is no doubt about it.' "

Śeṣa said:

121-122. Taking this message to (i.e. for) Sītā from the lord of the world (i.e. Rāma) Lakṣmaṇa bowed down through

attachment for Rāma and said to the lord of souls: "I shall tell those words full of politeness, which this one has uttered for bringing back Sītā."

123-125. Saying so and saluting the feet of Raghunātha, Lakṣmaṇa getting into a speedy chariot quickly went to Sītā. Having looked at the fortunate and very energetic sons of Rāma, making his face lovely by having a smile on Vālmīki said: "O sons, playing on the lute, sing (songs describing) the wonderful good deeds of Rāma, adorning them with your sweet voice."

126-133. Thus addressed, the two noble sons (of Rāma) sang Rāma's good deeds which give great religious merit, which were beautified with good sentences and words, in which the way of righteousness was actually present, in which chastity was present, so also were present brotherly affection and devotion to the teacher, where appeared in a bodily form the behaviour of the master and the servant, where punishment to one behaving unrighteously was actually (found to be inflicted) from (i.e. by) the descendant of Raghu. The singing pervaded the world; even in heaven gods remained (motionless); hearing which singing even kinnaras fainted in a moment. The entire assembly there on hearing the sound of the lute adorned with beating of time and measure, became (motionless) like a doll painted (in a picture). Rāma and other kings shed tears of joy; they being enticed by the singing of the fifth note, remained like (being) painted (i.e. motionless). Then seeing (Rāma) intent on (giving) a gift they laughed and with their eyebrows knit a little spoke to the best sage Vālmīki:

134-136. "O sage, a great injustice is being done by this king, since he (trying) to allure us desires to give us gold coins. Accepting gifts is recommended for brāhmaṇas and not for others. A king (i.e. a kṣatriya) intent upon receiving a gift is fit for hell only. (This) king is enjoying the kingdom, let free by us through compassion. How does he, adorned with good fortune, desire to give (us) gold coins?"

137-140. Vālmīki, full of compassion, looked at them who spoke like this and told them: "O you who are most prudent, know (this to be) your father." Hearing these words of the sage the two boys, full of modesty, and extremely pure due to their devotion to their mother, stuck to (i.e. fell at) the feet of

the king. Full of joy, Rāma firmly clasped the two boys to his body. He thought that the actual likenesses of his wife had stood by him. O best sage, the assembly too, seeing the charming faces of Rāma's sons, regarded Jānakī's devotion to her husband to be true.

141. Having heard this spoken from the mouth of Śeṣa, Vātsyāyana said: "I have a mind (i.e. I desire) to hear Rāmāyaṇa, full of all morality."

Vātsyāyana said:

142. At what time was this great Rāmāyaṇa composed? Why did he (i.e. Vālmīki) compose it? What is described in it? Tell me that.

Śeṣa said:

143-146a. Once the brāhmaṇa Vālmīki went to a great forest where there were tāla (trees), tamāla (trees) and blossomed kiṁśuka (trees); where ketakī (tree) made the forest fragrant with its pollen and was seen like the great lustre of the moon by having white heads; where there were many blossomed trees like campaka, bakula, and kovidāra and kuraṇṭaka. The forest sounded with the notes of cuckoos and the hummings of bees; it was charming everywhere and full of lovely birds.

146b-149a. There a pair of curlews, which was lovely, which was afflicted with Cupid's arrows, which was delighted with each other, which was (having) affection for each other, enjoyed. Then, a certain cruel hunter, greedy for eating flesh, came there, and killed one lovely (bird) of the two. Then the female curlew seeing her husband (i.e. her mate) killed by the hunter, became afflicted, and giving out loud cries through grief, lamented.

149b-151a. Then the sage (Vālmīki) who was angry, touching the holy water of the river, cursed the hunter who killed the (male) curlew: "O hunter, since you killed one of the two curlews infatuated by love, you will not attain glory for eternal years."

151b-153a. Then the brāhmaṇas—his followers, thinking that the composition of a verse had taken place, were delighted,

and praising the sage with the words 'Well (done), well (done)', they said: Lord, in the words that rose from the curse Sarasvatī has produced a verse. O best sage, this verse has been an extremely attractive one. O best brāhmaṇa, then the mind of the sage was extremely delighted.

153b-157. At that time, Brahmā having arrived with his sons said (these) words to Vālmīki: "O best sage, you are fortunate, (since) Sarasvatī, residing in your mouth, has become a verse. Therefore, compose the lovely Rāmāyaṇa of sweet words, by which your fame will last till the end of the world. Blessed is the speech in (your) mouth which is accompanied by the name of Rāma. Other stories about sensual love of men generate sin only. Therefore, compose the biography of Rāma, well-known in the world, by which the sins of the sinners will perish at (i.e. by means of) every word."

158-162. Saying so the Creator along with other gods disappeared. Then he thought; 'How would Rāmāyaṇa be (composed)?' Then on the charming bank of the river he became engrossed in meditation. Then in his heart appeared the lovely Rāma. Seeing Rāma who was dark like the petals of a blue lotus and whose eyes were like lotuses, and observing his past, future and present deeds, he met with great joy, and composed Rāmāyaṇa full of charming words and many kinds of metres, in which Rāmāyaṇa there are, O sinless one, six very charming divisions. (They are): Bāla, Āraṇyaka, Kiṣkindhā, and Sundara; so also Yuddha and Uttara.

163. O highly intelligent one, a man who listens to these six is freed from (i.e. absolved of) all sins.

164-167. In it, in the Bālakāṇḍa (is the description how) king Daśaratha who was pleased, obtained by performing the sacrifice to obtain a male issue, four sons, actually Viṣṇu, the eternal Brahman. Then (he, i.e. Rāma) goes to Viśvāmitra's sacrifice, marries Sītā, (meets) Paraśurāma, comes (back) to the city (of Ayodhyā), is allotted the position of heir-apparent; (then) at the words of his mother, he, with his wife and Lakṣmaṇa went to the forest after having crossed Gaṅgā, (then) to Citrakūṭa mountain. Having heard that he (lived) in the forest, Bharata, the wise one, went to his brother. Not securing him

(i.e. unable to get him back), he himself lived in Nandigrāma. (This is what) you listen to in the Bāla (kāṇḍa).

168-170. The description in the next takes place in Araṇya (i.e. forest). It describes his residence in the hermitages of the sages. At places there is a minute description. (Then there is the description of) the cutting of Śūrpaṇakhā's nose; (so also is the description of) the destruction of Khara and Dūṣaṇa; (then of) the killing of the illusory (deer) Mārīca; (the description of) the kidnapping of his beautiful wife by the demon (Rāvaṇa); the wandering of him separated (from Sītā) in the forest; (thus) he was endowed with human deeds. (Then follows the description of) his seeing Kabandha there, and his arrival at Pampā; (then is the description of) his meeting with Hanūmat.

171-174. This (kāṇḍa or division where these events are described) is called Vana (or Āraṇya kāṇḍa). O sage, listen to (the description occurring in) the next division. I shall abridge it and tell you (i.e. I shall tell it to you in brief). The breaking of the seven tāla (trees); the wonderful killing of Vālin; giving the kingdom to Sugrīva, and the description of the trees; then the message (i.e. advice) of Lakṣmaṇa about his act (i.e. duty); expulsion of Sugrīva; so also the full description of the army, and search for Sītā; then meeting Sampāti, crossing the ocean, meeting with the monkeys on the other shore. (This is the description that occurs in) the wonderful Kiṣkindhā (kāṇḍa or division).

175-182. Listen to (the description occurring) in the Sundara-kāṇḍa where (you find) the wonderful story of Rāma. The error of the monkey of seeing the picture in every house; then (Hanūmat's) seeing Sītā there, and (his) talk with Sītā; breaking of the forest (by Hanūmat); the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) being bound by the angry (demons); then (the description of) the burning of Laṅkā; then joining the monkeys; then the giving of the token of recognition (given by) Rāma; then the march of the army; then (the description of) constructing a bridge over the ocean; meeting with Śuka and Sāraṇa. (The kāṇḍa which contains) this (description) is called Sundara. In the Yuddha (kāṇḍa, is given the description of) union with Sītā. In the Uttara (kāṇḍa) (is given the description of) the conversation with sages and the commencement of the (horse-) sacrifice. There

are many tales about Rāma, which destroy the sins of the listeners. Thus these are said to be the six Kāṇḍas (i.e. divisions, listening to which) removes the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder. I have told you in brief (this) very charming (account). That is Rāmāyaṇa destroying great sins, having twentyfour thousand (verses), and marked with (i.e. having) six Kāṇḍas. Having heard it, Rāma was pleased, and putting (i.e. seating) his sons on the seat, and embracing them closely, he remembered (his) dear Sītā.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Commencement of the Sacrifice

Śeṣa said :

1-5. Then Lakṣmaṇa, having come (there) repeatedly saluted her, and with (his voice) faltering through love, he told her the words uttered by Rāma. Having seen Lakṣmaṇa full of modesty to have come (there) and having heard Rāma's message through his mouth, Sītā being abashed, said: "O Lakṣmaṇa, how (i.e. why) have you come? I forsaken by Rāma in the great forest and remembering Rāma, am staying in Vālmiki's hermitage." Having heard the words that came out from her mouth Lakṣmaṇa said: "O mother, O you chaste lady, Rāma is inviting you again and again. A chaste wife does not bring to her mind the fault committed by her husband; therefore, seated in an excellent charriot, come with me."

6-10. Hearing these words Jānakī who looked upon her husband as god, gave up the anger in her heart and sat in the chariot with Lakṣmaṇa. Having saluted all the female ascetics and the sages bright with (the knowledge of) the Vedas, and mentally remembering Rāma, she sat in the chariot and went to the city (of Ayodhyā). She having costly ornaments, reached the city in due course. She reached the river Sarayū where Rāma was waiting. Having got down from the chariot with Lakṣmaṇa, the charming one, devoted to her husband, stuck to (i.e. fell at)

the feet of Rāma. Rāma, having seen that Jānakī, beside herself due to love, (said): “O good lady, I shall complete the sacrifice with you.”

11-16. Having saluted Vālmiki and other best brāhmaṇas, she, eager to salute the feet of his mothers, went (to them). Having showered blessings on that dear Jānakī, the mother of the heroes, Kauśalyā became glad in many ways. Kaikeyī, seeing the daughter of the Videha-king bowing at her feet, gave her the blessing: “With your husband and sons live long”. Sumitrā, seeing the daughter of the Videha-king bowing at her feet, gave her blessing giving sons and grandsons. O brāhmaṇa, the chaste Sītā, dear to Rāmacandra, having fully saluted them indeed obtained great joy. Seeing the religiously wedded wife of Rāmacandra come there, the Pitcher-born (i.e. Agasti), disregarding the golden (image of Rāma’s) wife, placed (in its place) (his) chaste wife.

17-19. In the sacrifice Rāma at that time shone with Sītā, like the Moon having rising lustre in the autumn along with the star (Rohiṇī). With his chaste wife Vaidehī, he performed the sacrifice removing all sins when the lovely time had come. (People) seeing Rāma engaged with Sītā in the sacrifice, were, being full of eagerness, very much delighted.

20-34. At that time of the best sacrifice Rāma said to the intelligent Vasiṣṭha: “O lord, what needful things should be done hereafter?” Hearing Rāma’s words the very intelligent preceptor said: “Worship of brāhmaṇas, giving delight to them, should be done. Formerly (king) Marutta¹ made the sacrifice ready with preparations. Then brāhmaṇas were gratified with (gifts of) money etc. The brāhmaṇas were unable to carry large loads of the gifts. The brāhmaṇas unable to carry the loads of gifts threw them in the region of Himavat. Therefore, O foremost king having wealth, O best king, you too give gifts etc. to brāhmaṇas, so that there will be excellent (i.e. great) satisfaction.” Hearing this the foremost king, looking upon Agasti as venerable, first worshipped Brahmā’s son, the treasure of penance. He worshipped delightful Agastya with his wife by means of many loads of gems and various loads of gold surrounded by (i.e. together with)

1. Marutta—A king of the solar race, who is said to have performed a sacrifice in which the gods took part as waiters.

countries and people giving great delight. In the same way he honoured Satyavatī's son Vyāsa with gems, gold coins, and various countries. He worshipped Cyavana with his wife with good gems. He also honoured all other sages, priests, the treasures of penance, in many ways with heaps of gems and loads of gold. At that time, in the sacrifice Rāma gave large presents to brāhmaṇas. He gave a lakh of gold coins to each brāhmaṇa. He gave various gifts to the helpless, blind and poor with lovely gems given according to their satisfaction. There he gave, as laid down in the sacred texts, variegated garments, soft food, giving joy to all. The city crowded with well-fed and delighted people, grown (more populous) with all beings, surrounded (i.e. crowded) by women became very much delighted. The brāhmaṇa, the pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agastī), seeing him (i.e. Rāma) giving gifts to all, was very much delighted.

35-41. Then he called sixty-four kings with their wives, to bring nectar-like water to bathe (the horse). Rāma with Sītā, adorned with all (kinds of) ornaments went to bring water in a pitcher of a golden colour. Saumitra (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) also (went) with Urmilā, king Bharata with Māṇḍavī, Śatrughna with Śrutakīrti, and Puṣkala with Kāntimatī. Subāhu (went) with Satyavatī, Satyavat with Virabhūṣā, Sumada with Satkīrti, and king Vimala with his queen. King Viramaṇi went with lovely Śrutavatī, Lakṣminidhi with Komalā, Riputāpa with Aṅgasenā, Bibhīṣaṇa with Mahāmūrti, and Pratāpāgrya with Pratītā. Ugrāśva (went) with Kāmagamā, Nīlaratna with Adhiramyā. Suratha (went) with Sumanohārī and the monkey with Mohanā. The sage Vasiṣṭha sent these (and other) kings.

42-44. Vasiṣṭha who knew the sacred hymns, having gone to Sarayū flooded with holy and auspicious water, consecrated the water: "O water, purify this horse with this charming water for the sacrifice of Rāmacandra, the protector of the entire world." All kings like Rāma brought that water touched by the sage to the pavilion praised by best brāhmaṇas.

45-50. The pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agastī) having bathed the horse, white like milk, consecrated him with a hymn through the hands of Rāma: "O great horse, purify me in this crowd of the brāhmaṇas. May all the delighted gods be pleased by your sacrifice." Saying so, king Rāma with Sītā touched him. Then all the

kings through curiosity looked upon it as a wonder. They said to one another: "What does that Rāma by remembering whom men are freed from great sins, say?" When king Rāma spoke like this, the pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agasti), consecrated a sword and gave it into Rāma's hand. When Rāma held and touched the sword, the horse gave up the beast's form and assumed a divine form at the sacrifice.

51-53. Surrounded by celestial nymphs, fanned by chowries, and decorated with a necklace, he got into an excellent divine car. Then all the people seeing him to have given up the horse's form and to have assumed an excellent divine form, were wonder-struck at that sacrifice. Then that very righteous Rāma, knowing it himself, and making the people all around to know it, asked him of a divine form:

54. "Who are you who have obtained a divine form; for what reason are you turned into a horse? How are you accompanied by a divine woman? What do you desire to do? Tell it (to us)." Having heard the words of Rāma, the god said to the king (i.e. Rāma):

55-56. He laughed, and spoke very charming words with a voice resembling that of clouds: "To you who move without and within, there is nothing anywhere that is not known. Yet, I shall tell you who ask me, everything properly.

57-67. O Rāma, O tormentor of enemies, in the former existence I, an extremely righteous brāhmaṇa, behaved in a manner opposed to the Vedas. Formerly, sometime I went to the bank of Hutapāpā which was charming with trees and lovely everywhere. O you of mighty arms, having bathed there and gratified the dead ancestors, having duly given gifts, I took to meditation upon you (in a manner) acceptable to the Vedas. O King, at that time many kings had come there. To deceive them, I practised this religious hypocrisy. An excellent enclosed place was fixed with the preparations for many sacrifices. That charming and big place was covered with garments and had wooden rings on the tops of sacrificial posts. The smoke rising from the sacrificial fire and having a wonderful form, made the wide firmament charming and matchless. I whose body was beautified with many beautiful marks, whose penance was great, who was adorned with darbhas, who had the sacred fuel in his

hands, was indeed religious hypocrisy in an embodied form. (At that time) Durvāsas, of a great lustre, roaming at will over the world, came there on the bank of the river Dhūtapāpā. Before him he saw me practising religious hypocrisy, observing silence, not offering him materials of worship, arrogant, and not uttering words of welcome. Seeing (me), the very intelligent sage, overpowered with anger like the ocean on a parvan-day, cursed me, a religious hypocrite: ‘O you of a wicked mind, O you mean ascetic, since you are practising religious hypocrisy on the bank of the river, obtain beasthood (i.e. be born as a beast) which is fully censurable’.

68-74. Having heard that curse given (by him), I became extremely distressed at that time; and I indeed seized the feet of that sage Durvāsas. Then, O Rāma, the brāhmaṇa showed me an excellent favour. (He said:) ‘O ascetic, be a horse at the sacrifice of the king of kings. Then, due to contact with his (i.e. Rāma’s) hand, go, after taking up a divine, charming form, free from religious hypocrisy, to that highest position.’ Even that curse given by him became favourable to me, since I obtained the lovely touch of your hand. O Rāma, I have obtained the touch of your hand, difficult to be obtained, which was difficult to be had by gods etc. even after many births. O great king, give me an order. Through your favour I shall reach that great, eternal place of you, which is free from misery etc. O king, O lord of men, through your favour I shall go to that place where there is no grief, no old age, no death, no confusion about time.”

75-83. Saying so to him and turning round, he got into that excellent divine, car decked with jewels, and very much honoured by all gods. By the grace of Rāma’s feet he went to an eternal place, free from re-birth, and bereft of grief and delusion. Having heard what he had told, the other people knew Rāma (properly), and mad with joy they were amazed. O brāhmaṇa, O you very intelligent one, even if Viṣṇu is remembered with religious hypocrisy it gives salvation. Then what (will happen) by avoiding religious hypocrisy! Somehow or other Rāma should be much remembered, by which a man obtains the highest position, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods etc. The sages having seen that wonder regarded themselves blessed. When the god

who formerly had a horse's form, went to heaven, Rāma said to the treasures of penance and the best among those who know the Vedas: "O brāhmaṇa(s), what should I do? The horse is lost; he has obtained happiness. How will the sacrifice, gratifying all deities, will (now) proceed? May the sages do that by which the gods would be gratified, my sacrifice will be excellent, and I would have what is told by the sacred rules."

84-87. Hearing these words, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, skilled in knowing the hearts of all sages, said: "Quickly bring camphor, due to which gods having first received oblation, will now accept it, after being impelled by my words." Hearing these words Rāma quickly brought very shining camphor for pleasing the gods very much. Then the sage, with his heart very much delighted, invoked the wonderful gods. All of them surrounded by their attendants, came that moment only.

THE
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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA : SECTION V: PĀTĀLAKHAṆḌA (CONTINUED)

68. The Horse Sacrifice Ends	1939
69. The Story of Kṛṣṇa Begins	1941
70. A Description of Śrīkṛṣṇa	1950
71. The Greatness of Rādhākṛṣṇa	1954
72. Devotees of Kṛṣṇa Born in Gokula as Cowherdesses	1961
73. The Greatness of Mathurā	1970
74. Arjuna's Wish and Its Fulfilment	1974
75. Nārada's Experience	1987
76. The Greatness of Kṛṣṇa	1991
77. A Description of Kṛṣṇa	1992
78. Worship Prescribed for a Devotee of Viṣṇu	1997
79. Do's and Don't's for a Devotee of Viṣṇu	2001
80. Monthwise Rites Prescribed for a Viṣṇu Devotee	2005
81. Mantracintāmaṇi for Devotees of Kṛṣṇa	2010
82. The Greatness of Vṛndāvana	2015
83. Kṛṣṇa's Love Sports in Vṛndāvana	2021
84. Meditation of the Lord	2029
85. Greatness of Vaiśākha	2036
86. Acts to be Performed in Vaiśākha	2041
87. Subtle Are the Ways of Dharma	2045
88. Sumanā on Kinds of Sons	2050
89. Devaśarman's Life in the Previous Birth	2052
90. An Account of Devaśarman's Good Deeds of Previous Birth	2057
91. Happy End of Devaśarman's Story	2061
92. Citrā's Story	2062
93. Divyādevī Is Married to Virasena	2070

Contents

94. The Means of Destroying Sins	2072
95. More Rites and Rituals to be Observed in Vaiśākha	2083
96. Deeds Leading to Hell and Heaven	2094
97. More Sinful and Meritorious Deeds	2104
98. The Greatness of Vaiśākha	2111
99. Kaśyapa's Advice to King Mahīratha	2119
100. Carnal Enjoyment Is Sinful	2125
101. King Mahīratha Goes to Viṣṇu's Abode	2128
102. King Mahīratha Gives Part of His Merit to the Sufferers in Hell	2132
103. How to Meditate on Kṛṣṇa in Vaiśākha	2134
104. Dialogue between Śambhu and Rāma	2140
105. The Importance of Sacred Ash	2153
106. A Sinful Brāhmaṇa Becomes an Attendant of Virabhadra	2171
107. Virabhadra's Heroic Deed	2179
108. How to Prepare Sacred Ash	2186
109. Jābāli Recommends Phallus Worship to the Brāhmaṇa Ikṣvāku	2192
110. How a King Became Śiva's Attendant Agniśikha	2200
111. The Sinner Vidhṛta Goes to Śiva's Abode	2207
112. The Story of Śoṇa and His Wife Kalā	2211
113. The Requirements for Narrating a Purāṇa	2221
114. Dialogue between Śiva and Rāma	2226
115. Reciting and Listening to Purāṇas Is Meritorious	2260
116. Narration of the Rāmāyaṇa of a Former Kalpa	2267
117. Fruit of Worship by Justly Procured, Stolen and Impaired Material	2294

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Horse Sacrifice Ends

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Indra together with the gods tasting at the sacrifice the oblations cooked and seen by Rāmacandra. did not obtain satisfaction. Viṣṇu, Śiva, so also Brahmā having four faces, Varuṇa, Kubera and other gods tasted the oblations refined by Vasiṣṭha. The best brāhmaṇas also were as it were oppressed with hunger after taking the food. The treasure of pity (i.e. Rāma), having gratified all gods with the oblations, and being urged on by Vasiṣṭha, did what was necessary to be done according to the rules. The brāhmaṇas were pleased with the gifts; the great gods were pleased with the oblations. All being gratified on receiving their portions, went home. To the priests headed by the hotṛ (i.e. the priest reciting the prayers of the R̥gveda at the sacrifice) he gave kingdoms in the four directions. Those brāhmaṇas who were pleased, gave blessings to Rāma in an auspicious manner.

7-18. Then having offered the full oblation, Vasiṣṭha said to the good ladies: "You should felicitate the king who has completed the sacrifice." Hearing those words, those ladies gladly scattered parched grains over Rāma who had vanquished Cupid by means of his handsomeness and was adorned with great gems. Surrounded by crores of kings going on foot, he went to the best river surrounded by groups of birds. As the lord of stars with his lustre going up and being surrounded by his wives, shines, in the same way Rāma surrounded by hosts of kings shone. Coming to know about that great festival, all people were hurrying and their eyes had become steady after seeing the face of the husband of Sītā. The people, seeing the lord of kings going with Sītā to the river and having desired since long to see (Rāma) were delighted. Many actors and singers, singing the bright glory (of Rāma), followed the lord of the earth saluted by the entire world. The female dancers, dancing there and disturbing the minds of their husbands, and sprinkling (water) over them with syringes, went to serve Rāma.

Smearing the great king with turmeric and saffron and smearing one another, they obtained highest joy. They, with necklaces of pearls put on the pairs of their breasts and marked with ear-rings of gold, touching the pairs of their ears, went along the path crowded with men and women. They duly reached the river flooded with auspicious and holy water.

19-24. Having gone there, Rāma with Sītā followed by Vasiṣṭha and others entered the holy water. All the kings and the people entered after him. With lovely syringes they sprinkled the water purified by the dust of his feet and saluted by the entire world over one another. All with very red eyes enjoyed more than they expected. That righteous Rāma, having sported for a long time along with Sītā with the waves in the flood of that auspicious water, again went out (of the river). The king having put on a silken garment, having (worn) a crown and ear-rings, having excellent bracelets with the beauty of armlets, having the charm of a crore of Cupids, and being praised by best kings, shone. The noble-minded king, having fixed the sacrificial post adorned with excellent colours on the bank of the river, obtained the wonderful glory in the three worlds, which was not easily obtained by other kings.

25. Thus, along with the daughter of king Janaka he, performing three horse-sacrifices, obtained matchless fame in the three worlds very difficult to be obtained even by gods.

26-38. O dear one, I who was asked (by you), have described (to you) the good story of Rāma. I have described the sacrifice in detail. O brāhmaṇa, what do you ask again? He who, through devotion for Viṣṇu, hears the (description of) the good sacrifice of Rāma, would, after having crossed (i.e. overcome) the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa, obtain the eternal Brahman. A sonless man would obtain sons; a poor man would obtain wealth; a person suffering from a disease gets rid of it; one that is bound gets free from bondage. Hearing Rāma's story even a wicked cāṇḍāla obtains the highest position. What to say of the best brāhmaṇa, solely intent on devotion! By remembering Rāma sinners would obtain the highest position, the highest heaven difficult to be obtained by gods like Indra. Those men who remember the best of the Raghus, are blessed.

In a moment they, having crossed the mundane existence, go to inexhaustible happiness. Every letter (of the story of Rāma) is a wild fire burning the bamboo in the form of a brāhmaṇa's murder. One should worship that teacher who makes one hear (i.e. recites to one) that. Having heard the story, one should give the reader along with his wife a couple of cows after having honoured him with garments, ornaments and food. O best brāhmaṇa, having fashioned charming, excellent, golden images of Rāma and Sītā shining with ear-rings and adorned with rings, they should be presented to a brāhmaṇa only. His deities and dead ancestors would then reach Viṣṇu's heaven only. You formerly asked me about Rāma's story. I told it to you. O brāhmaṇa, what else should I tell you, the intelligent one. Those who listen to this story, destroying the heap of (sins due to) brāhmaṇa-murders, go to the highest position, very difficult to be obtained by gods. There is no scope for doubt here that he who kills a cow or his son, or he who drinks liquor, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), becomes purified in a moment.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Story of Kṛṣṇa Begins

The sages said:

1. O glorious one, we have duly heard from you the (description of) Rāma's horse-sacrifice. Now tell us the greatness (i.e. glory) of noble Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Sūta said:

2-3. O best sages, (please) listen to the nectar-like story of Śrīkṛṣṇa. I shall tell you what Pārvatī asked the lord of beings. Once goddess Pārvatī with her mind affectionate towards Śiva, having saluted him with reverence, said these words to him:

Pārvatī said:

4-5. The place of Viṣṇu staying without and within the crores of universes, is beyond them, is the chief one, the best one, and excellent. There is no place superior to the one which is Kṛṣṇa's charming place, dear to him. O great lord, I desire to hear it all. (Please) tell it.

The lord said:

6-15a. The highest, excellent secret place dear (to Viṣṇu) is more secret than a secret place, is holy, is very wonderful, and gives great joy. O goddess, it is great, very difficult to reach among all the places that are difficult to reach; it is full of all power, and is concealed among all places. This place of Viṣṇu is the chief among the places of the Sātvatas, is extremely difficult to reach, is eternal, is called Vṛndāvana, and is situated above the universe. It is the complete Brahman, happiness and glory, is eternal, is bliss, and is imperishable. Vaikuṇṭha is a part of its portion; on the earth there is Vṛndāvana itself. Whatever is the glory of Goloka is settled in Gokula. Whatever glory is (found) in Vaikuṇṭha is settled in Dvārakā. Whatever is the glory of that highest Brahman, it always resorts to Vṛndāvana. In the forest Kṛṣṇa's abode is especially great among them. Since that which is named Māthuraka is solely dear to Viṣṇu, therefore in the three worlds the earth is blessed. His own abode, named the region of Māthura, is superior; it is a concealed, multiform place, situated within a city. The Māthura region is of the form of a thousand-petalled lotus. Due to the roaming about of Viṣṇu's disc, the wonderful abode of Viṣṇu (has come about). Its pericarp and petals are extensive, and has sprung up with secret trees.

15b-23a. The twelve groves are important. In the order of importance they are: Bhadra, Śrī, Loha, Bhāṇḍira, Mahā, Tāla, Khadīraka, Bakula, Kumuda, Kāmya, Madhu(vana) and Vṛndāvana. They are twelve in number. Seven of them are (situated) in the west of Kālindī. The five on the east are (together) called Pañcavana (i.e. the five groves). There is a great, secret grove called Gokula and also Madhu(vana)-Vṛndāvana. This latter is

called the place of Kṛṣṇa's sport-delight. (Then there are:) Kadamba, Khaṇḍana, Nandavana, Nandīśvara, Nandanandana-khaṇḍa, Palāśa, Aśoka, Ketakī, Sugandhamānasa, Kaila, Amṛta, the place of his eating (food); Sukhaprasādhana, Vatsaharaṇa, Śeṣaśāyika; the village Śyāmapūrvodadhi, so also the city Cakra-bhānu; Saṁketa, Dvipada, dusty due to the sports of children; Kāmadruma, Sulalita and the grove Utsuka. It is a place of the enjoyment of pastimes of various kinds, so also of the enjoyment of many sports; Nāgavistāraviṣṭambha (literally, stopping of the expanse of the serpent), and having secret trees growing in it.

23b-51. The great place called Gokula is the thousand-petalled lotus. The great place in it, its pericarp, is the excellent abode of Govinda on a golden seat and is adorned with a golden pavilion. The petals have sprung up in (i.e. from) the pericarp in due order in the (main) directions and intermediate directions. The petal which is said (to be situated) in the south is the best and the best among the best (i.e. most) secret places. In that petal is a great seat inaccessible to the Vedic and sacred texts. It is difficult to obtain even for the lords of the meditating saints, is the soul of all, and is Gokula. In the south-east there is the second petal, a secret petal. It is Saṁketa, Dvipada; in that region two huts are situated. In the east there is the third petal, an excellent and chief place. It is said to be hundred times more meritorious than the contact with all holy places like Gaṅgā. In the north-east is the fourth petal, and the place is on the seat of the inspired sages. A cowherdess would obtain Kṛṣṇa as her husband at that place due to her worshipping Kātyāyana. It is said that snatching off of the garments and ornaments (of the cowherdresses) took place there. In the north is said (to exist) the fifth petal, the best of all petals. Here itself is the petal resembling Karṇikā (literally, the pericarp), called Dvādaśāditya (i.e. having twelve suns). In the north-west is the sixth petal. Kālīhrada is said (to be situated) there. It is said to be the best of the best petals, and the chief place. In the west is said (to exist) the seventh petal, the best of all petals. It gives the desired boons to the groups of the wives of Viṣṇu. Here even a demon obtained salvation difficult to be obtained by gods. Here only is the petal called Brahmadaḍa deluding

Brahmā. In the south-east is said (to exist) the eighth petal (called) Vyomaghātana. The killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa took place there. It is the place of the enjoyment of many sports. The eighth petal is well-known, and is said to be situated within the Vṛndāvana-forest. The glorious Vṛndāvana is on the south of Yamunā. There is seen the place of Śiva-phallus, called Gopīśvara. Outside it is the sixteenth petal, glorious and full of beauty, which, due to going round it in order, is said (to exist) in all directions. It is a great place, a great abode, named Svadhāmādhava. The first petal is the greatest, and its greatness is like Karṇikā (the pericarp). There is the Karṇikā on the Govardhana mountain which is lovely and is ever the abode of pleasure, is a grove full of great sports where Kṛṣṇa would be the lord of the Nityavṛndākānana. Kṛṣṇa became (there) a cowkeeper. What is the use of further talking much? The third petal is called Sarvaśreṣṭhottamottama. The fourth petal is called Mahādbhutarasasthala. There is the beautiful grove (called) Nandīśvara, and there is said (to exist) abode of Nanda. The fifth petal is called Karṇikādalamāhātmya. Here Gopāla (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) engaged in tending the cows, dwells. There, which is said to be the sixth petal, is said (to exist) Nandavana. The seventh lovely petal is called Bakulāraṇya. The eighth is Tālavana where the cows were killed. The ninth charming petal is called Kumudāraṇya. The tenth (called) Kāmāraṇya is the chief and the cause of all. There is Brahmaprasādhana (lit. decoration of Brahmā), and the manifestation of the disguise of Viṣṇu. It is the place of the pleasures of (i.e. due to) Kṛṣṇa's sports, and is said to be preeminent. The eleventh petal is called Bhaktānugraha-kāraṇa. A bridge is constructed here; and the place is full of many groves. The twelfth lovely and charming petal is Bhāṇḍira; there Kṛṣṇa was engaged in sports and was surrounded by Śrīdāman etc. The thirteenth best petal is known as Bhadravara. The fourteenth petal is called Sarvasiddhipradasthala. There is Śrīvāna, which is charming, and is the cause of all splendour; it has a part of Kṛṣṇa's sports and enhances glory, beauty and fame. The fifteenth excellent petal is known as Lohavana. The petal resembling Karṇikā is said to be the sixteenth petal.

52-55. There is said to be a secret, excellent, great grove. (Kṛṣṇa) surrounded by keepers of calves (i.e. young cowherds) is engaged in child-sports. The murder of Pūtānā etc. and the breaking of twin Arjuna trees (took place) there. The young Gopāla, five years old, the ocean of love, joy and pleasure, and called Dāmodara, lives there. This is said to be a well-known petal, and best and excellent of all petals. The sport of Kṛṣṇa (takes place here). It is called Kiñjalkivihārādala. It is also called Siddhapradhānakiñjalka.

Pārvatī said:

56. I desire to hear the importance and the wonderful secret of Vṛndāraṇya. O great lord, narrate it.

The lord said:

57-59. O most beloved one, I have told you the best, greatest mystery, the secret of secrets, and the rare of the rare. O goddess, it is watched over in the three worlds, and well-honoured by the lord of gods. It is desired by Brahmā and others; the place is resorted to by gods and inspired sages. The best among the meditating saints are devotedly always intent upon meditation on it only. There is the continuous singing and dancing of gandharvas and celestial damsels.

60-69. The glorious Vṛndāvana is charming and is an abode of complete joy and pleasure. There are many desire-yielding gems; and the water is full of the taste of nectar. The big tree there is surrounded by Kadamba trees. There is the lady Lakṣmī, the man Viṣṇu, produced from the tenth part of it. There (one sees) Kṛṣṇa, of the age of a boy, always of a joyful figure, walking dramatically, with a face having continuous sweet but indistinct talk, with the forest resorted to by devotees of Viṣṇu, of a pure nature, and full of love, engaged in the joy of the complete Brahman, full of the thoughts about him; being inspired by his image; (the forest was) charming due to the sweet notes and humming of the intoxicated cuckoos and bees, having the music of pigeons and parrots, with thousands of intoxicated bees, rich with the dance of the enemies of serpents (i.e. peacocks), full

of all amorous joyful sports; it was full of the pollen of flowers of various colours; it had the full moon always rising, and served with the sun having cold rays; it was without misery, free from grief, and old age and death. It was free from anger, free from jealousy, unbroken (i.e. complete) and without ego; it had the nectar of full joy; it was the ocean of full love and happiness. The great abode was beyond (all) qualities and was of the nature of full love, where due to horripilation tears were shed by trees etc.; then what can be said about Viṣṇu's devotees having consciousness! It was Vṛndāvana on the earth due to the constant contact with the dust of Kṛṣṇa's feet.

70-78. The Vṛndāvana is the seed-vessel of the lotus having a thousand petals, by the touch of which the earth is blessed in the three worlds. On the earth Vṛndāvana is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret) and a charming (place). It is an inexhaustible, unchangeable abode of Govinda, containing greatest joy. It is non-different from Govinda's body, and is the abode of the joy of (reaching) the complete Brahman. There salvation is had by the touch of the dust(-particles). What can be said about its importance? Therefore, O queen, by all means, keep in mind that forest. In the Vṛndāvana parks, (one sees) Kṛṣṇa having a boy's body. Kālindī went round its pericarp. The water of Kālindī is pleasant due to sports, is deep, and attractive due to fragrance; it was mixed with the nectar of joy; it is the dense place of honey; it is bright with many colours due to flowers like lotuses and blue lotuses. The water is lovely; it looks beautiful with birds like the ruddy geese with various sweet and indistinct notes; it is very lovely due to the waves. On both of its sides (there is a pericarp) which is lovely and fashioned with pure gold, said to be a crore times more meritorious than Gaṅgā (Gaṅgākoṭiguṇa). In the pericarp (Karṇikā) there is the Koṭiguṇa where Kṛṣṇa is engaged in sports. Kālindī, Karṇikā and Kṛṣṇa are not different from one another. They (just) have one body.

Pārvati said:

79. O you not having a beautiful body, I desire to listen to the wonders of Govinda. O you treasure of compassion, tell (them to me).

The lord said:

80-107. In Vṛndāvana adorned with lovely sprouts and beautified with the foliage of the branches of good trees extending over a yojana, in a charming abode there is a very bright seat for abstract meditation. It is fashioned with eight angles and is charming due to various lustres. On it is an auspicious throne (decked) with rubies. There is an eight-petalled lotus lying comfortably in the pericarp. It is the great abode of Govinda. How can its greatness be described? A man should meditate upon Kṛṣṇa who is served by the group of cowherdesses remaining in (i.e. following) the advice of Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who has the (proper) age and form for the divine station of the cowherds, who is the lord of Vṛndāvana, who is the chief of the station of the cowherds, who always has splendour, who alone is dear to the children of the station of the cowherds, whose childhood has broken into youth due to age, whose body is wonderful, who is without a beginning but is the origin of all, who is the dear son of the cowherd Nanda, who is to be sought after through the sacred texts, who is unborn, who is always charming to the cowherdesses, who is the highest abode, who is the highest form, who has two arms, who is the lord of the station of the cowherdesses, who is the son of a cowherdess, who is the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman), who is very glorious, who is fresh and pure, who has a dark lustre, who is charming, who is much glistening like the row of fresh clouds, who is pleasing to touch due to his great loveliness like a fully opened blue lotus, who gives comfort, who is glossy like the heap of collyrium that is expanded and is dark and attractive, whose entire (set of) hair is very glossy, dark, curly and fragrant, who is charming due to the dark lock of hair and the right part over it, who is bright on account of many colours and adorned with bright feathers of peacocks, who has on his crest a charming string of mandāra (flowers), who has put on lovely ornaments, who is at times adorned with a crown made with a multitude of big leaves, who at times has the ornament of a crown made with many gems and rubies, who is covered with unsteady hair, whose face is like a crore of bright moons, who has put on (his forehead) the mark of musk, who has been (smeared) with bright,

charming yellow pigment made from the urine or bile of a cow, whose eyes are long like very long petals, having the beauty of fully opened blue lotuses, in whose smile the creeper-like eyebrows dance (i.e. move) closely, and the sight is (i.e. the eyes are) charming, the tip of whose nose is charming on account of its beauty due to its being very beautiful and rising, who entices the three worlds with the rays of the pearls supposed to be found in the projection on the foreheads of elephants on the tip of his nose, who is lovely on account of his red and glossy lower lip resembling red lead, who puts on ear-rings resembling the shape of crocodiles and made of pure bright gold and of many colours, and the good cheeks of whom have the resemblance with mirrors due to the heap of rays of (i.e. shooting from) them (i.e. the ear-rings), on whose ears are placed mandāra and lotuses and who is well-adorned with chaplets of the shape of crocodiles, who has on his chest the (mark of) Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha, whose neck shines with a necklace of pearls, round whose arm are the bracelets and armlets with divine rubies shining and mixed with lovely gold, whose waist is adorned with small bells, whose beautiful feet are adorned with the beauty of sweet(-jingling) anklets, (on whose body) sandal etc. looks bright with camphor, agarū (sandal) and musk, who is painted with divine fragrant unguents mixed with a bright yellow pigment made from cow's urine or bile, who is shining with soft, yellow garment and with whose feet the collyrium is disturbed, whose lotus-like navel is deep, whose chaplet is depressed in the line of hair, whose pair of knees is quite round, who is lovely due to his lotus-like feet, whose palms and soles are adorned with (signs of) flag, diamond, gold and lotus, who having the row of rays shooting from his nails is the only cause of the complete Brahman. Some say that the unique supreme spirit, Brahman, is his portion; the wise ones say that Mahāviṣṇu is his tenth part; that one alone, who has three modes and who is fashioned with the essence of (materials required to) fashion all good things, is thought of in their hearts by the best meditating saints like Sanaka, who is lovely (as he has) vanquished innumerable crores of Cupids due to his neck that is turned (to a side), whose golden ear-rings shine when he has put his fine

cheek on his left shoulder, whose smile is accompanied by a side-glance, who deludes the three worlds with the sweet, indistinct notes of his flute put between the contracted lips, who is drowned in the ocean of love.

Pārvatī said:

108-115. O lord, tell me everything about the highest cause Kṛṣṇa, the highest position called Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, the eternal one, and the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman); tell me the importance of each secret, about the lovely wonder. O lord of lords, I desire to hear it.

The lord said:

O goddess, how much can be said about the greatness of him, the knowledge of whose moon-like rays cannot be had? Listen joyfully. In the innumerable crores of the universes, in the rise of the infinite (Prakṛti) with three constituents, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are equal to the parts of the measure of a croreth of a croreth of his feet. (These) arising from him are endowed with creation, maintenance, and destruction. The bodies of Cupid are the parts equal to the portion of a croreth of a croreth of his form. Born of his anḍāntara(?) they entice the world. Brahmā is (made of) a part equal to a croreth of a croreth of the lustre shining in his body. The forms of the sun are the partial rays equal to a croreth of a croreth of his light. Those of the form of rays which are a croreth of a croreth of his portion live due to rays of his body which are the nectar of great joy, which are of the nature of highest bliss and intelligence, and which are the only cause of the qualityless Brahman.

116-118. They say that the lustres of the gem-like (crescent) moon(-shaped) nails of his two feet are even the cause of the complete Brahman, difficult to be understood by the Vedas. (The fragrance) enticing the universe is but a part which cannot be measured (i.e. is negligible) of his fragrance; and the various fragrances are produced from the fragrance etc. of the flowers touched by him. The first (primordial) matter is Rādhikā, dear to Kṛṣṇa. Durgā and others having the three constituents are a

part equal to a croreth of croreth portion of her. The excellent Viṣṇu is produced from the touch of the dust of her feet.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

A Description of Śrīkṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, I desire to hear (the account worth) hearing of him and about those who are the members of his assembly. O you treasure of kindness, (please) narrate it.

The lord said:

2-7. (One can see) Govinda along with Rādhā seated on a golden throne. He has the loveliness of form as described before. His ornaments, garments and garland are divine. He, in his crooked posture (assumed with his body bent at three points while playing on his flute) is sweet and very glossy and is the pupil of the eyes of the cowherdresses. Outside sitting on the seat for abstract meditation (Yogapīṭha) covered with a golden sheet resembling a lion's skin(?) are the chief ladies dear to Kṛṣṇa and having a strong devotion for him in every limb (of their bodies). They are Lalitā and others, and are the portions of the primordial matter. Rādhikā is the primordial matter. In front of him is goddess Lalitā; in the north-west is Śrīharipriyā; in the east is Viśākhā; and after her, in the south-east is Śaibyā; Padmā is in the south; and then in the south-west, on the Yogapīṭha, in front of a bakula tree, is Candrāvatī, dear to him. Thus they remain in order. These eight are auspicious and chief natural forms, dear to Kṛṣṇa.

8-13. The chief form is Rādhā who is similar to Candrāvatī. Candrāvalī, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Priyā, Śrī, Madhumatī, Candrarekhā, Haripriyā—these are the sixteen original natural forms dear to Kṛṣṇa. At Vṛndāvana Rādhā is the (chief) goddess, so also Candrāvatī dear (to Kṛṣṇa). In front

are thousands of cowherdesses having identical virtues and beauty and charming eyes. They are lovely, are dressed attractively, are young and bright. They resemble the mass of pure gold, are very much pleased, and have lovely eyes; his form has got into their hearts, eager for his embrace; they have plunged themselves into the nectar of Kṛṣṇa; in their minds thoughts about him flash; they have dedicated their hearts to the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa, worshipped by their lotus-like eyes.

14-26. On the right are Śrutikanyās, gathered in thousands and myriads, having forms which have infatuated the world, having in their minds a longing for Kṛṣṇa; they have enticed the three worlds with many natural sounds; there they, overcome with love, sing the concealed (i.e. great) secrets; on the left are divine damsels, with divine dresses and splendid with love; they are proficient in many skills, and are full of many divine sentiments. They are endowed with excellence of beauty and are very attractive due to their glances; they, not being ashamed of Govinda, are eager for the touch of his body. Their minds are merged in devotion to him. They look with a smile and obliquely. Then outside the temple, clearly filled with his beloveds, (there are ladies) of a similar dress and age, of a similar might and valour, of similar virtues and deeds, to whom similar ornaments are dear. They are engaged in singing songs of similar notes and playing upon similar lutes. At the western door is Śrīdāmā; similarly at the northern (door) is Vasudāmā; in the same way, Sudāmā is at the eastern door and Kiṅkiṇī at the southern door. Outside it on the golden seat, surrounded by a golden temple, on another golden altar, adorned with golden ornaments (one can see) little Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by myriads and myriads of cowherds like Subhadra, having horns, lutes, flutes, canes and having (similar) age, dresses, forms and voice, and being overcome (with sentiments) and meditating upon his virtues, singing (his praise), drawn in pictures of wonderful forms, always shedding tears of joy, with their entire bodies full of horripilation, steady like best meditating saints; with trickling aloe-wood (paste), (he is also) surrounded by innumerable cow-keepers; outside it, on a golden rampart, bright with a crore of suns, and stupefied with sweet fragrance, is a great park

(spreading) in (all) four directions and having a glorious Pārijāta tree in the west.

27-31. Below it (is) a divine golden seat, decorated with gold; on it (is) a divine throne, decked with gems and rubies. On it (one can see), Vāsudeva, the lord of 'the world, who is the highest joy, who is beyond the three guṇas and of the nature of intelligence, who is the cause of all causes, who is dark like a sapphire and a cloud, whose dark hair is curly, whose eyes are broad like a lotus-petal, who has put on ear-rings of the shape of a crocodile, who has four hands, whose weapons are the disc, sword, mace, conch and lotus, who is without a beginning or an end, who is eternal, who is the chief, the Supreme Being, who is of the form of light, who is the great and ancient abode, who puts on the garland of wood-flowers, who has put on a yellow garment, who is glossy, who is adorned with divine ornaments, who has smeared himself with divine unguent, who is charming due to his lustrous body.

32-37. Then (one can) also (see) the eight ladies dear to Vāsudeva: Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Nāgnajitī, Sulakṣaṇā, Mitra-vindā, Anuvindā, Sunandā, and Jāmbavatī dear to him, and also Suśīlā. They are bright, are surrounded by their retinue, and are intent on devotion. In the north (is) a very great park, having the yellow sandal tree; below it (is) a golden seat decorated with a jewelled pavilion in it on a petal fashioned with gold; on a bright throne (one can see) Saṅkarṣaṇa i.e. Balarāma, with Revatī; he is very dear to the lord, and not having different virtues and form; he is like a pure crystal; his eyes are like red lotuses; he has put on a blue strap, is glossy, and has put on divine ornaments, garlands and garments; he is always addicted to drinking liquor with his eyes red due to (drinking) liquor.

38-42a. In the best region in the south, remaining in the interior of the lovely navel, at the root of the Santāna tree, there is the embellishment of a jewelled temple. In it on a bright divine throne decked with gems and rubies, one (goddess) attends upon god Pradyumna seated upon it. He is full of the charm of the row of the essences of beauty deluding the world. He resembles a heap of dark lotuses; his eyes are like the petals of lotuses; he is (adorned with) divine ornaments and decorations and

(with) smearing of divine sandal; his wonderful body has the full beauty which has infatuated the world.

42b-52a. In the eastern park in the great forest, resorted to by divine trees, below there, is a golden seat adorned with a golden pavilion. On it on a shining, divine, bright throne (one can see) glorious Aniruddha with Uṣā; he is the lord of the world; he is dark like a dense cloud; he is very glossy; his hair is dark; his eyebrows are lovely, and resemble a bent creeper; his cheeks are good (i.e. charming); his nose is fine; his neck is nice; his chest is lovely and is extremely handsome; he has put on a crown (and) ear-rings; he is decorated with an ornament round his neck; his body is extremely lovely on account of the sweetness of the charming anklets; he is being propitiated by his dear attendants; music is dear to him; he is the complete Brahman, always full of joy; his nature is pure goodness; above him, in the atmosphere (one can see) Viṣṇu, the god of all gods; he is without a beginning; he is the source and of the nature of intelligence; he is intellect and joy, is supreme, and is the lord; he is beyond the three constituents; is unmanifest; is eternal; inexhaustible and immutable; his dark body has the beauty of the sweetness of the mass of clouds; he is very handsome due to his dark curly and glossy hair; his charming eyes are very long (i.e. broad) like the petals of a white lotus; he is surrounded by pure beings having crowns and ear-rings (dangling) about the cheeks; so also by lovely individuals, of the nature of intelligence and intent upon meditation on his form, having thoughts about him in their hearts, and with their eyes fixed on the tips of their noses.

52b-65. By means of body, mind and speech purposeful devotion is practised. On their left (he is surrounded by) yakṣas, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādhara etc., so also by groups of very charming celestial damsels, intent on dancing and singing; and in front, in the atmosphere, on a comfortable seat, by all devotees of Viṣṇu, longing for Kṛṣṇa, and very much desiring service to his body; (he is surrounded by) Prahlāda, Nārada and others; so also by Kumāra, Śuka and devotees of Viṣṇu; so also by Janaka and others, having a bright (i.e. strong) sentiment, and intent upon inspiration out of the heart (*hrdbāhya-sphūrtatatparaiḥ?*), with their entire bodies overcome with

horripilation, full of darting love and sprinkled with the nectar of secret. The hymn of twin letters (viz. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the crest-jewel of all hymns and the origin of all hymns. Of all the hymns of the lord, the child's hymn (i.e. the hymn addressed to Kṛṣṇa, the child), is the cause. The hymn is the crest-jewel of all hymns (addressed to the) child. Resorting to full love and pleasure they mutter the name mentally. They desire a steady means of love for his lotus-like feet. Outside it on a very lovely crystal platform (one can see) in the west the door-keeper—Viṣṇu, who is fair, and has four hands; (he is sprinkled with) saffron, white and red flowers crowding (all) the four directions; he is adorned with a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, a crown etc.; he is red, has four hands, and has the lotus, the conch, and weapons like a disc and a mace. In the north, (one can see) a door-keeper, bright with a crown and ear-rings; he, Viṣṇu, is fair; has four hands, has a conch and weapons like a disc and a mace; he is adorned with crown and ear-rings etc. and has put on wood-flowers. On the eastern gate is a door-keeper; is fair and called Viṣṇu. The southern door-keeper is dark in complexion, has four arms, has ornaments like a conch, a disc etc. He is Śrī Viṣṇu of a dark complexion. He, who being restrained and pure, would read or listen to the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, obtains love for Govinda.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

The Greatness of Rādhākṛṣṇa

The goddess (Pārvatī) said:

1-3 O holy one, O lord of all beings, O soul of all, O you the origin of everything, O lord of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O you who show pity (to everyone), since I was pitied by you, I again say tenderly. O lord, you told me the hymns enticing the three worlds. (Now) tell me, by means of which particular things that god (Kṛṣṇa) having a very fascinating form, played with the cowherdresses.

Mahādeva said:

4-9a. Knowing about the descent of (Viṣṇu as) Kṛṣṇa, once Nārada, the best sage, playing upon his lute, went to the village of Nanda (literally, the cow-pen of Nanda). Having gone there and having seen there in Nanda's house the supreme ruler, the lord full of great concentration, who acted as a child, who looked as a god, who was lying on a golden couch on which a soft (bed-)sheet was spread, who was constantly, joyfully looked at by the cowherdesses, whose body was extremely delicate, whose sight was innocent, who was adorned with a mass of dishevelled, dark and curly hair, who manifested just one bud-like tooth by his sprout-like (i.e. delicate) smile, who illumined with his lustres (i.e. mass of lustre) the interior of the house on all sides, who was naked, he was extremely glad.

9b-14. He (i.e. Nārada) who was dear to all lords, addressing the lord of cows, Nanda, said to him: "To get the birth of Nārāyaṇa's devotees is extremely difficult. Here no (persons) know his matchless power. Even Śiva, Brahmā and others desire eternal bliss in him. The deeds of this boy give delight to all; and (people) like them gladly sing and hear about him, and greet him. Men have affectionate minds towards (i.e. men love) this son of yours whose prowess cannot be conceived. They will not be troubled by worldly existence. O best of the cowherds, give up all your desires in this world and the next world. With exclusive and singular mind, love this child." Speaking like this, the best sage went out of Nanda's house.

15-24a. He (i.e. Nanda), having saluted him, honoured him looking upon him as Viṣṇu and gave him leave (to go). Then the sage, the great devotee of Viṣṇu, thought: 'His beloved, glorious Lakṣmī, must have undoubtedly taken up the form of a cowherdess, descended (here) to play with Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu holding the Śārṅga bow. Today I shall look for her in every house of the residents of Vraja.' Thinking like this, the best sage, being (i.e. as) a guest entered the houses of the residents of Vraja. They, looking upon him as Viṣṇu, worshipped him. Seeing the great attachment of all the cowherds etc. to Nanda's son, the best sage mentally saluted them all. In the house of (one of) the cowherds, he saw a girl of a white complexion.

Seeing her, he conjectured: 'This must be Lakṣmī; no doubt about it.' Then the intelligent one entered the large house of certain excellent cowherd named Bhānu, a friend of the noble Nanda. He was duly honoured by him. The noble-minded one too asked him: "O good one, you are known on the earth for your devotion to piety. I observe your prosperity in wealth, grains etc. Do you have a worthy son or a daughter with auspicious marks, due to whom you will have fame pervading the entire world?"

24b-27. Thus addressed by the best sage, Bhānu brought his very lustrous and powerful son and made him salute Nārada. The great, excellent sage, having seen him, who was matchless in form on the earth, whose eyes were long (i.e. broad) like lotus-leaves, whose neck was nice, whose eyebrows were beautiful, whose teeth were fine, whose ears were beautiful, embraced him with his arms, shed tears of love, and affectionately and in a faltering voice said:

Nārada said:

28-31. This your boy will be a good friend of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Being alert, he will play with them day and night.

Then, when the best sage, after having talked to the excellent cowherd, decided to go, Bhānu spoke to him like this: "O god, I have (also) a daughter, resembling the wife of a god. She is younger than this boy. Her form (i.e. she) is dull and blind and deaf. Prompted by the desire for her prosperity, I seek a boon from you, O most glorious one. By just casting a pleasing glance at the girl make her quite composed."

32-37. Hearing these words, Nārada, with his mind attracted by curiosity, entered the house, and lifting up the girl rolling on the ground and with his mind overcome with great love, put her on his lap. Bhānu, too, reverential due to devotion, came near the excellent sage. Then the best devotee of Viṣṇu, the great sage, very dear to Kṛṣṇa, loving Viṣṇu, seeing her excellent wonderful figure, unseen and unheard of (before), became fascinated as before. Plunging into the ocean of great joy, a unique elixir, the sage, resembling a stone (i.e. being motionless) remained there (i.e. in that condition) for two muhūrtas. Slowly open-

ing his eyes, the best sage woke up. He was very much amazed, and remained silent only. The very intelligent one thought like this only in his heart:

38-46a. 'I, moving freely everywhere, have wandered over all the worlds. But nowhere have I seen any (beautiful woman) like this. I (can) move in the world of Brahmā, in the world of Rudra, and in the world of Indra. But nowhere have I seen one even a croreth part of her in beauty. I have seen the great worldly illusion, the glorious daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) of the lord of mountains, whose form fascinates all the mobile and the immobile (objects). Even she, of an extremely delicate body, does not at all have the beauty (like that of this girl). It is not at all seen that excellent ladies Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Kāntividyā, just touch (i.e. have) even the shade of her (beauty). I have seen Mohinī, the form of (i.e. taken up by) Viṣṇu, by which Śiva was fascinated. How can it even be similar to her (form)? Therefore, I do not at all have the power to know her true nature. Mostly even others do not know this dear wife of Hari. That growth in love, which now I have for the lotus-like feet of Govinda, on just seeing her, was never there before. Showing great magnificence, I shall praise the respectable one in a lonely place. Her form will cause great delight to Kṛṣṇa.'

46b-56a. Thinking like this, the sage, having sent the excellent cowherd somewhere, praised the girl of a divine form in a lonely place: "O goddess, O you controlling the great illusory power, O you of great lustre, O you having a very fascinating and divine body, O you who shower great sweetness, O you who have let loose the mind due to very wonderful love and delight, you have come within the range of my sight due to my indescribable great fortune. O goddess, your sight is always observed to be within (i.e. you always look within); and you appear to be gratified with great joy within yourself only. This your good (i.e. beautiful), pleasing, sweet, agreeable, charming face manifests great wonder and an indescribable rise of joy within. O you very beautiful one, you have the power of a bud to form pollen. You are of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. You are of a pure energy, of a quick power and of the nature of knowledge and the highest one. You have the highest heap of great joy of Viṣṇu. O you who have a wonderful

splendour, O you difficult to be obtained by Brahmā, Rudra etc., who are you? You never touch the path of meditation of the best meditating saints. You are the will-power, the power of knowledge and the power of action of the controller (of the world). It is just a part of you that my desire proceeds for. Of the highest lord Viṣṇu, of the magician, the child of illusion, inconceivable are the superhuman powers. They are just the portions of your portions.

56b-60. O you goddess, there is no doubt that you are the power of the nature of delight. In the form of just a child, Kṛṣṇa plays in the Vṛndāvana grove; you fascinate the (entire) universe. Of what nature is your wonderful form touched by youth? Of what kind is your youth, endowed with sportive glance with a smile due to longing for Viṣṇu as a man. O you dear of Viṣṇu, I desire to see that form of yours by which Nanda's son Kṛṣṇa will be enticed? O you great goddess, please show, through kindness, your own form to me who have bowed (before you) and have sought protection with you."

61-69. The best sage, with his mind devoted to her, and saluting that very great goddess, who was great and full of great joy, who was eager with great love, whose body was full of (love), whose eyes were auspicious, stood there, looking at Govinda and describing him like this: "Victory to you, O charming Kṛṣṇa; victory to you who are dear to Vṛndāvana; victory to you who have a charming knitting of the eyebrows; victory to you who are overcome with the sound of the flute; victory to you who have a chaplet of a peacock's tail-feathers; victory to you who entice the cowherdresses. Victory to you whose body is smeared with saffron; victory to you who have put on jewelled ornaments. When shall I, through your grace, see you in your childhood (i.e. as a child)—you who entice (everyone), along with this (girl) of a divine form, and having a beautiful body charming on account of youth, O lord of the world?" When he was praising (Kṛṣṇa) like this, she, that moment only, took up a divine, very fascinating form resembling (that of a young girl) fourteen years old and extremely charming. At that time only, other young girls of Vraja, of the same age, and having divine ornaments, garments and garlands, surrounded her. That motionless best sage became stunned with wonder.

70-79a. Then those friends of the girl, being full of compassion, sprinkled the sage with drops of water at the foot of a tree and revived him, and said to him: "O great sage, O glorious one, O lord of great meditating saints, you indeed have propitiated with great devotion, god Viṣṇu who fulfils the desires of his devotees. Since this (lady) dear to Viṣṇu, who is enticing due to her very wonderful age and beauty, who is difficult to be seen and approached by gods like Brahmā, Rudra, and lords of siddhas and sages, so also by other great devotees of Viṣṇu, has been seen by you due to your indescribable and inconceivable luck; therefore, get up, you brāhmaṇa sage, and quickly muster courage. Having gone round her by keeping her to your right, salute her again and again. Do you not see that the beautiful-bodied is extremely perturbed? Indeed, this moment only she will vanish. (Then) in no way you will (ever be able to) talk to her. O you best among those who know Brahman (or Vedas), you will not again (be able to) see her. But, in Vṛndāvana there is an auspicious Aśoka creeper (Aśoka-tree). In all seasons it is full of flowers; its fragrance pervades all directions. Not far from Govardhana, on the bank of the lake called Kusuma, you will see us all at midnight at its root."

79b-91. Having heard these words of them whose hearts were overcome with love, while the sage, having gone round her keeping her to his right, would salute her who was fashioned with many beautiful objects, (prostrating before her) like a staff Nārada called Bhānu and told him (about that) all-beautiful (girl): "Such is the prowess of the girl, that she cannot be obtained even by deities. But, in that house which is marked with her feet (i.e. her foot-prints) god Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, himself lives. Lakṣmī also stays there with all prosperity. O best one, today (i.e. now) protect this great one, the most beautiful one, carefully, like a deity". Talking like this, and recollecting her form in his mind the best devotee of Viṣṇu entered the dense forest. The best sage, having resorted to the root of the Aśoka-creeper, waited for the deity—her arrival just there at night, remained there, thinking, overcome with love, of that dear one to Kṛṣṇa. Then, seeing at midnight, those very wonderful damsels who were seen (by him) before, who had put on variegated ornaments and garlands, the sage confounded in his mind, fell (prostrate) like a staff. All

those auspicious ones, having surrounded the sage, entered. Even the sage, desiring to ask something about what was dear to him and he liked, being overpowered by the language dear to beauty (i.e. unable to find appropriate words), could not do so. That deity of the Aśoka-grove, named Aśokamālinī, full of pity, came (there) and said to the best sage who stood with the palms of his hands joined, whose neck was bent due to the burden of (i.e. great) devotion, who was full of wonder and was confused, and who was most polite.

Aśokamālinī said:

92-103. O great sage, I always live in this Aśoka-bud. I always wear red garments, I wear red garland, and red unguents. I use buds red like red lead. I use chaplets, the red lotuses. I am decorated with red rubies, red armlets and red crown. Once, the cowherdresses, having put on variegated garments, while sporting with their beloved one, met just there; and then I devoutly and duly worshipped, with Aśoka-garlands, Viṣṇu taking up the form of a cowherd, and all those of the form of Lakṣmī. Since then I have always been staying among them and pleasing Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), the highest (god), with various decorations. I know everything from everywhere. I also know the secret of the cows, the cowherds, and the cowherdresses. You had the desire and said into your heart (i.e. to yourself): 'How shall I see that goddess, of a wonderful form, giving a wonderful joy, dear to Viṣṇu, looking (bright) like gold, having a bright diamond ring and having unsteady eyes? How shall I propitiate her feet with devotion?' Thus, O brāhmaṇa, you thought. In this matter, I shall tell you the account of the very noble sages who remained at the Mānasa lake and practised severe penance, who muttered effective hymns, who meditated upon Viṣṇu, and who constantly longed for his lotus-like feet. Today I shall tell you the great secret in the forest.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

*Devotees of Kṛṣṇa Born in Gokula as Cowherdesses**The lord said:*

1-6a. O you beautiful goddess, listen with a concentrated mind: There was a sage, named Ugratapas who was firm in his vow. He, performing rites in honour of Agni, ate (i.e. subsisted on) fire, and practised a very wonderful penance. He muttered the great hymn, fit to be muttered and having fifteen letters, bound together by a desire-yielding hymn, securing desired objects from one giving the desired boon, with the word *Kṛṣṇāya* (to Kṛṣṇa), along with the word *Svāhā* (offered to), and giving great prosperity. He meditated upon the dark Kṛṣṇa, mad with dance, eager to grant a boon, having put on a yellow garment, with a flute put at his lower lip, endowed with fresh youth, and dragging his beloved with his hand. Thus, the great sage, engaged in meditation, cast his body after the end of hundred kalpas and was born as the daughter of the cowherd by name Sunandā.

6b-11. She was called Sunandā and held a lute in her hand. There was another sage named Satyatapas practising a great bow. He ate (i.e. subsisted on) dry leaves and muttered a great hymn, ending in devotion, bound by ten letters having the seed of desire. The best sage meditated upon Viṣṇu who put on a variegated dress, who held the creeper-like arms of Ramā, bright with bracelets, who was dancing, getting mad, repeatedly embracing (Ramā), laughing loudly, and having waves of joy in the sky (i.e. cavity) of his belly, holding the flute, who was decorated with the necklace reaching his knees, whose face with folds on his forehead was wet with the drops of sweat.

12-19a. Again and again, casting his body, the great sage, after ten kalpas, was born here from Nandavana, as the daughter of the cowherd named Subhadra, and known as Bhadrā. On her back is seen a divine fan. There was a certain sage named Haridhāman. He practised a difficult penance and always ate leaves only. He muttered a hymn of twenty letters, giving the fruit quickly. Then from the (hymn having) the seed of desire, he got upon it only (*obscure!*). There was Māyā; in front of her were water, swans, saffron and bright moon. Then, recollecting

and with a salutation (he muttered the hymn) with ten letters and in the charming bower of the jasmine-creeper he meditated upon the lord who was lying on his back on the beautiful bed of leaves, whose expansive chest was being repeatedly covered by a cowherdess who was greatly overcome with passion and whose eyes were red, with her pair of breasts, who (i.e. the lord) was being kissed on his cheeks, and whose lips were being gratified, who, the wonderful one, was with a smile holding his beloved with his arms.

19b-28. That sage, having cast many bodies was born after three kalpas as the daughter having auspicious marks, of a cowherd named Raṅga. She was known as Raṅgavenī. She was skilled in drawing pictures. On her teeth were variegated marks of red colour. There was (also) a sage named Jābāli, a teacher of the Vedas. He, engaged in austerities, roamed over this earth. Once, by chance, he went to a great forest extending over a myriad of yojanas. There he saw a very beautiful well which had on all sides crystal-walls, which was full of sweet water, which was cooled with breezes fragrant with blooming lotuses. In the region to its west, at the root of a banyan tree he saw a female ascetic who was practising a severe penance, was endowed with youth, was of an extremely beautiful form, whose lustre was like the lunar rays, all of whose limbs were beautiful, who had put her left hand on her waist, and made the position of the fingers of her right hand as practised in religious worship, whose eyes were steady, who had given up food and enjoyment, and who had remained steady. The excellent sage desiring to know her (to know who she was) remained there for a hundred years. At the end of that (period) the sage raised her, and politely said to her who was walking (away).

29-30a. He asked her: "Who are you of a wonderful form? What will you do? If it would be proper (to tell me), then please tell it to me." Then the young lady, who was extremely emaciated due to the penance, slowly said (to him):

30b-33. "I am the matchless knowledge of Brahman, who am sought after by best meditating saints. That I, meditating upon the supreme spirit, have been practising in this fierce forest for a long time penance with a desire for Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. I am full of the joy of Brahman. My mind is pleased with that

joy. Yet, I am looking upon myself to be lonely for want of Kṛṣṇa's love. Now I am extremely dejected, and desire to cast this body in this auspicious well here only."

34-46. Hearing these words of her the sage being extremely amazed and with great love fell at her feet and asked her about the auspicious rite of the service of Viṣṇu after having abandoned dislike for the self. Having known (i.e. learnt) the hymn told by her he went to the Mānasa lake. Then he practised an amazing penance very difficult to practise. Standing on one leg and looking at the sun unwinkingly he muttered a great hymn of twentyfive letters. With great devotion he meditated upon Kṛṣṇa who was of the form of joy, who was moving along the streets of Vraja with a strange and sporting gait, who was making a jingling sound of his anklets with charming steps, who attracted the minds and bodies of the beautiful women of Vraja with the knots of their garments loose and suddenly embracing him, with various sports of love and side-glances accompanied by a smile, and with the charming golden flute called Sammohana, having the fifth note, and kissing (i.e. touching) his bimba-like lower lip, who had put on divine flowers and garments, and who had smeared divine sandal (to his body), who enticed the three worlds with the mass of the lustre of his dark body. Thus having worshipped the lord of the world with many hymns he was born in Gokula at the end of nine kalpas as a daughter having divine form, of a very famous cowherd named Pracanda. The girl of an auspicious face was well-known as Citragandhā and delighted the ten directions with the various fragrances of her body. See her, the auspicious one, who drinks sweet drinks from Vṛnda, who, being full of passion takes her husband on her body. Necklaces strike her breasts while in contact with them, while fragrances of lovely aloe-wood etc., fall out from them.

47-54. Other great sages whose minds are always pure and who eat (i.e. subsist on) air, muttering a great (i.e. very sacred) hymn, practised penance: 'A recollection to (i.e. of) Kṛṣṇa, having the skill of destroying passion.' Having recited the hymn of fifteen letters the great sages meditated on the figure of Kṛṣṇa, along with Agni's wife, the image which was having divine ornaments, whose fleshy waist was covered with a beautiful silken garment, whose crest was covered with peacock's feathers, whose ear-

rings were bright, who had put the right lotus-like foot on the left shank, who, after having folded his charming lotus-like hands, was wandering, who had put the flute with its cover moving at his waist-region, who gave delight to the eyes and minds of the cowherdesses, who had very wonderfully entered the hall that was filled (i.e. covered) with showers of flowers on all sides by the cowherdesses. Then having cast their bodies at the end of the kalpa they are now born here. On their ears are seen large ear-rings shining with gems. Round their necks are jewelled necklaces, and in their braids are (put) flowers.

55-59. There was a sage named Śuciśravas. There was also another sage named Suvarṇa. They, proficient in the Vedas, were the sons of Kuśadhvaja. With their feet put up (in the air i.e. standing on their heads), they practised a severe penance with a three-lettered hymn. With their minds controlled, they muttered (the hymn) saying 'Hrīm, Hamsa'. They meditated upon Kṛṣṇa (living) in Gokula, a child ten years old, and constantly enticing the beautiful women looking at him, with his figure like Cupid and with his charming youth. At the end of the kalpa they, having cast their bodies, were born in Vraja as the extremely beautiful daughters of the cowherd Suvira. In their hands were seen two parrots of auspicious sounds.

60-66a. There were four sages—Jaṭila, Jaṅghapūta, Ghṛtāśī and Karbu—who were blessed and were desireless here and in (i.e. for) the next world. With single devotion they sought the refuge of (Kṛṣṇa) the lover of the cowherdesses. Plunging themselves into water, they muttered a hymn having ten letters with a recollection (of Kṛṣṇa) at the beginning and end, and put together by the triad of Ramās. As cowherdesses, they with deep devotion meditated upon (Kṛṣṇa) who was wandering in every forest, who was valuing the charming, whose entire body was smeared with sandal, who had put on a China rose as an ear-ornament, who had undergone a change due to a garland of lotuses, and was covered with blue and yellow garments. At the end of three kalpas they were born in Gokula (as cowherdesses) of auspicious marks. Those charming ones with curved eyebrows are seated in front. Round their forearms are lovely bracelets supported by (i.e. decked with) gems etc. and divine pearls etc.

66b-73. In the former kalpa a sage name Dīrghatapas was the Vyāsa. His excellent and very intelligent boy, always remembering the feet (of Kṛṣṇa), abandoned his father, mother etc. and meditating on Kṛṣṇa went to a forest. There he, night and day, without eating anything, worshipped god Viṣṇu who had taken up the form of a cow(-herd). With great devotion, muttering the hymn of eighteen letters put together by Ramā, he reflected upon Hari who was seated in a golden pavilion upon a golden seat, who was holding a golden flute with the tips of his golden hands, who was whirling a golden lotus with his right hand, who looked charming due to his body clasped by his dear beloved of a golden complexion, who was laughing with great joy and who was looking at his hermitage. He, full of tears due to joy, with his body decked with horripilation, loudly saying, 'O lord, be pleased', and trembling, fell on the ground to salute the creator of the world with a prostration.

74-79. Saying loudly 'I am fatigued', Viṣṇu with his eyes full of joy, holding the hands of him who desired devotion, who had prostrated himself (before him) like a staff, touched him and spoke to that Śuka, who had obtained the form of his beloved: "O good one, you are my beloved. Thinking of my form, and having become the abode of my love, stay by me." Two cowherdresses are chief, are of the same age, and auspicious. They are practising a steady vow, are of a firm devotion, and are named after the same constellation. One is bright like heated gold and the other has the lustre of lightning. The eyes of one are sleepy, (while) the eyes of the other are pleasing and long (i.e. broad). He worshipped with great devotion the left and right sides of Viṣṇu; and at the end of the kalpa, he, having cast his body, was born as Upananda's daughter, resembling in beauty the petal of a blue lotus, in Gokula of that magnanimous one.

80-91a. That one is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's wife who had put on a yellow garment, who is covered with a red bodice, whose breasts are like golden pitchers, who has put on her entire body the veil of red lead, whose cheeks are shining with golden ear-rings, and who is very beautiful. She is adorned with the garland of golden lotuses, and her stout breasts are smeared with saffron. In her hand there is something to be chewed, given to her by Hari. She is very skilled in playing upon a flute and (other) musical instru-

ments; she is the attendant of Keśava (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa), and some time is engaged by the delighted Kṛṣṇa in singing. An auspicious string of guñjā fruits shines round her conch-like neck. (She is) afflicted by love due to Kṛṣṇa's charm even in his absence; (Kṛṣṇa) causing this young lady to dress as he likes, would make her, singing extremely melodiously, dance, when her friends are playing upon musical instruments. Again and again, she devoutly embraces and kisses Govinda. She is dear to all cowherdesses and is also very dear to Kṛṣṇa. (Then) there was the son of Śvetaketu. He had mastered Vedas and Vedāṅgas. Giving up all this, he resorted to great penance. He constantly muttered the eleven-lettered hymn, meditating upon her who had served the feet of Kṛṣṇa, who was resonant like the sweet Gaṅgā, who was a dear power of Govinda, who was inaccessible to Brahmā, Rudra etc., who was devoutly resorting to the charming glory of (Kṛṣṇa). Making everybody laugh, and keeping himself on sylvan paths, and settling the world all round with smiling lustre, always thinking about the meaning of the hymn, he lived in the spring.

91b-100. He too, after a couple of kalpas attained perfection, and was born here. This girl of a thin body, having bud-like breasts, with a necklace of pearls shining round her neck, having put on a pure silken garment, having anklets, bracelets, armlets, and rings inlaid with pearls, acts like a child. She put on divine ear-rings which were oozing nectar and were auspicious. She had (a mark) like the dot of red lead in her braid that was dressed with musk. On her forehead she had a mark along with (sectarian) marks of sandal. That same tranquil one was seen to worship the highest position (i.e. Brahman). There was a handsome royal sage by name Candraprabha. By Kṛṣṇa's grace he got a son with a charming figure. He was known as Citradhvaja and was a devotee of Viṣṇu from his childhood. The king taught the great eighteen-lettered hymn through a brāhmaṇa to his good son who was handsome, well-composed and twelve years old. When the boy was being sprinkled with water full of the nectar-like hymns, he, that moment only, full of tears, saluted the king. That day the guileless boy of a pure heart, wearing a spotless garment, adorned with necklaces, anklets, strings, neck-ornaments, armlets and bracelets, having

touched (i.e being full of) devotion to Viṣṇu, went to the temple of Viṣṇu, remained (there) all alone, and thought:

101-107a. 'How shall I worship him who is worshipped (by his devotees), who fascinates the cowherdesses and always sports with them on the sand-bank of Kālindī and in the forest.' The boy thinking like this and with his mind very much perturbed, obtained a very great lore and also had a dream. Before him there was the figure of Kṛṣṇa. It was beautiful. It was made of stone. It was (placed) on a golden seat. It was marked with all (good) characteristics. It was dark like a blue lotus. It was having glossy beauty. It was adorned with peacocks' feathers. It was having charm due to three folds; it was gladly playing upon the flute which was made of gold and was put to his lower lip. It was served by two beautiful damsels standing on its left and right sides. It aggravated their passion with kisses, embraces etc. Citradhvaja, having seen Kṛṣṇa having a sporting attire like that, was abashed in his mind, and bent his head before him.

107b-116. Hari, laughing, said to the beloved on his right side: "O you lotus-eyed one, having produced a divine, wonderful form of a young lady, resembling you and being very bashful and seated on your body, look upon it as non-distinct from your body. Touched by the lustres in your body it will have your form." Then that lotus-eyed one went near Citradhvaja, and remained thinking his body to be non-different from her body. Then the lustres from her body filled his body. From the lustre of her breasts, too charming, stout breasts were produced. From the lustre of her buttocks, charming, round hips were produced. From the lustre of the hair, ornamented hair was produced. From (the lustre of) her two hands, hands were produced. Thus, everything—ornaments, garments, garlands etc.—was well-accomplished. And with fragrance inside, she became skilled in arts. Seeing, as one lamp (is lighted) from another, that fortunate girl on the earth, named Citradhvajā, who was charming with a smile and was beautiful, she, by her arms, seized her with love and gladly took her away. And having embraced the woman standing by Govinda's side, she said: "This is your female servant. Give her a name. With love tell her, the beloved, liked by you, (what) service (she should do to you)."

117-129a. Then, as she liked, she named her Citrakalā, and said: "For serving the lord of our life, full of virtues, you take the flute, always remain near him, and sing in various notes. This is the practice enjoined upon you." Then Citrakalā, obeying the order saluted Mādhava. Having seized the feet of his beloved and having taken the dust-particles from his feet (on her head), she sang very sweet songs, giving joy to both of them. Then Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of joy, embraced her with love. When she was fully (merged) in the ocean of joy, she woke up. Citradhvaja, overcome with great love, and intent on remembering that (Kṛṣṇa) only, the highest joy, wept with a free voice (i.e. freely). Since then, giving up food and pleasures, he, who was weeping, though talked to by his father etc. did not say any word. Resorting to Kṛṣṇa at night, he remained in his house for a month. (Then) going out (of the house) to a forest, he (there) practised a penance, difficult to be practised by sages. After casting his body at the end of a kalpa, that great sage, only due to his penance, was born as the auspicious daughter named Citrakalā, of a cowherd named Viragupta. On her shoulder, a charming lute, adorned with the seven notes, was always seen. On (her) left (shoulder) a wonderful golden pitcher (decked) with jewels, remained. In her right hand, (she had) a jewelled spittoon. (Then) there was a sage, Kaśyapa's son, named Puṇyaśravas, who knew all duties. His father was a devotee of Śiva, and everyday praised the lord of gods, the lord of the universe (i.e. Śiva) who loves his devotees.

129b-134a. Śiva along with Pārvatī was pleased with him. He granted him a boon at midnight on the fourteenth day (of a fortnight): "Even as a child, your son will be a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Having performed his thread-ceremony in his eighth year, teach him the twentyone-lettered hymn which (will) be told (to you) by me. This hymn, called *Gopāla-vidyā* (lore of Gopāla), gives the power of (getting whatever is expressed by) words. On the tip of the tongue of him who accomplishes this, the wonderful account of Kṛṣṇa remains. The figure of the Infinite one himself, granting boons, comes (to him). Beginning to recite the hymn with the words *Kāmamāyā Ramākaṇṭha Sendrā Dāmodarojjvalā* (i.e. the bright Dāmodara with Indra etc.),

then reciting the ten-lettered (hymn) in the middle, he should again refer to them.

134b-147. I shall tell you the meditation with the sages etc. expressed by ten letters. He should remember the island full of light of the full treasure of nectar, and surrounded by Kālindī, (and) he should reflect on him in the grove of Vṛndāvana. It is covered with trees and creepers dropping flowers in all seasons, and (resounding) with the cries of dancing and intoxicated peacocks and the crying cuckoos and (humming) bees. In it is a great Pārijāta-tree which is a hundred yojanas tall and has the expanse of branches and twigs. At its spotless foot, the young cowherds holding flutes and syringes have formed a circle, surrounded by a circle of cows. Inside it there was a charming circle of the beautiful women of Vraja, who had many presents in their hands, whose minds were overcome with ardent passion, who had joined the palms of their hands (in obeisance); it was a circle of them who had put on white garments, who were adorned with bright ornaments, whose hearts were overcome with love. He would think about the dear words of the daughters of Śruti (i.e. sacred ordinance). Then on the jewelled altar he would think about Hari, covered with a silken garment, lying on the breasts of Rādhā on a portion of a plantain tree, and looking at her beautiful face with a charming smile on it, with his left foot slightly bent, embracing his beloved with the left hand holding a flute, touching her chin with his right hand, having the brightness of pearls, having large eyes like white lotuses, having put on a yellow and spotless garment, with his head shining with a load (i.e. mass) of peacocks' feathers, charming due to a necklace of pearls, having ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles shining on his cheeks, having a Tulasī-garland (hanging) up to his feet, having the ornaments like bracelets and armlets, adorned with anklets, rings and a girdle, being very delicate, being of the age of a child; the worship is said to be of ten letters only. The initiatory rite is marked with the scriptures.

148-154. Saying so the lord vanished; so also the goddess, daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain and his chaste wife. The sage having come (to his) son taught him like that. Puṇyaśravas, after having vanquished all the sages, described (in) various

(words) him who was having wonderful marks like form, beauty, cleverness and charm. Then the boy, delighted at heart, went out of his house. Eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, he practised panance for three myriad kalpas. At the end of it he was born in Gokula, in the house of Nanda's brother. Her name was Lavaṅgā. She observed (i.e. knew) the internal thoughts of Kṛṣṇa. In her hand is seen the mechanism with which the face was washed. I have thus told you about certain principal beloveds of Kṛṣṇa. That man, who devoutly reads or causes to read this chapter full of many pleasures of Kṛṣṇa along with the excellent girls in Vraja, having charming and smiling eyes, goes to the abode of the lord Śrī Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The Greatness of Mathurā

The lord said:

1-6. I have told you in (due) order, the wonder about which you asked me. Who is not stupefied there, where Brahmā and others are stupefied? Yet I shall tell you what the great sage (Vyāsa) said to Ambariṣa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, connected with Śiva. The king, having come to the Badaryāśrama, saluted and praised, with a desire to know the Vaiṣṇava way of life, Veda-vyāsa who was seated there, who had restrained his senses, who was noble, omniscient, and best among men: "Please protect me from this mundane existence. I am detached from the sensual pleasures; I salute them, I salute everything. How would I always obtain mental recourse to that highest Brahman, a position free from dejection, having a form of auspiciousness, intelligence and joy, the highest sky, the absence of ether, which is healthy, and seeing which the sages cross the ocean of worldly existence?"

Vyāsa said:

7-14a. You have asked me a great secret. I have not told it (even) to Śuka, my son, what you have asked me. But I shall tell it to you who are dear to Viṣṇu. Listen, this great universe

was of his form, was situated in him; it was unmanifest, free from pain; it was full of the lord. Formerly, I, subsisting on fruits, roots, palāśa-leaves, water and air, practised penance for many thousand years. Then Viṣṇu said to me who was engaged in meditation on him: “O you very intelligent one, what do you want to do, or what do you want to know? I am pleased; ask for a boon from (me) who am the best among the givers of boons. I tell you the truth that the mundane existence lasts till I am seen.” Then, with my body full of horripilation, I said to Kṛṣṇa: “O Madhusūdana, I desire to see you with my physical eyes, whom the principal Vedas described as the truth, the highest Brahman, the light of the world, the lord of the world, the wonderful visible lord.”

The lord said:

14b-19. I was formerly asked by Brahmā and was requested by him. I shall tell you also what I had told him. Some describe me as Prakṛti (i.e. the primordial matter); some call me Puruṣa, the lord. Some call me Dharma (i.e. Piety); some call me wealth; some call me Mokṣa (i.e. salvation) where there is no fear from anywhere. Some call me void. Some call me devotion. Some call me Sadāśiva. Others described me as the only eternal one remaining on the top of the Vedas, of a good disposition, without a change, and of the form of goodness, intellect and joy. See, today I shall show you my form concealed by the Vedas.

Then I saw, O king, a boy who was like a dark cloud, who was surrounded by cowherdresses, who was laughing along with the cowherds, who was seated at the root of a Kadamba tree, who had put on yellow garments, and was wonderful.

20-23a. (I also saw) a grove named Vṛndāvana, which was adorned with fresh foliage, which was resounding with the notes of cuckoos, which was charming due to (the presence of) Cupid. I (also) saw the river Kālindī, which had the colour of the petals of blue lotuses. I also saw the Govardhana (mountain) which was held up by the hands of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, for destroying the pride of the great Indra and which gave pleasure to the cowherds. I saw the cowherd (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who was happy in the

company of women and who was playing upon the flute. On seeing him, the ornament of all ornaments, I was extremely delighted.

23b-29a. Then the lord, moving in the Vṛndāvana grove, himself said to me: "There is no greater form of mine than the one which is divine, eternal, partless, actionless, calm, and of the form of auspiciousness, intellect and joy, complete, having eyes like the petals of a fully blossomed lotus, which you saw (now). The Vedas describe this only as the cause of causes, which is true, eternal, of the form of great joy, a mass of intellect, eternal and auspicious. Know my Mathurā to be eternal, so also Vṛndāvana; so also (know to be eternal) Yamunā, the cowherdesses and the cowherds. This incarnation of mine is eternal. Do not have any doubt about it. Rādhā is always dear to me. I am omniscient, greater than the great. I have all my desires (fulfilled), I am the lord of all, I am all joy and greater than the great. In me appears all this universe, spread out by (my) Māyā (illusion)."

29b-31a. Then I spoke to the lord, the cause of the cause of the world: "Who are the cowherdesses? What are the cowherds? What kind of tree is this said to be? Who is the grove? What are the cuckoos etc.? What is the river? And what is the mountain? Who is this noble (one that has become the) flute, the only place of joy to all people?"

31b-36a. The lord, happy and with his lotus-like face pleased, said to me: "The cowherdesses should be known to be the Vedas. The young daughters of cowherds should be known to be the ṛcs (hymns). They are divine damsels, O king. They are endowed with penance and desire salvation. All the cowherds are sages, the forms of joy in Vaikuṇṭha. This Kadamba is the desire-yielding tree, the receptacle of the highest joy. The grove is called Ānanda, which destroys great sins. The cuckoos and others are siddhas, sādhyas and gandharvas. There is no doubt about it. Some are his joyful heart, Yamunā is the body. This mountain is the servant of Viṣṇu and has no beginning. Listen, who is the flute. O brāhmaṇa, you know it (to be) like that.

36b-54. There was a brāhmaṇa, of a tranquil mind, engaged in penance and truthfulness. His name was Devavrata, and

he was proficient in ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites as enjoined in the Vedas. Being in the midst of Viṣṇu's devotees, he was engaged in (various) rites. O king, once he heard that the lord of sacrifice was (present in the house). The brāhmaṇa, determined (to see) me went to his house. That devotee of mine in his house worshipped (me) with a Tulasī-leaf and water and offered me something (like) a fruit and a root. The intelligent one affectionately gave him the water for bath and fruits. Smiling without faith, he too accepted it from the brāhmaṇa. Due to that sin he had the extremely fierce condition of a bamboo; and as a result of that religious merit he became dear to me. Due to that (merit), O king, he shines as the chief. At the end of the age, he, being one with Viṣṇu, will obtain (the state of) Brahman. Oh, men with wicked hearts do not know my ancient city, which is great, which is praised by lords of gods and serpents and sages, which is charming and old. Though there are cities like Kāśī, Mathurā alone is virtuous among them; birth, thread-ceremony, death or cremation in that gives salvation to men. When men become purified by penance etc., have pure hearts, and have constant meditation as their wealth, then only they see my city, not otherwise, even after hundreds of kalpas, O best brāhmaṇas. The residents of Mathurā are blessed, and are respected even by the residents of heaven. Their greatness is immeasurable, and all of them have four hands. The residents of Mathurā do not see any defect due to thousands of births and deaths in those in whom (other) men see a fault. Those who are even poor, but who remember Mathurā, are (really) blessed. There the god, the lord of beings, giving salvation even to the sinners (lives). That great lord of beings, who is always most dear to me, never leaves the city due to affection for me. That man of bad conduct who would not salute the lord of beings or would not worship him, would not see this my self-shining city, called a great deity. How would that sinful man who would not worship my great devotee, viz. Śiva, obtain devotion to me? Those mean men who do not salute the lord of beings, do not remember him or praise him, have their minds mostly deluded by my Māyā (illusion). Even the boy Dhruva, engaged in worshipping me, obtained a pure place, obtained with difficulty by the grandsires. A man, being lame, or blind,

would come to my city Mathurā, difficult to be reached by gods and would cast his life there.

55-56. O glorious Vedavyāsa, do not have any doubt at all about the secret of the best of the Vedas, which I have divulged to you. He, the pure one, who would recite or listen to with devotion this chapter narrated by the lord, will have eternal salvation."

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Arjuna's Wish and Its Fulfilment

The lord said:

1-3. Once, in private, glorious Uddhava, dear to the lord and an attendant of his, asked Sanatkumāra: "Where is that great place which is always the abode of gods, where Govinda sports everyday with the cowherdresses? If you have affection for me, tell me the account of (Govinda's) sport and whatever else that is wonderful, if you know it."

Sanatkumāra said:

4-6. As occasion arose, I have told what that noble Arjuna, of a good vow, and the attendant of the lord, at some time seated on the bank of Yumunā, at the root of a certain tree, saw and did—his experience in loneliness. I shall tell you that. Listen with great attention. But you are not to divulge it here and there (i.e. anywhere).

Arjuna said:

7-12. O you ocean of compassion, O lord, be pleased to tell me all that which Śaṅkara and others, so also Brahmā and others have not seen or heard. What have you told before? The cowherds' wives are dear to you. How many kinds do they have? How many are they in number? How many names do they have? Who are they? Where are they? Where are they settled? How many (i.e. what) are their deeds? O lord, what is their age?

What is their dress? O lord, with whom and where will you sport in privacy in every forest that is eternal, that has eternal happiness and eternal grandeur? Where and of what kind is that eternal and great place? If you have that kind of favour (towards me) then please tell all that to me. O you glorious one, O you who destroys the distress of the distressed, you will (please) tell me all the secret, which even I have not asked and which is not known to me.

The lord said:

13-29a. That is my place. Those are my dear ones. Such is my sport, which is imperceptible even to men who are (to me) like my own life. This is the truth. O dear one, when told about it, you will be eager to see it. How other people can, when it cannot be seen even by Brahmā and others? Therefore, O dear one, desist (from asking about it). What (do you lose) without that?

Hearing these very fearful words of the lord, Arjuna, being helpless, fell at both his lotus-like feet (prostrating himself) like a staff. Then the revered lord, affectionate towards his devotees, raised him with his arms, and with great love said to him: "What is the use of telling about it now? For you are going to see it. Having with great devotion propitiated that glorious goddess Tripurasundarī, in whom everything has come up, remains even now and will merge, present yourself to her. Without her I can never give this position to you."

Having heard these words of the lord, Arjuna, with his eyes full of joy, went to the feet of the glorious goddess Tripurā. Having gone there he saw the altar of the desire-yielding gem, very much decorated with staircases fashioned with various jewels. There (he saw) a desire-yielding tree which was bent with many flowers and fruits, and which was brightened due to foliage, having leaves, tender in all seasons and dripping with sprays of flowing honey and unsteady due to wind; which (i.e. the tree) was resounding with parrots, flocks of cuckoos, sārīkās and pigeons, so also with sportive partridges and (other) charming birds; which had at its foot a divine, very wonderful, jewelled temple which was shining with bright jewels, and charming

like a wild fire. There was a jewelled throne, made of bright gold and enchanting, and very wonderful.

29b-31a. Arjuna, saying, "I am known as Arjuna", and having repeatedly saluted, by folding the palms of his hands, and full of devotion to the goddess who resembled the young (i.e. morning) Sun, who was decorated with many ornaments, who was endowed with fresh youth, whose four arms resembling creepers shone with a goad, a noose and a bow, who was very much pleased and attractive, whose lotus-like feet were adorned with the rays of the gems in the crowns of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa (i.e. Śiva) etc., who was covered with (i.e. who possessed) the (supernatural powers) like *aṇimā*,¹ sat in a secluded place. The goddess, the treasure of compassion, knowing his adoration and good temper, and overcome by his recollection said (to him) tenderly:

The goddess said:

31b-37. O child, which rare gift have you made to a person worthy to receive gifts? Which sacrifice have you performed? Or, which penance have you practised here (i.e. in this world)? Or formerly which (kind of) devotion have you accomplished? Or which difficult and auspicious, great act have you done, so that the lord has, indeed, gladly done you a favour, which is the most secret, and which cannot be had by anyone else? O child, that favour which the universal soul has done to you, is not (done by him) to the people of the mortal world, living on the earth, (so also) to deities etc. living in heaven, and not at all (done) to all his devotees who are best ascetics and practise abstract meditation. Then, come on; knowing the lake, my seat, resort to it. The goddess fulfils all desires. (Therefore) go with her; and having duly bathed there, quickly come (back) here.

38-46a. Then only, Arjuna went there, bathed, and came like that (i.e. as he was told). The goddess made him who had bathed and come (back), offer *nyāsa*², *mudrā*³ etc., and told into

1. *Aṇimā*—The superhuman power of becoming as small as an atom.

2. *Nyāsa*—Assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.

3. *Mudrā*—Name of certain positions of the fingers practised in religious worship or devotion.

his right ear the lore (called) *Bālāvidyā* which gave instant success, which was great, which had for its goal half the portion of Śiva (i.e. Pārvatī), which was unique and which was adorned by everything. (She also made him) practise religious austerities, worship and mutter the prayer five lakh times; and having duly carried out the performance (of worship) with the buds of karavīra tree, the goddess, kindly spoke to him this (i.e. these words): “Worship me in this manner only. Then, when I shall be pleased, you will be entitled to the sport of Kṛṣṇa due to my favour. This rule has been formerly formulated by the lord himself.”

Having heard like this, Arjuna worshipped her with that hymn. Then having performed the worship and muttering, he pleased the goddess. Then, having performed an auspicious sacrifice and having bathed duly, Arjuna regarded himself as blessed, as one whose almost all desires were fulfilled, and as one having every success in his hands.

46b-51a. At this time the goddess, coming to him, spoke, with a smiling face, to him: “O child, now go into the interior of that house”. Then, Arjuna hastily and joyfully got up, and full of immeasurable delight, he saluted her in the manner of a staff (i.e. by prostrating himself before her). Then, ordered by the goddess, Arjuna, along with the friend of the goddess went to the place of the lord of Rādhā, which is inaccessible even to siddhas. Then he was shown Vṛndāvana which remained above Goloka, which was stable, sustained by wind, eternal, the abode of all happiness, in which the great festival of Kṛṣṇa’s dance with the cowherds constantly went on. He saw the great secret full of the feeling of love.

51b-54. By her words (i.e. order) only he saw that secret, and being beyond himself and overcome with enhanced love, he fell there. Then regaining consciousness with difficulty he was raised by her by (holding) his arms. Due to her words of consolation, he somehow became stable. “Tell me what other penance should be practised by me?” Thus, full of anxiety to see him, he was unsteady. Then holding him by her hand, she went towards the southern direction of that place.

55-61a. Going along a good region, she spoke these words

(to him): “O Arjuna, in order to bathe enter this (lake) which is auspicious, has extensive water, has the shape of a thousand-petalled lotus with a bud in the centre, four waterfalls and four streams, and is full of a multitude of wonders. On entering into its interior, you will notice a special property. To the south of it is this lake. There is drunk honey and spirituous liquor distilled from the madhūka tree, after which the stream (flowing) from Malaya (mountain) is named. This park is full of flowers, where, in the spring season, Kṛṣṇa celebrates the vernal festival in honour of Cupid, heaped with vernal flowers; where they, day and night, praise the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, by whose mere recollection the sprout of love would be (rising) in the heart of an ascetic. Then, having bathed in this lake, and having gone to the bank of the eastern lake, and having bathed in its water, accomplish your desire (i.e. desired object).”

61b-74a. Then having heard the words, when Arjuna plunged into the water of the lake, which was tinged with the pollen dropped from white lotuses, lotuses opening on moonrise, (other) lotuses and red and blue lotuses, and which was agreeably perfumed with honey-drops, which was shaken by the notes of corpulent swans, whose four banks were decked with jewels, which had ripples due to gentle breezes, she vanished just there. The charmingly smiling one got up and on seeing around, was confused. He instantly saw himself (to be turned into) a wonderful, excellent lady, who had a slim, fair, charming body like the rays of pure gold, whose age was that of a sparkling youth, whose face resembled the autumnal moon, whose hair was very dark, curly, glossy and shining with jewels, whose curls of hair on the plate (-like forehead) were brightened up due to the rays from the mark of red lead, who had vanquished Cupid's bow due to the knittings of the creeper-like eyebrows being manifest, whose wagtail-like eyes were dark like clouds and sportive, whose round cheeks were sparkling due to the bright lustre of the jewelled ear-rings, whose wonderful creeper-like arms were delicate like lotus-stalks, whose sprout-like hands took away all the beauty of autumnal lotuses, who had put on a waist-band made of gold and arranged cleverly, whose hips were shining with jingling girdles, whose beautiful place of hips was covered with a shining garment, whose lotus-like feet were very charming due

to the jingling jewelled anklets, who possessed the skill in the various arts of love being manifested, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who was adorned with all ornaments. Due to the illusion of (i.e. created by) the lover of the cowherdesses he forgot whatever belonged to his former body; and after that, being very much astonished, stood there, not knowing what to do.

74b-80. In the meanwhile, there was heard a sudden, grave voice in the sky, saying: "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice." Hearing these divine words, she went to the eastern lake which had many wonderful streams and which was crowded with various birds, which shone with quivering white lotuses, white lotuses opening at moonrise, (ordinary) lotuses and blue lotuses that were quivering, and with rubies, which had a good bank of (i.e. decked with) lotuses, whose four banks were adorned with various lovely arbours of creepers and trees having abundant flowers. Having bathed (there), she stood for a moment. Then she heard in her ear (i.e. with her ears) the tinkling of small bells tinged with the (sound of) jingling girdles and sweet anklets.

81-88. Then (she saw) a bevy of young damsels that had wonderful youth, who had put on wonderful ornaments, whose figures and speech were wonderful, whose bodies were wonderful, who were unique, whose amorous actions were the same and wonderful, whose conversation was interesting, whose laughter and beholding were agreeable, whose beauty was sweet and wonderful, who possessed all sweetness, whose charm of understanding had reached the extreme, who were wonderfully beautiful, whose beauty was wonderfully glossy, whose favour etc. was wonderful, who were a heap of all wonders, whose appearance etc. was wonderful. Seeing that great wonder and thinking a little in her heart, she, scratching the ground with her toe, remained (there) with her face hung down. Then they hastily looked at one another: 'Who is this one, belonging to my class, that has created curiosity (in us) for a long time?' Having thus observed her, and (thinking) for a moment, 'she should be known'

(i.e. 'we should know who she is'), they, clever in deliberation, deliberated, and came to see her out of curiosity. One of them, a wise one, named Priyamudā, came (to her) and with sweet words and affection spoke to her:

Priyamudā said:

89-91. Who are you? Whose daughter are you? Whose beloved are you? Where were you born? Who brought you into this (region)? Or have you come on your own? Tell all this to us. What is the use of anxiety? Is there any trouble to anyone in this place of great joy?

Thus asked by her, she bowed through modesty; and enticing their minds, she spoke in a sweet voice.

Arjuna said:

92-97. I do not know anything as to who I am, as to whose daughter I was born, whose beloved I was, who brought me here or if I came here on my own; but the goddess might know it. (Please) hear what is told by me, if you believe my words. To the southern side of this, there is a lake. I came to bathe there, and remaining there only I became fearfully eager. Then looking all round in (every) direction, I heard a wonderful voice in the sky, "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice."

98-104a. Having heard these words I came here from there. My mind is full of dejection and joy and I am fully overcome with anxiety. I came here, and after bathing in its water, I heard many kinds of auspicious sounds, and then I saw you, the great ones. Physically, mentally, and through words, I know this much only. O respectable ladies, this much I have told you, if you like. Who are you? Whose daughters are you? Where were you born? Whose beloveds are you?

Hearing those words of hers, that Priyamudā spoke: "Let

it be so. O auspicious one, we are his beloveds. We are daughters happily sporting with the Moon of Vṛndāvana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). We are self-delighted. So we have come here as the cowherdesses. These are the groups of the sacred texts; these again are the sages. We are cowherdesses. I have told you about our nature.

104b-121. (We are those) most beloved to the lord of Rādhā due to (our) mirth. We always sport irregularly; we always play and move. This is goddess Pūrṇarasā. This is Rasamantharā. This one is Rasālayā by name; and this is Rasavallarī. This is Rasapiyūṣadhārā; this is Rasatarāṅgiṇī; and this is Rasakallo-
linī; and this is Rasavāpikā; this is Anaṅgasenā; and this is Anaṅgamālinī. This young lady is Madayantī and this is Rasavi-
hvalā. This is Lalitā by name, and this is Lalitayauvanā; and this is Madanamañjarī. This is Kalāvati by name, and this one is known as Ratikalā. This is Kāmakalā by name; this is Kāma-
dāyini. This young lady is Ratilolā; and this young lady is Ratotsukā; and this one is Ratisarvasvā; and this one is Raticin-
tāmaṇi. Some of these are always delighted and always give love. After this (come) the groups of the scriptures. Listen to (the names of) some of these: This one is Udgītā; this one is Sugītā; this dear one is Kalagītā. This young lady is called Kalasurā; this young lady is Kalakaṇṭhikā. This one is Vipāñcī; this one is Kramapadā; this one is known as Bahuhutā. This is one known as Bahuprayogā. This lady is called Bahukalā. This one is called Kalāvati; and this one is known as Kriyāvati. After this (come) the groups of the sages. Some of them are here: This one is named Ugratapā; this one is known as Bahuguṇā. This one is Priyavratā by name; and this one is said to be Suvratā. This one is known as Surekhā. This young lady is known as Suparvā. This is Bahupradā. This one is called Ratnarekhā. This one is known as Maṇigrivā; and this one is Suparṇā; (and these are) Ākalpā, Sukalpā, Ratnamālikā. This (lady of) beautiful eyebrows is Saudāmini; and this one is Kāmadāyini; and this one is called Bhogadā; this chaste one is Viśvamātā. This one is Dhāriṇī; and this is Dhātrī; this one is Sumedhā; and this one is Kānti. This one is Aparṇā; this one is known as Suparṇā; and this one is Sulakṣaṇā. This one is Sudatī. This one is Guṇa-
vatī; and this one is known as Saukalinī. This one is called Sulocanā; and this one is known as Sumanā. (These are known

as) Aśrutā, Suśilā, and Ratisukhapradāyini. Next are we, the cowherdesses, that have come here.

122-138. O you having a face like a lotus, get acquainted with some of them. This one is Candrāvati; this auspicious one is known as Candrikā. This is Candrāvalī. This one is Candrarekhā and this is Candrikā. This one is called Candramālā and this one is known as Candralikā. This is Candraprabhā and this lady is known as Candrakalā. This one is Varṇāvalī; this one is Varṇamālā; this one is Maṇimālikā. (This one) is called Varṇaprabhā; this one is Suprabhā; this one is Maṇiprabhā. This one is Hārāvalī; this auspicious one is Tārāmālinī. This one is Mālatī; this one is Yūthī. (These are) Vāsantī and Navamālikā. This one is Mallī; this one is Navamallī. This one is known as Śephālikā. This one is Saugandhikā. This one is Kastūrī; this one is Padminī; this one is Kumudvatī. This one is Rasollāsā; this one is Citravṇḍā; this one is Surekhā; this one is Svarṇarekhikā. This one is Kāñcanamālā; this other one is the chaste Asantatikā. All these have surrounded (you). Others also are to be introduced to you. O you beautiful, young lady, you will amuse yourself with us and with these. Come on to the bank of the eastern lake. There, O friend, having duly given you a bath, I shall give you a hymn, giving success."

Thus suddenly taking her (to the lake) and having duly bathed her, she made her accept, according to the proper rites, and in brief, the excellent hymn of the beloved of the Moon of Vṇḍāvana, which was excellent and belonged to the germ of Varuṇa (-hymn), and put forward by the seed of the hymn sacred to Fire, which was endowed with the fourth note, and decorated with a point of sound, and sewn between the Praṇavas and extremely difficult to get in the three worlds. Every success comes by merely accepting the hymn. There is the repetition of the name of a deity accompanied with burnt offerings. There is meditation; and there is a number of sacrifices and the success due to muttering of prayers. Along with her friends she gladly worshipped the goddess whose body was fair like heated gold, who was adorned with various ornaments, whose form and beauty were wonderful, who was well-pleased, and who gave boons according to proper rites, and with white lotuses and karavīra flowers etc., with camkaka flowers and lotuses, so also with other fragrant

flowers and (other objects) having fragrance, with water for washing feet and rinsing mouth, with charming incense and lights, so also various offerings of eatables; then she repeated the hymn for a lakh times; she made offerings according to the proper rites, praised her and fell (prostrate) on the ground like a staff.

139-143. Then without a wink the goddess was praised with a longing for her. She, through illusion, got ready her shadow, and put, as it were through force, the beloved, near her. She was surrounded by her friends, and was delighted. Due to the worship, muttering of prayers, eulogies, devout salutations, she manifested herself through grace. Her complexion was like gold or campaka flowers. She was bright due to beautiful ornaments. Her figure was lovely due to beauty in every limb, large and small. Her face was beautiful like the full moon in autumn. Her smile and appearance were kind and simple. She was attractive in (all) the three worlds. She brightened the ten directions with her lustre. Then that goddess, granting boons and affectionate towards her devotees, spoke:

The goddess said:

144-154. The words of my friends are true. Therefore, you are my dear friend. Get up, come along, I shall fulfil your desire.

Arjunī, having heard the words of the goddess which were (but) the longing of her heart, and with her body lovely due to the sprout-like horripilations, with her eyes full of tears, and again overcome with love, fell at the feet of the goddess. Then she said these words to her friend-goddess, Priyamvadā. "Holding her hand, and cheering her up, bring her near me." Then, being zealous by the order of the goddess, Priyamvadā took her like that and came near the goddess. The goddess, dear to Hari, went to the bank of the northern lake, and having duly bathed her and made her worship according to the proper rites and preceded by a solemn vow, made her accept the hymn, granting good success, of (i.e. sacred to) the Moon in Śrī Gokula. The vow is called Gokulanātha, is old, and adorned by Mohana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa); the hymn gives all success and is preserved in all reli-

gious treatises teaching magical and mystical formalities. She, knowing the songs of Govinda gave her steady devotion. She told her the meditation and the enchanting king of hymns. It is told in the religious treatise called Mohana. Even its recollection gives success. One should meditate upon (Kṛṣṇa), dark like the petal of a blue lotus and adorned with many ornaments, and having beauty like that of a crore Cupids, and full of love. For purification, she told this secret to Priyamvadā.

Śrī Rādhikā said:

155-167a. Till her excellent initiatory rite would be over, be attentive, and along with your friends, protect her.

Having kept (there) the shadow of her own and of her beloveds, she went near the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa. That Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, remained there as before. Here, by the advice of Priyamvadā, she prepared an auspicious eight-petalled lotus, and having written that wonderful auspicious hymn, and drawn the mystical diagram giving success, with bright yellow pigment, saffron, and sandal mixed together, and having made Nyāsa etc., and having duly offered water for washing the feet, materials for worship, and having offered worship to Nanda's son with many flowers of the season, with saffron and sandal incenses, lights, offerings of eatables, tām-būlas and perfumes used to scent the mouth, and with garments, ornaments and flowers, and having, along with all followers, weapons and vehicles, praised and duly saluted him, she remembered him. Then the lord, Yaśoda's son, influenced by devotion, with a smile and wavy side-glances and thoughts said to goddess Rādhikā: "Quickly bring her here." The goddess (thus) ordered, sent for friend Śārādā, and she brought her suddenly before the playful one. Having come in front of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and overcome with love, she, observing everything wonderful, fell on the ground after being turned into gold. Having somehow got up with difficulty, and having slowly opened her eyes, she, full of burden of perspiration and horripilation and trembling, saw there a beautiful and attractive place.

167b-177a. There was also a desire-yielding tree, which was having bright emerald-like leaves, which was having foliage

with sprouts, which was delicate, and had golden stems, which had crystal-like shoots and roots, which granted rich objects of desire, and which gave the desired fruits to a suitor. Under it was a jewelled temple. There was a jewelled throne. There (i.e. on it) was an eight-petalled lotus. There were the two treasures¹ viz. Śaṅkha and Padma, placed on the left and right (sides). In the four directions were placed the desire-yielding cows at proper places. Around it was the Nandana garden. It was served by the Malaya-breezes. It was scented with lovely fragrances of flowers of all seasons (and) thus had defeated (the fragrance of) Kālāgaru (sandal). It was cool due to the shower of the drops of honey and was very lovely. Its interior was constantly resounding with the hummings of the swarms of female bees intoxicated on tasting the honey. It was resounding with the sweet notes of cuckoos, pigeons, sārīkās, and female parrots, and others in (i.e. hidden behind) leaves. It was full of the dances of intoxicated peacocks and enhanced the passion of love. It had the beauty of the thin (layer) of darkness like collyrium produced by the emission of juice.

177b-196a. She saw Kṛṣṇa whose hair was very glossy, dark, curly and fragrantly perfumed; on whose head was tied the best tail of a peacock intoxicated with madness; on whose left side was the ear-ornament of flowers resorted to by bees; who was shining with the mirrors of his cheeks, bright with the bee-like hair; who was shining with the beauty of the large forehead having a beautiful mark; whose nose was lovely like the sesamum-flower and the eagle's beak; whose lips were charming and like the bimba fruits; who inflamed passion of love with his gentle smile; who looked lovely due to the necklace resembling a wild flower; whose both large and charming shoulders were shining with the garland (of the flowers) of the divine tree, resorted to by thousands of intoxicated female bees; who was adorned with the Kaustubha on the region of the chest shining with a pearl necklace; who had the mark of Śrīvatsa, who was attractive on account of his hands hanging up to the knees; who was very handsome on account of having his waist like that of a

1. Nidhi—The treasure of Kubera. They are nine in number: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla and Kharva.

lion and with a deep navel; who was lovely due to not long and very round knees like a good tree; who was adorned with excellent ornaments like bracelets, armlets, and anklets; whose hips were covered with a portion of his yellow garment; who had vanquished a crore of Cupids in beauty by means of his loveliness; who enchanted (others) by means of charming songs proceeding from his flute; who made the three worlds plunge into the ocean of happiness; who had the arrogance of Cupid in every part of his body; who was tired due to his interest in dancing. There were deities appointed at respective places, observing his internal feelings, having fixed their eyes on his face, who were in due order and with respect carrying separately a chowrie, a fan, a flower, a perfume, sandal, and tām̐būla, a mirror, a drinking vessel, a spitting pot, and also other objects of sport, so also frankincense and an amulet. Arjunīyā, having seen in confusion on the left side of the pleasing goddess Rādhikā, propitiating and offering a tām̐būla to him of a bright smile, was overcome with the passion of love. Then Śrīkṛṣṇa, who knew everything, knowing her to be like that, seized her hand, and he the lord, the great master of magical art secretly sported with her in the entire pleasure-forest. Then putting his sport-like arm on her shoulder and coming to Śāradā, said to her: “Bathe quickly this slim-bodied lady of a gentle smile, fatigued due to sport, in this western lake.” Then that goddess Śāradā (took her) to the western lake, (and) said to her, “Take bath”. The fatigued one did like that. She who got to the interior of the water, again turned into Arjuna and got up at the place where the lord of gods and the chief of the beautiful Vaikuṇṭha stood. Seeing Arjuna dejected and broken-minded, Kṛṣṇa kindly touched him with his hand and put him (back) to his nature.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

196b-198a. O Dhanañjaya, I bless you. You are my dear friend. In the three worlds there is none else like you who knows my secret. O Arjuna, you will curse me if you tell anyone the secret about which you asked (me) and which you have experienced.

Sanatkumāra said:

198b-200a. Thus having received his grace and having taken decision due to being bound by oaths, Arjuna, with his mind delighted and having wonderful recollections, went home from that (place). I have thus told you the entire secret of Govinda that is known to me. I swear you if you tell it to him.

The lord said:

200b-204. Having heard these words the follower of the cowherd got success. He went to Vṛndāvana in the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. There he, knowing the daily sports of Kṛṣṇa, stays even today. I did not tell this secret to Nārada, even though I was asked by him. Yet, having reached the natural form, he obtained it. O you auspicious one, like one of your stock, you are not to tell the secret which I told you through love (for you), to anyone else.

He who would read or listen to this wonderful chapter describing the greatness of the lord's devotee, obtains pleasure in Hari.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Nārada's Experience

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, you have told me in various ways the secret of Vṛndāvana. Due to which particular religious merit did Nārada obtain the natural form?

The lord said:

2-6. Once, formerly I desired to know a wonderful account. From the lotus-like mouth of Kṛṣṇa I heard the secret told by Brahmā. Nārada asked me. Then I got this. "I am not at all able to tell its greatness. What shall I do? Remembering his

oath I am distressed in my mind.” Hearing these words of mine, when he became sad, then, O dear one, I called Brahmā and ordered him: “Tell Nārada what you told me.” Then Brahmā, hearing my words, went with Nārada near Kṛṣṇa and asked him that only.

Brahmā said:

7. O you lord of the subjects, what is that Vṛndāvana forest of thirtytwo (parts)? O lord, I desire to hear (about it). If I am fit (to hear about it, then) tell it to me.

Bhagavān said:

8-14a. This charming Vṛndāvana is just my unique abode where there are actually these beasts, trees, insects, men and gods, who stay near me. When they (will) die they (will) come to me. Those wives of the cowherds that live in my abode, are the female devotees. The gods (also) are devoted to me. This forest of mine, which is of a divine nature, is (having an area of) five yojanas. This Kālindī called Suṣumnā (the artery in the human body lying between Idā and Piṅgalā), is a great river of nectar; and in it gods and beings live in a subtle form. I have pervaded (the forest) on all sides, and I never leave it. In every yuga appearance and disappearance take place here. This place is full of lustre, and it is invisible to the physical eyes. In the yuga, see my secret, my prowess—the Vṛndāvana. It can never be seen by gods like Brahmā.

The lord said:

14b-16. Having heard that, Nārada saluted Kṛṣṇa and Brahmā, and came to the Miśraka Naimiṣa forest on the earth. There he was well-received by the best sages like Śaunaka; and they asked him: “O brāhmaṇa, tell us wherefrom you have come now.” Hearing that Nārada said: “Having heard the secret of Vṛndāvana from Kṛṣṇa’s lotus-like mouth, I have come from Goloka.”

Nārada said:

17-18. There repeatedly a number of questions were asked.

There I heard all the hymns and spells. I shall truly tell (you) those only according to the questions (asked by you).

Śaunaka and others said:

19. If you favour us, then tell us the secret of Vṛndāvana, which Brahmā told you.

Nārada said:

20-22a. Sometime, on the bank of Sarayū we saw Gautama who was wise, very unhappy and had his mind full of anxiety. Seeing me, the divine Gautama fell on the ground (i.e. prostrated himself before me). I said to him: “O child, O child, get up. If you like, tell me why you are called wise”.

Gautama said:

22b-24a. From your mouth (i.e. from you) only, I have heard the fact about Kṛṣṇa like that. (I have also heard) many times the secret called Dvārakā and Mathurā. But from your lotus-like mouth I have not heard the secret about Vṛndāvana, from (i.e. by hearing) which my mind will be steady, O good preceptor.

Nārada said:

24b-32a. This is a great secret, the secret of secrets. Formerly Brahmā told me that secret about Vṛndāvana (when I had said to him): “O lord of gods, O father, tell me the secret of Vṛndāvana.” Hearing this desire (of mine), he remained silent for a moment. Then he said to me: “O child, go to Mahā (i.e. great) Viṣṇu, my lord. Undoubtedly I must also go there with you.” Saying so, and taking me (with him) he went to the abode of Viṣṇu. He told Mahā Viṣṇu what I had said to him. Hearing that Mahā Viṣṇu himself ordered the self-born one (i.e. Brahmā). “By my order, you take the sage Nārada, and arrange for his bath in the lake called Amṛta.” Ordered by great Viṣṇu the self-born one acted like that with me. Having entered the Amṛta lake, I took bath there. Just at that moment I was (i.e. I found myself) near women, beyond (i.e. on the other side of) the lake. (I was) turned into a woman, endowed with all (good) characte-

ristics and was very much amazed. Seeing me coming, those (women) repeatedly asked (me):

The women said:

32b-35. Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Explain your conduct.

Listen to what I said on hearing their agreeable talk. “Where I have come from, who I am, how I have become a woman—all this appears like a dream. Am I confused on the earth?” Hearing those words of mine, the goddess spoke to me in a sweet sound: “This is the city by name Vṛndā, which is always dear to the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa; and I am the goddess Lalitā, gone beyond the fourth state and without parts (i.e. whole).”

36-39a. The great goddess, who was addressed like this, and whose mind was soft with pity, again said to me: “Come along with me.” All other women, devoted to Kṛṣṇa’s feet, said the same thing to me: “Come along with her.” O you who resemble gods, the fourteen-lettered hymn of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa—the noble one, and also of that goddess was then kindly narrated to me; and just at that moment, I got her resemblance.

39b-45. With them, (we) went where the eternal Kṛṣṇa remained. The lord, who was merely of the form of the Good, the Intelligence and the Joy, and of that of a woman, and whose heart was delighted due to the women, again and again said to me: “Come along O dear one, O beloved, embrace me devoutly.” O you best brāhmaṇa, there only he enjoyed (with me) for a year. Then that best lover said to that goddess Rādhikā: “This was my natural form there, which had taken the form of Nārada. Take her to the Amṛta lake, and arrange for her bath.” Then I spoke agreeable words to my lover. “I am Goddess Lalitā and that Rādhikā who is celebrated in songs. I am called Vāsudeva, who always is of the nature of the art of love. I am truly of a feminine form, and I am the ancient woman, and I am goddess Lalitā, and in a manly form I have Kṛṣṇa’s body.

46-53. O Nārada, there is no difference between us. This is the truth, the (only) truth. He, who knows, along with the (code of) conduct and convention, the fact and usual practices about

me, so also the hymn (sacred to me), is dear to me like Lalitā. This sacret (place) named Vṛndāvana, is my abode. This is to be disclosed at no place. It should never be told to a brute.” After that goddess Rādhikā took me to the lake, waited there, and went (back) near the feet of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa. Then immediately after plunging (into the lake) I came (back) as Nārada, having the lute in his hand, and repeatedly engaged in gladly singing that great secret. Having saluted the self-born (i.e. Brahmā), I went to Viṣṇu’s assembly. The self-born one saw that, but did not say anything at that time. O child, I have told you a great secret. You too have to guard carefully the (secret about the) unique, perfect abode of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, like (that of) the paramour of one’s mother. As I have told the agreeable (story) along with its secret to my dear disciple Gautama, in the same way I have narrated fully to you the great secret.

54-55. O brāhmaṇas, if sometime it would be disclosed wheresoever, then certainly there would be a curse from the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, O best sages.

He, who would read or listen to this excellent chapter full of the sports of Kṛṣṇa goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The Greatness of Kṛṣṇa

The lord said:

1-3. Here, hearing that Śiśupāla was killed, Dantavakra came to Mathurā to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that Kṛṣṇa got into a chariot and came with him to Mathurā. Then he killed him, and having crossed Yamunā, and having gone to Nanda’s abode, he saluted his parents and consoled them. He was embraced by them. He embraced all the old cowherds, consoled them, and pleased all living there by (giving them) many garments and ornaments.

4-6. On the charming sand-bank of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā), crowded with auspicious trees, he, day and night enjoying sports with the cowherdesses, lived for three nights. In that region, all people like the cowherd Nanda, with their sons and wives, so also beasts, birds and animals, having divine forms, got into an aeroplane and reached the highest place—Vaikuṇṭha. And Śrīkṛṣṇa, having given all the residents of Nanda's cow-pen his own infallible place, and being praised by hosts of gods, entered the glorious Dvārāvati.

7-9. There he was everyday worshipped by Vāsudeva, Ugrasena, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Akrūra etc. He of an omnipresent form, enjoyed on very soft beds, strewn with flowers of the divine trees in the divine, jewelled bowers of creepers, with his queens numbering sixteen thousand and eight. Thus, for the welfare of the gods, for destroying the entire burden of the earth, he descended in the Yadu family, and having destroyed all the demons (and thus) having destroyed the great burden on the earth, having released the immobile and mobile living in Nanda's abode and at Dvārikā from the bondage of the worldly existence, he established them in his great, eternal, charming abode meditated upon by the meditating saints. Being always waited upon by divine queens etc. Vāsudeva said to all: "Brahman was unseparated like (the particles of) hail and ghee. Freed from the constituents (of the Primordial Matter), he, living in the Prakṛti (the Primordial Matter), melted and went to heaven."

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

A Description of Kṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1-2. Tell me in detail the importance of the meaning and the words of the hymn; so also (tell me) the nature of the god, and (about) the splendour of his places. O lord of gods, (tell

me) all (about) the great abode of Viṣṇu and Hari's (i.e. Viṣṇu's) different modes called eternal bliss.

The lord said:

3-6a. In the excellent Vṛndāvana (one sees) Kṛṣṇa surrounded by crores of cowherdesses. Gaṅgā is a great power there. The Ānandakānana is (also) there. It is made fragrant by fragrant breezes (blowing) over many good flowers. It is cool and has the colour of the divine ripples of the daughter of Kalinda (i.e. Yamunā). It has come in contact with the best sages—the devotees of the lord like Sanaka etc. It is adorned with flocks of cows, bellowing joyfully and sweetly. It is covered with boys having charming garlands and ornaments and dancing.

6b-13a. There is a glorious desire-yielding tree, covered with gold. It is rich with many gems and corals. It is bright with many gem-like fruits. At its root is a jewelled altar. It is brightened by the rays of jewels. There (i.e. on it) is an excellent golden throne made of the triad (of the Vedas); (one can see there) the lord of the world who is seated there, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. beyond Prakṛti), who is immutable, who resembles a crore of moons, who is bright like a crore of suns, whose handsomeness is like that of a crore of Cupids, who illumines the ten quarters, who has three eyes, two hands, who is fair and bright like heated gold, who is always embraced by beautiful women, who is always everywhere respected, who is meditated upon and influenced by Brahmā and others and Sanaka and others, who is always surrounded by crores and crores of scriptures that have obtained the bodies of cowherdesses repeatedly kissing him, embracing him and laughing, and with their hearts set upon the spirituous liquor (coming) from his lotus-like feet.

13b-18. That goddess who among them is bright like heated gold, who brightens up all directions and makes them bright as (with) lightning, is the Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), who has pervaded all this. She is of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. She is beyond knowledge, ignorance and the triad (of Vedas). She is of (his) natural form, is of the nature of power, of the nature of illusion (Māyā) and is full of intelligence. She brings about the cause of the bodies of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The entire mobile and immobile world is grasped by illusion. Due to her similarity with Viṣṇu, Rādhā is called Vṛndāvaneś-vari. A man should meditate like this, upon him, god Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, who remains embracing her, who is shaking due to the influence of passion for kissing and embracing. He would obtain success.

19-21. That noble one, who knows this best hymn, hymn of (i.e. sacred to) him, and mutters or listens to it, is very difficult to find. (There are) Rādhikā, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Śrīpriyā, Śrīmadhumatī, Śaśirekhā, Haripriyā, beautiful like gold, deluding and shining with horripilation due to love, having paleness and perspiration, attached due to love, talking agreeably. (Then there are) Suvarṇamālinī, Śāntā, Surasā and Rasikā.

22-23. She who leads the full life of a woman, who is affectionate to the helpless, who is of a pure heart, who has fully drunk the nectar of (Kṛṣṇa's) name, is called Rādhā. Rādhā is endowed with a prolonged smile, has the lustre of heated gold, is the river of surging love, a choice collyrium for (better) view.

24a. She who possesses pity and envy, who lives in the empire of charity, who indulges in the joyful battle of copulation, is called Citrarekhā.

24b-27a. She whose body is fair, who is not very tall, who is always engaged in instrumental music, who gesticulates helplessness, who is overcome by swoon and horripilation, who remains on the right side of Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), to whom all hymns are dear, who possesses sweetness due to desire for love (-making), is called Candrā.

27b-30a. She whose gait is sportive and slow, who has charmingly closed her eyes, who is bright and full of the stream of love, who looks charming due to expanded collyrium, who is interested in Kṛṣṇa's love, who is eager for the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, who possesses egotism, who has condemned the moon with her face, who is clever in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have curbed their senses, who is endowed with a charming smile, is Madanasundarī.

30b-31. She who is interested in the faultless dance of Kṛṣṇa, who is dark (yet) charming, who attracts Hari's heart through love and affectionate glance, who has conquered her senses, who has curbed her anger, is called Priyā.

32-34a. She whose body is fair like well-heated gold, who has a sportive gait and is beautiful, whose figure is sweet due to the strikingness of the love caused by Cupid and horripilation, whose face endowed with a charming smile has put down the moon, who is skilled in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have restrained their senses, and who is intent upon the fulfilment of love, is Madhumatī.

34b-40a. She who is endowed with the fever of delusion, horripilation and stream of love, who diverts herself with charity (looking upon it as insignificant) as dust, who is a great dancer following the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, and who is always Kṛṣṇa's beloved, is Śaśirekhā. She is Kṛṣṇa's soul. She is excellent, is dark, has lovely and tawny eyes. She is fascinated by the love for his feet; sometimes she is touched by horripilation. At Śivakuṇḍa she is Śivānandā; on the bank of Dehikā she is Nandinī. She is Rukmiṇī at Dvārāvātī; and in the Vṛndāvana-grove she is Rādhā. This goddess of mine has become Devakī at Mathurā; similarly at Citrakūṭa she is Sītā. On the Vindhya (mountain) she is Vindhyanivāsini. At Vārāṇasī she is Viśālākṣī; and in (i.e. with) Viṣṇu she is Vimalā. Kṛṣṇa who graced her, gave her the rule over Vṛndāvana. At other places she is the goddess and is Rādhā in the Vṛndāvana-grove. Kṛṣṇa has always a happy body, who is called bodiless.

40b-48a. He having Kṛṣṇa's body is described as the superintending deity of Air, Fire, Sky (i.e. Ether) and Earth, so also of Brahmā. Though the sun is powerful, yet is not designated with power; in the same way Kṛṣṇa endowed with brilliance, certainly deludes time. He does not have a material form, produced from marrow, flesh or bones. He possesses a wonderful power, is another lord, and having an eternal body, is the soul of all. Hardness is accidental as in the case of (particles of) hail and ghee. The surface of the foot of Kṛṣṇa of unlimited primary substance is not a deity (*obscure!*). In the mass of dust in Vṛndāvana, there are crores of Viṣṇus. In Ānandakiraṇa, the Moon of the universe (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is surrounded by a group. The souls are parts of his rays as the nature of constituents is present in the soul. Kṛṣṇa is surrounded by (i.e. having) two arms. He never has four arms. There, surrounded by a cowherdess, he always sports. Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) alone is a man; Brahmā and

others are women only. From that nature appears. This lord is a mode of nature.

48b-51. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are the first Prakṛti and Puruṣa. Except the lord of Vṛndāvana, everything is the product of Prakṛti. Due to their appearance, this world appears, and breaks on their disappearance. As gold does not perish (even though its products may perish), so Kṛṣṇa does not fall even if (his incarnation like) Matsya perishes. This expanse of the three constituents (guṇas) (i.e. the mundane existence) is the expanse of him who sports in Vṛndāvana. The ripple of an ocean turns into a wave; but the ocean is not (newly) produced.

52-55. There is no woman resembling Rādhikā, and no man resembling Kṛṣṇa. There is no (better) age than adolescence; that is the great innate disposition of Prakṛti. Adolescence should be thought upon. Vṛndāvana-grove should be thought upon. The greatest form is (that of) Śyāma, and the greatest delight is the first god. Childhood lasts up to the fifth year. Boyhood is up to the tenth year. Adolescence lasts for eight and five years. The limit (of it) is the fifteenth year. Adolescence, springing up from youth (*yauvana*) is called fresh youth (*navayauvana*). That age is his all-in-all; other age (than that) is unreal (*prapañca*).

56-62. I salute the charming childhood, boyhood and adolescence. I salute the young cowherd Kṛṣṇa who is of the form of Cupid-like cowherd, who is the cowherd-Cupid, of the nature of an adolescent and is wonderful, and whom they call the Cupid-enticer, whose youth has just broken up (i.e. set in), who is the great ocean of continuous, matchless nectar-like joy. The lord of Śrī is victorious. The body of him having the form of youth is hidden. Men of different minds, according to the difference in their likings, see him who is one only, immutable, ancient, who is to be known through meditation in the group of the cowherdesses. I salute him, the lustre of whose nails is Brahmā, who is meditated upon by gods like Brahmā, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. Prakṛti), who is the lord of Vṛndāvana. Govinda never leaves Vṛndāvana. His body elsewhere is artificial. There is no doubt about it. I worship that Nanda's son who is easily accessible to the women in Vraja, but

difficult to be reached by those who desire salvation. The hymn is the great lustre of his nails.

Pārvatī said:

63. As long as the female imp in the form of the desire for salvation or enjoyment is present in the heart, how can, till then, the delight of love rise there?

The lord said:

64-65. O good one, you have asked well. I shall tell all that there is in my mind. Listen attentively. (A devotee) remembers his virtues, his name, songs pleasing the mind; enlightens himself, and always is merged in (his) love.*

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Worship Prescribed for a Devotee of Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1. Tell me the correct way of life of the followers of Viṣṇu, practising which all men will cross the ocean of worldly existence.

The lord said:

2-9. Here the purification of the devotees of Viṣṇu is said to be in twelve ways: Smearing the house, similarly approaching Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), going round (his idol) with devotion, (lead to) purification of the feet. Taking leaves and flowers with devotion only for the worship of Hari (leads to the purification) of the hands. This purification is the most important of all purifications. Narration of the names, so also of the virtues of god Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, is said to cause the purification of speech. Listening to his account, and witnessing his festival—this is said (to lead to) the proper purification of the ears and eyes. Putting on one's head the water (used for washing the idol's) feet, the flowers that had been offered (to the idol), and the garlands (offered to

*Some verses of this charter like 41, 44ff. are not quite clear. Some, e.g. 52b ff. seem to be irrelevant.

the deity) is said to cause the purification of the head of him who has bowed down before Hari. O dear one, smelling the flowers etc. offered to him (leads to) the purification of the heart, and it is laid down as causing the purification of the nose also. That (place) alone, where there are flowers (and other objects) offered at the couple of feet of Kṛṣṇa, is purifying in the world, and that (alone) would purify everything.

10-11. Worship (of Kṛṣṇa) is said to be of five kinds. Listen from me (i.e. as I tell) the difference in them. I shall, in proper order, describe to you the worship of five kinds, viz. *Abhigamana*, *Upādāna*, *Yoga*, *Svādhyāya* and *Ijyā*. The real approach (to the deity consists in) cleansing the place of the deity, smearing it and removing the flowers that were offered to it.

12a. *Upādāna* (i.e. acquisition) is the collection of sandal, flowers etc.

12b. *Yoga* (i.e. union) is the thought that the deity of one (i.e. worshipped by one) is oneself (only).

13-14a. *Svādhyāya* (i.e. self-study) consists in muttering (the deity's name) with the scrutiny of the meaning of the hymn, reciting Vedic hymns and hymns of praise (of a deity), so also the narration of (the virtues etc. of) Hari. *Svādhyāya* is also said to be study of branches of knowledge about the (final) truth etc.

14b-16a. *Ijyā* (i.e. worship) is properly worshipping one's deity. O you of a good vow, I have thus told you the worship of five kinds. According to the occasion I shall in due order tell you about (the worship) that gives equality with the deity, nearness of the deity, residence in the same heaven with the deity, intimate union with the deity, and assimilation to the deity. (I shall also tell you about) the worship of the Śālagrāma stone.

16b-27. In the hands of Keśava having four hands, are held, in order, a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus beginning with the right hand, then the upper hand (etc.). The mace-holder is called Keśava. Nārāyaṇa is he who in due order holds the weapons viz. a lotus, a mace, a disc and a conch. Mādhava would be (he who holds), in order, a disc, a conch, a lotus and a mace (in his hands beginning with the right hand, then the

upper one...). The mace-holder called Govinda holds a mace, a lotus, a conch and a disc. My salutation to you, of the form of Viṣṇu, holding a lotus, a conch, a disc and a mace. My salutation (to you) of the form of Madhusūdana, possessing a conch, a lotus, a mace and a disc. My salutation to Trivikrama having a mace, a disc, a conch and a lotus. My salutation (to you) of the form of Vāmana having a disc, the Kaumodakī (mace), a lotus and a conch. My salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīdhara, having a disc, a lotus, a conch and a mace. Salutation to you, O Hṛṣikeśa, having a disc, a mace, a conch and a lotus. Salutation to your own form of Padmanābha, having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to Saṁkarṣaṇa, having a conch, a lotus, a disc and a mace. O Vāsudeva, salutation to you having a disc, a conch, a mace and a lotus. Salutation to him who has taken the form of Pradyumna, having a conch, a disc, a mace, and a lotus. Salutation to the form of Puruṣottama having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to (you having) the form of Adhokṣaja having a mace, a conch, a disc and a lotus. Salutation (to you) of the form of Nṛsiṁha holding a lotus, a mace, a conch and a disc. Salutation (to you) of the form of Acyuta having a lotus, a disc, a conch and a mace. Salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīkṣṇa having a mace, a lotus, a disc and a conch.

28-43. That is god Śrī Gadādhara who is present in the aperture of Śālagrāma stone, who holds two discs, who has white lines and who is rich in beauty. That is Puṣkala, the forepart, with two discs present and of a red lustre. There is Saṁkarṣaṇa, so also is Pradyumna. The one having small discs is Pītaka. The round one that is having a long hollow and holes is Aniruddha. The dark one, dark-blue at the aperture and having three lines, is Nārāyaṇa. Nṛsiṁha is the one having the lines of the form of a mace, and having a very tall navel-lotus; he has a big disc. One having three dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots should be worshipped by a celibate. That is Varāha that has three marks and two uneven circles. Nīlā has three lines, is having dots, and is big. That is the form of the tortoise. The dark one having circles and eddies, is whitish and

has the backside preserved. Śrīdhara has five lines. Vanamālin is marked with a mace. Vāmana is round; one having a disc in the centre is Nīlaka. Anantaka is the one that has many colours, many forms and the hood of a serpent. Dark and corpulent is Dāmodara. The one having a circle in the centre is Nīlaka. May he, of a contracting aperture, protect (me). So also Brahmā, the very red one. The one having a very long line is Suśīra; Pṛthu is the one having a disc and a lotus. Kṛṣṇa has a big disc and a large hole. Bindumān has a dot. Hayagrīva has the form of a goad. One having five lines is Kaustubha. Vaikuṇṭha shines spotless. The black one, having one disc, is like the shape of a long lotus, is having a long lotus, is having a long line, and whitish is Matsya. Rāmacandra has vertical lines. That one that is dark, is Trivikrama. Salvation to him, staying in the Śālagrāma-Dvārakā, who, marked with one, and having a mace and looking charming, should protect (me). With two (are formed) Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa; with three Trivikrama. With four, the four modes. With five, Vāsudeva (is formed). May Pradyumna, with six, and Saṁkarṣaṇa with seven, protect (me). Puruṣottama would be (formed) with eight; the one with nine modes is placed as new. May Anirundha, having the ten incarnations and with ten, protect (me). The one with twelve souls, with twelve (may protect me). Anantaka has more than this (number). Brahmā has four faces, a staff, a water-pitcher and a garland and is tall. Maheśvara has five faces, ten arms and is bull-bannered, and has respective weapons.

44. The mother are Gaurī, Caṇḍikā, Sarasvatī and Mahālakṣmī. Divākara has a lotus in his hand.

45-46. The attendants like Gajāśya, Gajaskandha, Ṣaṇmukha are of many kinds. They are there, or are installed and if they are worshipped in a palace, a man obtains *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

*Do's and Don't's for a Devotee of Viṣṇu**The lord said:*

1-2. Not only in the house (but everywhere) the worship of Hari should be done everyday on the Śālagrāma, a gem, a mystical diagram or images. In one region of Gaṇḍakī there is a great place of Śālagrāma (i.e. where Śālagrāma stones are found). May the stone found there protect. This is the case.

3-5a. By the touch of the Śālagrāma stone, the destruction of sins committed during crores of existences takes place. Then (what can be said) about Viṣṇu's worship there? It is the cause of (being in) the vicinity of Hari. One would obtain the fruit of worshipping a hundred liṅgas. If one would obtain a black stone (i.e. Śālagrāma) having a mark of a cow's foot, as a result of religious merit of many existences, then (the mission of) one's life is accomplished.

5b-11. First one should examine a glossy, excellent, black stone. One that is slightly black is said to be mediocre. A mixed one always gives a mixed fruit. As the fire always present in wood is manifested by friction, in the same way the (all-)pervading Hari is felt in a Śālagrāma. He who everyday would worship twelve Śālagrāma stones from Dvāravatī, is honoured in Vaikuṇṭha. (If) a man observes an aperture on the Śālagrāma stone, his dead ancestors live contentedly in heaven till the end of the world. There is the residence in the form of Vaikuṇṭha, where there is the Dvāravatī stone. A man dying (here) goes to the city of Viṣṇu. That sacred place spreads over three yojanas. Everything (like) muttering, worship, sacrifice (performed there) would be crorefold meritorious. Over the area of one krośa, whatever is desired (is obtained). There is no doubt about this, since, even an insect dying here goes to Vaikuṇṭha.

12-15. The man who fixes a price on the Śālagrāma stone, so also who sells it, and he who gives consent (to the deal), so also he who sanctions its examination—all these go to hell till the sun (shines in the sky) and till deluge. Therefore, O respectable lady, one should avoid the purchase and sale of the

(Śālāgrāma with a) disc. There is no doubt that salvation takes place there where there is the union of the deity in Śālāgrāma and the one born in Dvārakā. The one produced in Dvārakā, endowed with a disc, marked with many discs of the shape of a stone having a round seat, is of the form of Brahman and unstained.

16-21a. Salutation to (you) of the form of Omkāra and of the form of constant joy; O glorious Śālāgrāma, favour me, (your) devotee, who desires your grace and is stricken by death. Hereafter I shall gladly tell you the manner (in which) the dot (or mark is put), hearing which all men would obtain assimilation to Viṣṇu. (A man) should have Keśava (i.e. take Keśava to be present) in the forehead, Śrī Puruṣottama in the neck, god Nārāyaṇa in the navel, Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the heart, Dāmodara in the left side, and Trivikrama in the right, Hṛṣīkeśa in the head, and Padmanābha at the back, Yamunā and Gaṅgā in the ears, and Kṛṣṇa and Hari in the arms. (These) twelve deities are said to be pleased in their respective places.

21b-25. When a dot (i.e. a mark) is put he should recite these names. He, with all his sins purified, goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. He, even though he is a cāṇḍāla, on whose forehead an upright line is seen, is of a pure heart, and deserves to be honoured. There is no doubt about it. One should not look at a man on whose forehead an upright mark is not seen; (and) on seeing him one should look at the Sun. On seeing or touching a brāhmaṇa on whose forehead a mark with three lines or an upright mark is not seen, one should bathe with one's clothes on. One should put a mark of the form of Viṣṇu's foot, keeping space between (the toes).

26. On the head of that mean brāhmaṇa who would not put an upright mark, there is always the foot of a dog (placed on it). There is no doubt about this.

27-29. One should know that a very auspicious upright mark starting from the nose and ending with the hair, and having a hole (i.e. space) in between, is the temple of Viṣṇu. One should know that Brahmā has settled on the left side, Sadāśiva on the right, and Viṣṇu in the middle. Therefore, one should not besmear (i.e. cover) the middle (part). The glorious one who, after

looking into a mirror or into water puts the upright mark, goes to the highest position.

30-33a. Fire, Water, the Vedas, and the Moon and the Sun, so also Wind, always remain in the right ear of a brāhmaṇa. Gaṅgā also remains in the right ear, and Fire in the nose. By touching both (these), one is purified at that moment only. Having put water in a conch and having mixed it with Tulasī, one should give it to the noble devotees of Viṣṇu, drink it, and salute (them) with the head (bent down). One should drink it and sprinkle one's body, one's son, friend and wife with it.

33b-36a. The water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, when drunk, destroys sins (committed) in crores of existences. The sin becomes eightfold on dropping (even) a drop on the ground. He who, holding a conch full of water in his hand, praises (the deity) and goes round (it), always holds the water, has obtained the fruit of his existence. He in whose house there is neither a conch nor a bell with the (form of the) eagle on it before (the image of) Vāsudeva, is not a follower of the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the Kali age.

36b-45. (Going) to the lord's temple in vehicles, or with sandals on, or drinking spirituous liquor there, not (offering) service in the festivals of the deity, not saluting before (the image of) him, or saluting the lord with the remains of food on the hands etc. not washed, or when impure, saluting the lord with (only) one hand, or spreading the feet before him towards the south, or enjoying a bed before him, or lying (in front of him), or eating, or telling lies, or talking loudly, or talking to one another, crying and quarrelling, curbing or favouring, talking cruelly to women, covering with one garment (only), censuring or praising others, speaking obscene words, breaking wind, behaving badly with an inferior because of having power, eating without (first) offering (the food) to the deity, not offering (to the deity) fruits etc. produced during the season, giving the remains after use of a seasoned article etc., eating (food) after making it distinctly visible, censuring and praising others, keeping mum before the preceptor (i.e. not talking to him), praising himself, censuring deities—these are said to be thirtytwo offences against Viṣṇu: "O Madhusūdana, day and night I commit thousands of offences. Thinking me to be yours, forgive me."

46-47. Uttering this prayer he should salute (the deity prostrating) on the ground like a staff. Hari always forgives thousands of offences. Similarly the brāhmaṇas should eat in the evening and in the morning whatever food is left over by Viṣṇu's devotee. (Such a person) is freed from the sins committed during the day.

48-57a. Uttering me (i.e. my i.e. Śiva's name) and thinking 'food is Brahmā, and sauce is Viṣṇu', he who eats (food) is never covered by the faults of the food. A man who is a devotee of Viṣṇu should not eat a round bottle-gourd, masura-beans with their skin on, the white nut of the palmyra tree, egg-plant; (similarly) a man who is Viṣṇu's devotee should not eat on the leaves of a bunyan tree, aśvattha or arka tree, or a kovidāra or kadamba. In (the month of) Śrāvaṇa he should avoid vegetables; he should forgo curd in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina he should avoid milk and should give up (eating) flesh in Kārtika. (He should) also (avoid) burnt food, citron, and whatever is not offered to Viṣṇu, so also common citron, vegetables and visible salt. If by chance he would eat (any one of these), he should remember his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) name. Haimantika (a kind of rice), grains anointed with sugar, mudga sesamum, barley, kalāpaka (a kind of grass), kaṅgu, wild rice, vegetable, Enhydra Hingcha, kāla vegetable, vāstūka (a kind of vegetable), radish other than red, rock-salt and ocean-salt, curd and ghee obtained from a cow, milk from which water is not taken out, jack-fruit, green vegetable, Piper Longum, cumin-seeds, so also oranges and tamarind, plantain, lavalī (a kind of creeper), Dhātrī, jaggery from any other object than sugarcane, that (food) which is not cooked in oil—the sages describe these as food for offering.

57b-59a. One should know even him who has flowers along with Tulasī-leaves etc., to be Viṣṇu. This is the truth (and) truth (only). There is no doubt about it. By planting Dhātrī-tree a man would be equal to Viṣṇu. One should know that the area round about it to the extent of three hundred cubits is Kurukṣetra.

59b-65. Having put round his neck a garland made with (pieces of) Tulasī-wood having the shape of rudrākṣa, a man should start the worship (of Viṣṇu). Similarly, the worshipper of Viṣṇu should carefully wear round his neck a garland of

āmalakas, or a good garland of lotuses, or that of kadamba-flowers; he should also put on his head flowers taken off after being offered (to Viṣṇu) and Tulasī-mālā. He should mark his body with flowers Taken off after being offered and sandal, with (the accompaniment of) his epithets. He should put (the mark of) a mace on his forehead, and (the marks of) a bow and an arrow. On the chest (he should put the mark of) the Nandaka (sword), and (the marks of) a conch and a disc on both the arms. If a brāhmaṇa endowed with (the marks) of a conch and a disc dies on the cremation ground, he certainly gets the same (highest) position which is said (to be obtained by dying) at Prayāga. He who being devoted to Viṣṇu, puts a Tulasī-leaf on his head, performs all his deeds, obtains an inexhaustible fruit.

66-68. The rites performed in honour of the dead ancestors and deities by one decorated with Tulasī-garlands, become a crorefold meritorious. The sin of that man who devoutly wears a garland made of Tulasī-wood, after offering it to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), perishes. Having worshipped (Viṣṇu) with water for washing the feet etc. he should utter this prayer: “Salutation to that Tulasī which, when seen, destroys the multitude of all sins; which, when touched, purifies the body; which, when saluted, removes diseases; which, when sprinkled, frightens Yama; which, when planted, bestows the vicinity of lord Kṛṣṇa; (and) when placed at his feet, gives the fruit (in the form) of salvation.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Monthwise Rites Prescribed for a Viṣṇu Devotee

Pārvati said:

1-2a. Then, how does (a man) survive, when the terrible Kali age, full of the alligators in the form of objects of senses, and having the distress in the form of a son, a wife and wealth,

has arrived, O lord? O great god, O treasure of kindness, tell the remedy for it.

The lord said:

2b-8. Kali does not harass them who always utter the name of Hari and Hari only, or the auspicious (utterance) 'Hare Rāma, Hare Kṛṣṇa' or 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. Doing (his) deeds one after another, a man should remember (Viṣṇu's) epithets. He repeatedly says, 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. He should also use your name and my name with inversion. He too would be free from sin as fire (goes away) from a heap of cotton. He who mutters my auspicious name with your name as 'Victory to the First One', or preceded by the word 'Śrī', is freed from the worldly existence. He should remember it by day, at night, in the evening—at all times. He, remembering Rāma day and night, sees Kṛṣṇa with his eyes. He being pure or impure, just by remembering always and at all times, (Viṣṇu's) name, is, just at that moment, freed from the worldly existence.

9-12. (Uttering) the name removes the sin of even him who is having many offences. In the Kali age a sacrifice, a vow, penance or charity is not complete in all parts. This couple—bath in Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu's name—is free from evil. O auspicious lady, horrible thousand sins connected with killing, (sin due to) cohabiting with crores of wives of preceptors, thefts and other (sins) do not take place due to the name 'Govinda' dear to Hari. He who is impure or pure or who is reduced to every condition, who remembers (Viṣṇu) of lotus-like eyes, is pure from within and without.

13-20a. By remembering his name or by reflecting on his feet he should start worshipping him by fashioning his image with gold, silver, flour or of the shape of a garland marked with his feet. He bears (the mark of) a disc at the root of his right thumb. He causes the end of the worldly existence of the man who bows there. Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu) bears a very beautiful mark of a lotus at the root of the middle finger, which attracts the bees in the form of the hearts of those who meditate (upon Viṣṇu).| Below the lotus he bears (the mark of) a flag, which is the victory-flag of all calamities. At the root of the small finger is the mark (like a diamond-pin) that breaks (i.e. destroys) the

stream of the sins of a devotee. In the side is a goad, the cause of joy in the devotee's heart. At the joint of the thumb he bears (the mark of) a barley-corn which is full of pleasures and riches. At the root (of the thumb) there is (the mark of) a mace breaking the mountain of sins of all men. The unborn lord also bears marks like lotuses etc. on the right (foot) to illumine all knowledge. The treasure of kindness would stand on the left foot and has (these marks).

20b-40a. Therefore, he who would always listen to or narrate the greatness of Govinda, which is charming due to the relish of joy, is fully free. There is no doubt about it. I shall (now) tell the rites (to be performed) in (different) months, which give delight to Viṣṇu. In Jyeṣṭha, one, being pure, should carefully bathe Śrī Viṣṇu. On the full-moon day (when this is done), daily sins, sins committed during the fortnight, the month, the season and the year, so also thousands (of sins like) killing a brāhmaṇa, those committed knowingly or unknowingly, (sins like) stealing gold, drinking liquor, violating the teacher's bed (i.e. wife), so also thousands of crores of minor sins—all these perish. One should sprinkle (the idol of) Acyuta on (its) head with water from a pitcher to the accompaniment of the hymn (called) *Puruṣasūkta* or (the group called) *Pāva-mānī* hymns. (Or one should sprinkle the idol) with coconut water, or water from the tāla fruit, or fragrant water with gems put into it or water offered with flowers. Having propitiated (Viṣṇu) with the five articles of worship, according to (one's) expanse of wealth, one should offer the musical instrument viz. bell, saying, 'Gham, salutation to Ghaṇṭā'. 'I am fallen into the heat of sins put along the great path'. 'Protect me, a sinner—falling into the ocean of the terrible mundane existence'. A learned brāhmaṇa, pure and wise, who does like this, is freed from all sins, and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. One should celebrate the great festival of (Viṣṇu's going to) sleep on the eleventh day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha. In Āṣāḍha one should take out (Viṣṇu's) chariot (in procession). In Śrāvaṇa one should perform the ceremony called Śrāvaṇa-vidhi (performed on the full-moon day). He should be intent on a fast on (Viṣṇu's) birthday in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina, one should perform the ceremony of (Viṣṇu's) turning to another side. One

should (also) perform (the ceremony of) Śrī Hari's getting up. Otherwise he will be a traitor to Viṣṇu. In the auspicious Āśvina month one should worship the golden or silver (idol of) Mahāmāyā of the form of Viṣṇu, without making an oblation. A religious-minded worshipper of Viṣṇu should not indulge in killing or hating (anyone). In the months of Kārtika and Pauṣa one should perform (deeds of) religious merit according to his desire. One should also offer a lamp (kept) on a high place to Dāmodara. The lamp should be of the size of four fingers and should have seven wicks. At the end of the fortnight one should arrange an auspicious row of lamps. In the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, on the sixth day, one should, with (i.e. having put on) white garments, worship the lord of the world, particularly Brahmā. In Pauṣa one should sprinkle (water over the idol) with flowers. One should avoid loose sandal(-paste). On the Saṁkrānti day and in the month of Māgha one should make an offering of food made from fragrant rice to Viṣṇu, and should recite this prayer. One should also feed brāhmaṇas residing in the city of the god of gods. One should (also) honour Viṣṇu's devotees and brāhmaṇas looking upon them as the lord. When one devotee is fed, a crore of them are fed. Merely by feeding brāhmaṇas a deficient (deed) certainly becomes complete.

40b-45a. On the fifth day in the bright fortnight one should bathe (the idol of) Keśava, worship it duly with fruits and powders, along with young leaves of mango trees, and with fine, fragrant garments. The house should be (rendered) charming, should be bright and illumined with lights. It should have grapes, sugarcane, plantain-trees, jambīra, nāgaraṅga, nut-trees, coconuts, dhātrī, jackfruits, and green vegetables. (It should be decorated) with portions of other trees, with flowers of all seasons, with other various fruits and flowers, with canopies, with abundant flowers and pitchers full of water, with branches and twigs of mango-trees and with umbrellas and chowries.

45b-57a. The festival of the swing is laid down after remembering (Kṛṣṇa) with the words 'Victory to Kṛṣṇa' and after going round (the idol)—especially in the Kali age (it is celebrated) on the fourteenth day in Phālguna (at the time) called Yāma. Or one should devoutly and duly worship (the idol) with four kinds

of powders of figs on the full-moon day on the first day at a time called sandhi. One should please the highest lord with white and red (articles), white and yellow (articles), and (articles) mixed with camphor etc.; so also with (articles) having lovely colour and form due to the colour of turmeric. Or one should please the highest lord with (articles) having other colours and forms. One should start (the festival) on the eleventh day and finish it on the fifth day. The swing-festival is laid down (to last for) five days or three days. Men, seeing Kṛṣṇa facing the south and swinging, get free from heaps of sins. There is no doubt about it. A man should, in the month of Caitra, put the deity rising from (i.e. present in) Śālagrāma, in a pot containing water or in a golden, silver, copper or earthen vessel and should worship him while (the idol) is in water. Or, O magnanimous one, he should worship his image. His religious merit cannot be measured. Having planted the damana (tree), he should offer (the leaves of) it to Śrī Viṣṇu. He should offer it in Vaiśākha or Śrāvaṇa or Bhādrapada. While offering damana etc. he should do so in the foremost sheltered place; otherwise it is fruitless. On the third day of Vaiśākha he should get fashioned (the idol of Viṣṇu) especially in water or in a circle or in a pavilion in a big grove. Day by day he should nourish it well with fragrant sandal. With care as he can bestow, he should do it, which gives nourishment.

57b-66. They recognise these things to be Viṣṇu's Gandhāṣṭaka 'eight fragrances'—sandal, agaru (a kind of sandal), hrībera, black saffron, rocanā (a kind of yellow pigment), jaṭāmāmsī (a kind of black pigment), murā. With these particular (articles) he should smear the body (i.e. the idol) of Viṣṇu. Rubbed Tulasi-wood with camphor and agaru or used with filaments of flowers is called haricandana. The men who, at the time of pilgrimage, see Kṛṣṇa (i.e. his idol) with devotion, are not reborn even after hundreds of crores of kalpas, (so also those) who put (i.e. bathe the idol with) water mixed with fragrant articles. Or having gone to Vṛndāvana, having put in the midst of flowers (the idol of) the lord of the world, and having decorated (it), he should make a worthy devotee of Viṣṇu enjoy (all) that fully. He should pluck a coconut or the seed-vessel of a lotus and offer it (to the deity), so also jujube fruit, bread-fruit, after removing the cover.

He should also cause to be offered food mixed with curd, after dipping it into ghee. He should also cause to be offered cooked flour, cake with ghee, so also ripe fruit with oil mixed with sesamum (-seeds). He should give whatever is dear to himself. Having offered (an article) he should never take it back; especially that which is intended for Viṣṇu and given to his devotees.

67-69. O Mahesvarī, O Pārvatī, I have told you something in brief. You should protect it like your own vulva. When there is this section (giving) instruction in the class of sacred texts describing the form and virtues of Śrīkṛṣṇa, enough of other texts. When the (devotee's) mind is (fixed) on the necklace of love (for him), interest (in him), devotion (to him) and his sports and names, what is the use of beautiful women? With heart worship that lord of the children in Vraja, the ground of Vṛndāvana, water of Yamunā; a body smeared with dust of the lotus-like feet of the lord of the world (is better than one smeared with) agaru, sandal etc. which are indeed vain.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Mantracintāmaṇi for Devotees of Kṛṣṇa

The sages said:

1-3. O Sūta, O good one, live long. You have disclosed the nectar of the deeds of Śrīkṛṣṇa, which emancipates all devotees from the mundane existence. O lord, tell (us) all the daily sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa, on hearing which devotion to Kṛṣṇa increases, O good man. O glorious one, tell us separately the application and characteristic of the prayer of the teacher and the disciple; for, you are our great friend.

Sūta said:

4. Once Nārada saluted and said to the lord of the world, the god of gods, Sadāśiva, seated on the bank of Yamunā.

Nārada said:

5-10. O god of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O lord of the world, O you who know the truth about the characteristics of the lord, O you best among those who know the prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, I secured great prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa from you and from my father. Those best prayers and others have been properly learnt by me eating vegetables, roots and fruits for many thousand years, subsisting on dry leaves, water, air etc. or (sometimes) not eating (at all), avoiding looking at and talking to women, conquering the six qualities like lust, curbing the external organs. Even though this was done, O Śaṅkara, my mind was not pleased. Therefore, O lord, tell me that which would succeed even without purificatory rites etc., and which gives an excellent fruit just by uttering it even once. O lord of gods, if (you think) I am fit, then please tell it to me.

Śiva said:

11-16. O glorious one, you, desiring the welfare of the world, have asked well. I shall tell you the prayer—the gem yielding all desires, though it is to be well (i.e. carefully) protected. This is the secret of secrets and the excellent secret of secrets. I have never before told it to the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) nor to your elder brothers. I shall tell you the excellent pair of prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa. The pair is called *Mantracintāmaṇi*—the desire-yielding gem. There are alternatives to this prayer—so also the five-syllabled (prayer). Beginning with (the words) ‘Gopījana’ and ending with ‘Vallabha’ and ‘I seek the refuge’—This is the five-lettered (prayer). The great prayer of sixteen letters is called the *Mantracintāmaṇi*. Saying ‘Gopījana’ first, he should then say ‘Vallabhābhyām’. The prayer having two lines is said to be (having) ten letters.

17-22. Having internally repeated with or without faith, (just) once, he would go to the proximity of those dear to Kṛṣṇa. There is no doubt about this. For him there is no (need for) the consideration for an initiatory rite, no (need for) the order of rite of nyāsa, no restriction about place or time, no requital of an enemy or a friend etc. O best sage, all are entitled

to it (even) up to a cāṇḍāla. So also women, śūdra and others, the dull, the dumb and the lame. Others (like) the Hūṇas, Kirātas, Pulindas and Puṣkaras, Ābhīras, Yavanas, Kaṅkas, Khasa and others, so also other low-born ones, those having much religious hypocrisy and egotism, those given to wickedness, killers of cows and brāhmaṇas, those having (committed) major and minor sins, those without knowledge and detachment, those without learning etc.—these and others—all are entitled to the prayer.

23-25. O best sage, if these have devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the god of all gods, then all of them are entitled; not otherwise. A performer of sacrifices, one engaged in giving gifts, one practising all regular orders of ceremonies and rites, one who speaks the truth, or an ascetic, master of Vedas and Vedāṅgas, one intent upon the contemplation of the Supreme Being, one born in a noble family, one practising austerities, one engaged in vows—is not entitled to this (hymn) if he does not have devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

26-28a. Therefore, it should not be told to him who is not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, who is ungrateful, who is proud, who is faithless, and who is an atheist; so also it should not be told to him who is not desirous of attending, or to him who does not serve Śiva. This (prayer) should be carefully given to him who is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa only, free from religious hypocrisy and greed, free from lust and anger.

28b-33. I am the inspired poet (i.e. the author) of it, and its metre is said to be Gāyatrī. The lover of the cowherdresses (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the deity of this hymn. Its application is said to be to the service of Hari with his beloved. A man should employ the five modes (of devotion) beginning with the disc etc. and hymns also, or he should practise the assignment of the hands and body with the mystical letter forming its essential part. The first letter of the hymn is decorated at the top with a dot. The mystical letter would be 'gem' here, and the power is said to be 'namaḥ'. In the last syllable there are ten parts, and worship is to be done with them, so also with sandal and flowers, with water in their absence. It should be done (i.e. muttered) after first doing the assignment of the various parts.

of the body to different deities for pleasing Hari. Therefore, only others tell the nyāsa etc. of this hymn.

34-35a. Even if it is recited once it bestows blessedness. Yet one should always assign in ten ways for the muttered (hymn) etc. O best brāhmaṇa, now I shall explain (to you) the meditation of this prayer:

35b-43. (A man) should remember Kṛṣṇa seated, along with his beloved, on a throne in Vṛndāraṇya—Kṛṣṇa, who has put on a yellow garment, who is dark like a cloud, who has two arms, who has put on a garland of sylvan (flowers), who has a chaplet made of peacocks' tail-feathers, whose face resembles a crore of moons, whose eyes are rolling about; who has a kaṁṇī-kāra (flower) as the ear-ornament, who has a round dot put on the centre of his forehead which is all around (smeared) with sandal, who is shining with ear-rings resembling the young sun, whose cheeks are like mirrors as they are glittering with drops of perspiration, whose eyes are rivetted on his beloved's face, who has sportively raised his brow due to a side-glance, whose very high nose is shining due to pearls put on its top, whose lips like ripe bimba fruits are shining by means of the moonlight (shooting) from his teeth, whose hands are shining with ornaments worn on the upper arms, with armlets and rings set with good (i.e. bright) gems, who holds in his left hand a flute, so also a lotus, whose waist is shining with a girdle and a chaplet, whose feet are glittering due to anklets, who is agile in the flurry caused by the joy due to love-sports, whose eyes are unsteady, who is laughing with his beloved and who is repeatedly making her laugh (thus he should remember Kṛṣṇa).

44-52a. Then he should remember Rādhikā who is seated to his left side, who has put on a blue bodice, whose lustre is like heated gold, whose lotus-like, very smiling face is half covered with the end of her garment, who has fixed her eyes on the face of her lover, whose eyes are unsteady like those of a cakori, who is putting with her thumb and fore-finger a nut along with a (betal) leaf and powder into her lover's mouth, whose lovely, plump and elevated breasts are glittering due to a necklace of pearls, who has a slender waist, whose buttocks are large and are adorned with a mass of small bells, who has put on large jewelled ear-rings, armlets, rings and bracelets, who has

put on a jingling string, anklets and jewelled foot-rings, whose body is bewitching due to her being an essence of beauty, who is beautiful in all limbs, who is submerged in the water of joy, who is pleased, who has fresh youth. O best of brāhmaṇas, there also are her friends who are of the same age and have the same qualities, and would be engaged in serving her with chow-ries and fans. Now, O Nārada, I shall tell you the meaning of the prayer; listen to it. Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa is called Gopī due to her being concealed by the external parts of the manifestation (of the world), her own parts like the powers of illusion etc., so also with the internal parts, always present, like intelligence etc.

52b-56a. The goddess, full of Kṛṣṇa, and the highest deity is called Rādhikā. She is of the nature of all beauty and of the nature of Kṛṣṇa's joy. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, she is called Hlādinī by the wise. Durgā and others having the three constituents (like Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas) are a part of the croreth portion of her. She is actually Mahālakṣmī, and Kṛṣṇa is lord Nārāyaṇa. O best sage, there is not the slightest difference between the two. She is Durgā (i.e. Pārvatī); Hari is Rudra. Kṛṣṇa is Indra; she is Indrāṇī. She is Sāvitrī; Hari is Brahmā. She is Dhūmorṇā; Hari is Yama.

56b-60a. O best sage, what is the use of (speaking) much? There is nothing of the nature of living or non-living that is without them. The whole world is full of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In this way, O Nārada, that all (this) is the splendour of the two. It is not possible for me to describe it even (if I do so) for hundreds of crores of years. In the three worlds the earth is venerable; Jambudvīpa is better than it. In it Bhārata country (is excellent); in it the city Mathurā (is the best). In it the (grove) named Vṛndāvana (is excellent); in it the group of Rādhā's friends is excellent. In it Rādhikā is the best.

60b-66. Due to her proximity, superiority in successions of the earth etc. would be there. Nothing else is lofty here. This is that Rādhā. The cowherdesses are the group of her friends. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are dear chiefs of the lives of the group of her friends. In this world, their feet should be sought for refuge. I go to them, have gone to them; I the soul that is very much afflicted, have sought their refuge; whatever is mine is his. All (I offer) to them, is for

them; it is to be enjoyed by them; it is not mine. O brāhmaṇa, this in brief is told (as) the meaning of the prayer. I have told the five alternatives as: the meaning of the couplet, nyāsa, reaching them and taking shelter of them, offering oneself. This hymn alone should be carefully reflected upon day and night.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The Greatness of Vṛndāvana

Śiva said:

1-4. O Nārada, I shall now accurately tell the rite of initiation. Listen to it. Even without doing it a man would be freed just by listening to it. The wise one, realising that all this world from Brahmā is evanescent, having experienced the threefold misery like that of the mind, and due to all pleasures being transitory, putting them on the side of (i.e. looking upon them as) misery, and being free from them, and being detached should think about the means of the cessation of the worldly existence. He should be very much satisfied to obtain highest happiness.

5-8. The very intelligent one knowing the wickedness of men, being very much afflicted, should, O brāhmaṇa, seek refuge of me, the great one. A teacher is said to be calm, free from jealousy, devoted to Kṛṣṇa, having no other aim (than reaching Kṛṣṇa), having no other means, having virtue, free from lust and greed, knowing the truth in the interest in Śrī-kṛṣṇa, the best among those who know prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa, always resorting and attached to prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, always pure, teaching good ways of life, always prescribing good practices, following the tradition, full of compassion and detached.

9-10. A disciple is said to be one who has mostly these qualities and who is desirous of serving his teacher's feet, who is extremely devoted to his teacher, and who desires salvation. The actual service offered to him through love is said to be the

salvation of the Vaiṣṇavite by the wise knowing the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

11-18. Having resorted to the feet of one's teacher one should tell him one's account. He (i.e. the teacher) removing doubts, repeatedly instructing him, should, with a very much delighted heart, teach the other one (i.e. the disciple) who has bowed down to his feet, who is calm and who desires to serve his feet. O brāhmaṇa, on the left and right shoulder-blades he should draw, with sandal or clay, a conch and a disc. In the same way he should then draw, according to the rules, the upright mark on the forehead etc. Then he (i.e. the teacher) should indicate (i.e. whisper) the two prayers into his right ear. Then in proper order and properly he should tell him the meaning of the prayers. He should carefully give him a name along with the word *dāsa*. Then the wise one should affectionately feed the devotees of Viṣṇu. He should also honour his honourable teacher with garments, ornaments etc. O great sage, he should give all his possessions to the teacher or half their number. The poor ones should even remain after throwing down their bodies (i.e. should throw down their own bodies) for the teacher. The wise one who is consecrated with these five sacred rites, shares the service of Kṛṣṇa; not otherwise even for crores of kalpas.

19-21. The former learned ones have described these to be the five sacred rites: marking (the body with mark of a conch etc.), the upright mark, the prayer, taking up a name and the fifth one is sacrifice. Marking is (done) with a conch, a disc etc.; the upright mark is said to have a hole; name is connected with the word *dāsa*; the prayers are two. Sacrifice is the worship of the teacher and a devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told you these five great sacred rites.

22-24. O Nārada, I shall now tell you the duties of those who have taken refuge (with Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu), resorting to which men will go to Viṣṇu's abode in Kali (age). A wise one, having thus obtained the hymn from his teacher, and greatly devoted to his teacher, serving the teacher every day, would obtain his favour. Then he should learn the duties of the good, especially of those who have taken refuge (with Viṣṇu). He should always

gratify the devotees of Viṣṇu looking upon them as his own desired deity.

25-27. As women due to being the objects of enjoyment by lustful persons get beating and reproach, in the same way the wise ones should get the respective things of the devotees of Viṣṇu. They should never worry about worldly things or things in the next world. The worldly things always come according to the deeds done in the former (existence). In the same way Kṛṣṇa will bring about the things in the next world. Therefore, men should always give up (making) effort for them.

28-32. All expedients should be given up and Kṛṣṇa should be worshipped thinking oneself to be Kṛṣṇa. As a woman devoted to her husband and loving him, is afflicted when the lover has gone on a journey for a long time, and as she, desiring his company only, would always think about his qualities and sings and listens to them (i.e. qualities), so he should think of the qualities and sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa. It should never be adopted as a means (to reaching Kṛṣṇa). As the woman (devoted to her husband) kisses, embraces, and drinks with the corner of her eye, her husband looking upon him as her lover who has come after travelling for a long time, in the same way a devotee should serve Hari with adoration.

33-37. He (should) never seek the refuge of anyone else; he should never have any other means. Because of his having no other means he would have no other aim (than Viṣṇu). He should not worship any other deity; should not bow to or remember any other deity. He should never see or sing about or censure (any other deity). He should not eat what is left over by another person. He should not wear what is given up by another person. He should avoid talking to or saluting those who are not devotees of Viṣṇu. He should cover his ears and go. If he has power he should punish (the person censuring these deities). O brāhmaṇa, I think that he, resorting to the course of a cātaka till the body falls, should concentrate on the meaning of the two (hymns).

38-46. As a cātaka, when thirsty, abandons a lake, a river, a sea etc. and either dies or appeals to a cloud, in the same way a man should think about the means. He should always solicit his desired deity, saying 'You should be my recourse'. He should

always remain in (i.e seek) the favour of his deity, those belonging to the deity, and especially of the teacher also; and should avoid their disfavour. I who have sought their refuge once, will tell about their propitiousness. Thinking 'these two will emancipate me', he should have faith in them. "O lord(s), you who destroy the fear of him who has taken your refuge, are the saviour (of your devotee) from the worldly existence, and from friends, sons, home and family. Who I am, whatever I have in this and the next world, all that I have today dedicated to your feet. I am the abode of sins; I have given up the means; I have no (other) course; therefore, O lord, you alone are my recourse. O lover of Rādhikā, through my acts, mind and speech, I am yours. O Kṛṣṇa's beloved, I belong to you. You two only are my refuge. O you heaps and mines of compassion, I have sought your shelter. Favour (me) by (giving) me, the wicked and sinful one, (the opportunity) of serving (you)".

47-50a. Thus, muttering to himself these five verses, he, desiring their service, should quickly remain (thinking about Kṛṣṇa), O best sage. I have briefly described these external qualities. Now I shall describe the essential, internal quality of those who have sought refuge (with Kṛṣṇa). Having, with effort, resorted to the condition of the friend of Kṛṣṇa's beloved, he should carefully serve both of them day and night. I have told (you) the hymn, the constituents of it and (about) those who are entitled to it.

50b-59. I have described their duties, the fruit of the hymn (accruing) to them. O Nārada you (should) also do it. You will obtain their servanthship (*dāśya*). O brāhmaṇa, here there is never a doubt about the (consequent) loss of one's authority (ego?). I have no doubt that Hari would grant his (servanthship) to him who has but once sought his refuge, and who has appealed to him, saying, 'I am yours'. Now I shall tell you a great, wonderful secret which formerly I had heard from lord Kṛṣṇa himself. O best sage, I have told you the secret course of conduct. This is more secret than a secret; it has to be guarded carefully. Formerly, muttering this gem of a hymn and pondering over god Nārāyaṇa, I lived on the top of Kailāsa in a dense forest. Then the lord was pleased and appeared before me. "Choose a boon". When this was said (by him), I too opened my eyes and saw the

god with his wife and seated upon Garuḍa. Having saluted the lord of Kamalā, the giver of boons, I said to him: “O ocean of compassion, O highest god, I desire to see with my eyes that form of yours which gives great joy, which is the abode of joy, which is eternal, which is embodied, which is superior to everything (else), which is qualityless, actionless, calm, and which the wise know as Brahman.”

60-64. Then, the glorious lord of Kamalā said to me who had sought his refuge: “Today you will see that form (of mine) which is desired in (i.e. by) your mind. Go to my Vṛndāvana, to the western bank of Yamunā.” Saying so, the lord of the world vanished along with his beloved. Then I also came to the auspicious bank of Yamunā. There I saw Kṛṣṇa, the lord of all gods, who had put on the dress of a cowherd, who was lovely, who was of the age of a boy, who had properly put his charming left hand on the shoulder of his beloved, who was laughing and making her laugh in the group of the cowherdresses, who was bright like a glossy cloud, who is the abode of auspicious qualities.

65-73a. Then, having laughed, Kṛṣṇa, speaking (sweetly) like nectar, said to me: “O Rudra, having known your desire, I have appeared before you, since you have today seen this uncommon form of mine, which is the embodiment of spotless love that is solidified and of goodness, intelligence and joy (i.e. Brahman), which is (at the same time) formless, qualityless, (all-)pervading, actionless, and higher than the highest. The groups of the Upaniṣads describe this faultless form of mine only. Because my qualities have not sprung from the constituents of Prakṛti, and because of their being endless, and because of their not being effected, they call me the qualityless lord. O Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), because this form of mine is not visible to the physical eyes, all the Vedas describe me to be formless. The wise ones also know me to be Brahman, as a part of the supreme spirit, because of my (all-)pervading nature. As I am not the agent of the visible world, they (also) call me actionless; since my portions through power of Māyā perform creation etc., I do not myself perform creation etc., O Śiva. O Mahādeva, I am overcome with the love of these cowherdresses. I do

not know any other act, even myself, O Nārada(?). Being influenced by her love, I always sport with her.

73b-79. Know this my beloved Rādhikā to be a great deity. Around her see her friends in hundreds and thousands. O Rudra, they are eternal as I having an eternal body. The cowherds, cows, cowherdesses and this my Vṛndāvana always (exist). All this is eternal, and full of the joy of intelligence. Know this called Ānandakanda ('the root of delight') to be my Vṛndāvana, merely by entering which a man would not again get into the worldly existence. The fool who, after having reached my grove, goes elsewhere, would be self-killer only. I have told the truth and the truth (only). I never leave Vṛndāvana and go anywhere else. With her I always live here only. O Rudra, I have thus told everything (I) had in mind. Tell me now, what else do you want to hear."

80-88. O best sage, then I said to the god: "Tell me the means by which you would be obtained like this." Then the lord said to me: "O Rudra, you have spoken well. This is a very great secret, (and) it is to be guarded carefully. The man who has once sought our refuge, worships us, after giving up (other) means, as a cowherdess, comes to me, O lord of gods. He who has sought the refuge of the two of us, or only of my beloved, and serves us or her with unswerving devotion, comes to me. There is no doubt about it. O Maheśvara, he who has sought my refuge and of my beloved, undoubtedly comes to me. Thus I have told you. He who has but once sought (our) refuge and would say, 'I am yours', comes to me without any (other) means. There is no doubt about it. Therefore, with all efforts a man should seek the refuge of my beloved. O Rudra, having resorted to my beloved, you can impress me. I have told you this great secret. O Mahādeva, you have also to guard it carefully. You too, having resorted to this my beloved Rādhikā, and muttering this couple of hymns, always live in my abode."

Śiva said:

89-91. Having thus spoken, and having taught the great hymn, and sacred rites into my right ear, Kṛṣṇa, the treasure of compassion, disappeared along with attendants there only when I was looking (at him). Since then I have been constantly

here. I have fully told you all this. Now, O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what more you want to hear.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Kṛṣṇa's Love Sports in Vṛndāvana

Nārada said:

1. O lord, O great one, you have told me whatever I had asked (for). Now I desire to know the excellent path of devotion.

Śiva said:

2-11. O brāhmaṇa, you, desiring the well-being of all the worlds, have asked well. I shall tell you the secret also. Listen as I (shall) tell it to you. O greatest sage, the maid-servants, friends, parents and beloveds of Hari live here. All of them are eternal and virtuous. As they are described in the Purāṇas (indulging) in open sports, in the same way they remain in sports on the Vṛndāvana ground. They always go from the grove to the cow-pen and come back. They, along with their friends, also graze the cows without any harm from the demons. Similarly people dear to him are proud of those having water-pitchers (the ascetics). With secret devotion they delight their beloved persons. A man should there look upon himself among them as one who is charming, who is endowed with beauty and youth, who is a young woman, who has the form of a young beautiful woman, who knows many crafts and arts, who is fit for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment, who is averse to enjoyment though solicited by Kṛṣṇa, who is the follower of Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā even more than Kṛṣṇa, who, through love, day by day brings about the union of the two (i.e. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā), who is extremely happy due to the pleasure and joy of serving them. Thus looking upon oneself, one

should, beginning with the early part of the day till late night, offer service there.

Nārada said:

12. I desire to hear correctly the everyday sport of Hari. How can I mentally serve Hari without knowing his sport?

Śiva said:

13-14. O Nārada, I do not correctly know that sport. From here go to Vṛndādevī. She will tell you the sport. She, the attendant of Govinda, surrounded by the group of her friends, lives near Keśītīrtha, not far from here.

Sūta said:

15-16. Then the best sage Nārada, who was addressed like this, went round him, and being delighted, saluted him again and again and went to Vṛndāvana. Vṛndā too, seeing Nārada, repeatedly saluted him and asked the greatest sage, “How have you come here (i.e. what brings you here)?”

Nārada said:

17. I desire to hear from you (about) the daily life of Hari. O auspicious one, if I am fit, then tell it (to me) from the beginning.

Vṛndā said:

18-30. O Nārada, I shall also tell you the secret (since) you are a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. You too are not to disclose this great secret which is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret). In Vṛndāvana which is charming and adorned with fifty bowers, in a chamber with divine gems, in an arbour of the desire-yielding tree, the two embracing each other remain (in a) sleeping (position), though later they are awakened by birds obeying my orders. They have obtained great joy due to a close embrace and are afraid of its being disturbed. They do not at all desire to get up from the bed. Then they have to get up from their bed when awakened with various notes made on all sides and repeatedly by groups of sārīkās and parrots etc. Seeing them

seated gladly on the bed, the friends enter (the bower) and offer the two service appropriate for that time. Then the two, having got up from the bed by the notes of sārīkās, overcome with eagerness go to their respective houses. In the morning, Kṛṣṇa, awakened by his mother, quickly gets up, and having with Baladeva brushed his teeth and being allowed by his mother, goes, being surrounded by his friends, to the cowstall. O brāhmaṇa, Rādhā too, awakened by her friends, gets up from her bed, and having brushed her teeth would then smear her body with unctuous substances. Then she goes to the quadrangular for bath. There she is bathed by her friends. (Then) she would go to the chamber for decoration, and there her friends decorate her with ornaments and various divine fragrant flowers and unguents. Then when, with effort, her friends request her mother-in-law she is invited along with her friends by Yaśodā to cook good food.

Nārada said:

31. How is it, O goddess, that she is invited by Yaśodā to cook food, when there are foremost cooks like Rohiṇī?

Vṛndā said:

32-43. I have formerly heard from the mouth of Kātyāyānī that in olden days she was granted a boon by Durvāsas, O great sage. (The boon was:) “O respectable lady, the food which is cooked by you, would be, as a result of my favour, sweet and vying with nectar, and would in the same way promote long life of the eater (of it).” Therefore, Yaśodā, loving her son, every-day calls her thinking, ‘my son, due to longing for sweet (food), would, (after eating it) live a long life.’ Allowed by her mother-in-law, she, being delighted, would go to the house of Nanda. Going there with the multitude of her friends she cooks there also. Kṛṣṇa also, having milked the cows and having some others got milked by (other) men, comes home surrounded by his friends at the words (i.e. order) of his father. Having smeared his body with unctuous substances and having had shampooing and after being gladly bathed by servants, he puts on washed garments, a garland, and has his body smeared with sandal. With his neck and forehead shining due to the hair on

his head separated and tied at two places, with the hair reddened by the dot on the forehead resembling the moon, and shining, with his hands delightfully glittering with jewelled bracelets, armlets, and bracelets worn on the upper arm, with his chest shining due to a pearl necklace, having put on ear-rings resembling crocodiles, he, holding the hand of his friend, and being followed by Baladeva, would enter the dining hall, after being again and again called by his mother. Then, surrounded by his friends and brother, making them laugh by means of (anecdotes etc. causing) laughter, and himself laughing with them, he eats various kinds of food. Having thus eaten (food), having sipped (water), having rested on a cot for a while, and distributing and chewing the tām̐būla given by the servants, Kṛṣṇa, having put on the dress of a cowherd, with the flock of cows going ahead of him, followed on the path by all the residents of Vraja with love, having saluted his father and mother, and having sent back properly the host (following him) with a glance, would go to the forest.

44-52. Having entered the forest and having played there with his friends for a while, he then gladly sports there, in the forest by means of various pastimes. Then, having deceived all, and surrounded by two or three friends, he, being eager to see his beloved, would gladly go to the rendezvous. She too, who had come home, on seeing Kṛṣṇa, goes, after deceiving her elders, under the pretext of Sun-worship etc. or for collecting flowers, to the forest with a desire to meet her lover. Thus the two, having, after many efforts, met in the forest, gladly sport there for the (whole) day with various pastimes. Sometimes the two get upon a swing and are rocked to and fro by their friends. Sometimes, Hari, deceived by the bebies of his beloveds, is seen, searching his flute dropped from his hand, and hidden by his beloved. He, made to laugh by them by means of merriment, remains there. At times the two enter the forest endowed with vernal breezes, and sprinkle each other with water (mixed with) sandal, or with water (mixed with) saffron etc., released from syringes, or smear each other with mud. In the same way, the friends also sprinkle them (with water etc.) and the two also sprinkle them.

53-59a. Then the two, O brāhmaṇa, being tired due to

many pastimes proper for the time in the groves endowed with vernal breezes on all sides, resort, with their attendants, to the root of a tree, and sitting on a divine seat, drink liquor, O best sage. Then the two, intoxicated due to the liquor, with their eyes closed due to sleep, holding each other's hands, being under the influence of Cupid's arrows, and desiring to sport, enter, with their words and mind stumbling on the path. There they sport like a female elephant and (the male elephant,) the lord of the herd. All the friends also, intoxicated by wine, and with their eyes troubled by sleep (i.e. drowsy) sleep all around in the charming bowers. Again and again incited by his beloved, Kṛṣṇa, the lord, would go near all, with a separate body (for each) and simultaneously. Having satisfied all of them as a lord of elephants satisfies the female elephants, he would, along with his beloved and with them, go to the lake to sport.

59b-69. Then the two, with their attendants, sport between themselves by sprinkling water (on each other). They are adorned with garments, garlands, sandal(-pastes), and also with divine ornaments. O sage, I have there, in a chamber full of divine gems, on the bank of the lake, already arranged fruits and roots. Hari, having eaten first, and being clasped by his beloved, and being served by two or three (maids) would go to a bed made of flowers. There, being served (by them) with tām̐būlas, fans and shampooing of his feet, he laughing with them, and remembering his beloved rejoices. Rādhikā too, when Hari is asleep. extremely delighted along with her attendants, having put her heart into him, eats what is left over (by him). Having but eaten a little there, she would go to the bed-chamber to see her lover's face as the female cakora bird sees the moon. The maids there have told (her) about his having chewed the tām̐būla. She also chews tām̐būlas and distributes them among her dear friends. Kṛṣṇa too, desiring to hear their free mutual talk, though sleepless, covers himself with a piece of cloth, appearing as if he is asleep. Those too, looking at one another in jest, and getting the hint from somewhere, biting their tongues with their teeth, look at one another's face. Merged as it were into the ocean of bashfulness, they do not say anything for a moment. Just after a moment, having removed the piece of

cloth from his body, and saying 'You were really asleep' they laugh and make him laugh.

70-75. Thus sporting with the attendants by means (of jokes etc. causing) laughter, and having, for a moment, experienced the pleasure of sleep, he sits upon the seat gladly spread by his attendants, and the two having mutually staked necklaces, kisses, embraces and garments, play with dice preceded by jocular talk. Though defeated by his beloved he, saying, 'I have won', proceeds to seize her necklace etc. and is beaten by her. Thus beaten by her on his lotus-like face with her hand Kṛṣṇa, being dejected in his mind, thinks of going. "If, O honourable lady, I am defeated, then accept what is staked (viz.) kisses etc. offered by me." On his saying so she would act like that to see the crookedness of his eyebrows and to hear his words of reproach.

76-80. Then having heard the mutual wordy fight among the sārīkās and the parrots, they two, desiring to go home, move out from that place. Having allowed his beloved (to go), Kṛṣṇa would go to the cows. She, accompanied by the circle of her world goes to the Sun's abode (temple). Having gone a little away from there, Hari, again, returning, after having put on the dress of a brāhmaṇa, goes to the Sun's abode. Requested by her friends, he would worship the Sun there, with Vedas (hymns), containing jokes and composed then only. Then the clever ones, having recognised their lover who makes himself known, merge in the ocean of joy, and do not know themselves or other (persons).

81-91a. Having thus passed two watches and a half in various sports, they would go home, and Kṛṣṇa would go (to the place) of the cows. O sage, Kṛṣṇa, joining his friends, and taking the cows from all sides, comes playing upon the flute joyfully to Vraja. Then, all like Nanda and others, so also women and children, hearing the sound of Hari's flute, and also seeing the sky full of dust (raised) by the cows, give up all their jobs, and being eager to see Kṛṣṇa go towards him. Kṛṣṇa also, joining all the residents of Vraja, on the royal path, at Vraja-gate—wherever they are—(honours all) as before in due order—by means of seeing them, touching them, speaking to them, looking them with a smile, saluting with words and physically the old cowherds, and saluting his parents and Rohiṇī also (in such a way that) the eight parts (of the body touch the ground),

○ Nārada, so also his beloved with a modest side glance. Thus very much and properly respected by the residents of Vraja, having sent the cows to the cowstall, he goes, after being requested by his parents to his abode with his brother. Having bathed there, having drunk (milk), having eaten a little, and being allowed by his mother, he, with a desire to milk the cows, again goes to the cowstall. Having milked them, and got them milked, having made some of them drink (water), he, being followed by hundreds of venerable men goes home with his father.

91b-101a. There with his father, paternal uncles, their sons, and Baladeva, he eats various kinds of foods like those that are chewed, those that are sucked etc. Even before he entertains a desire, Rādhikā, through her friends, would send dressed foods to his house. Hari, praising them, and eating them with his father etc. would, with the bards, go to the assembly hall. The friends (of Rādhā), that had come there having brought with them many foods, take (from his house) many kinds (of food) given by Yaśodā there and also whatever is left over by Kṛṣṇa. Having brought all that, they inform Rādhikā of it. She too, along with her group of friends, having eaten it in order and being decorated by her friends, would be (ready) to meet by appointment (her lover i.e. Kṛṣṇa). 'From here or there some friend is sent away by me'. Met by her, she, surrounded by her friends, and having put on a dress proper for white (i.e. bright) or black (i.e. dark) night goes to the chamber having divine jewels, near Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa also, seeing their curious things, then having heard delightful music from Kātyāyanī, and having properly pleased them with (gifts of) wealth and grains, and propitiated by people, goes with his mother to the house of his friend.

101b-106a. When his mother departs, he, having eaten, comes here—to the rendezvous—unnoticed and with his beloved. Both of them meet here and play in the groves of trees, with many sports, with Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherdess, accompanied with singing and instrumental music and laughter. Thus having spent two watches and a half of the night in sporting, the two desiring to sleep, enter, unnoticed by female birds, the bower. There, in the solitary place, the two sleep on a charming bed made of flowers and for sport, and are served by their

female friends. Thus I have told you the full daily life of Hari. O Nārada, even sinners are freed on hearing it.

Nārada said:

106b-107a. O goddess, I am blessed; I am favoured by you. There is no doubt about it, since today you have disclosed to me the delightful sport of Hari.

Sūta said:

107b-111a. Saying so, going round her, and honoured by her also, Nārada, the best sage, vanished, O brāhmaṇa. I too have told you all (the account) in due order. One should daily carefully mutter this couple of prayers. Formerly Rudra obtained it with effort from Kṛṣṇa's mouth. He told it to Nārada; and Nārada told it to me. Prescribing the sacred rites like this, I have told it to you. You too have to guard this very wonderful secret.

Śaunaka said:

111b-112a. O great one, I have been actually contented by your favour, since you disclosed to me the secret of secrets (i.e. the greatest secret).

Sūta said:

112b-117. Practising these modes, and muttering the hymn day and night, you will soon obtain the position of his attendant. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, I too have to go to the eternal abode of the supreme lord of lords on the bank of Yamunā. Those men who, full of devotion, listen to this glorious and very pure account narrated by Maheśa, go to the eternal place of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is excellent, it gives glory, promotes (long) life, health and gives desired success. It is the cause of the wealth in the form of heaven and salvation, and destroys sins. Those men, devoted to Viṣṇu, who everyday devoutly recite it, never come back from the heaven of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

*Meditation of the Lord**The sages said:*

1-5. O Sūta, O Sūta, O glorious, pleasing Romaharṣaṇa, you have told (us) a story giving delight to the world. O highly virtuous one, we have heard the entire, very wonderful life of Śrīkṛṣṇa, as you narrated it. We are pleased with it. Oh, since (the recital of) the glory of Śrīkṛṣṇa gives (the highest) position (i.e. salvation) to the devotees, who would not then obtain joy by (listening to) it? Therefore, we again desire to hear the great account of Śrīkṛṣṇa, so also other vows, presents, worship or bath which were formerly done by whom and how. Tell all that in detail so that we would be satisfied.

Sūta said:

6-10a. O best brāhmaṇas, you have asked well about the great liberating (account). You whose minds are full of devotion to Kṛṣṇa are blessed. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell (you) the life of Kṛṣṇa, a great, excellent and auspicious tale which gives great delight to the good. Once the best sage Nārada, dear to the lord, while wandering over the worlds, saw in Mathurā the highly virtuous Ambarīṣa intent on a vow and engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa. That best sage, seeing the excellent sage having come (to him) welcomed him, and with his mind delighted, asked with faith as you (have done).

Ambarīṣa said:

10b-18. O sage, that which is said to be the highest Brahman by the teachers of the Veda, is that highest god Nārāyaṇa himself, having lotus-like eyes, who (though) unembodied, is the embodied lord, is manifest and unmanifest and is eternal. He is full of all beings; he is inconceivable. How should that Hari, in whom the whole world is sewn lengthwise and crosswise, in whom it remains, who is known as the only highest unmanifest one, and as the highest soul, from whom the origin etc. of the world takes place, who, having created Brahmā, gave him the Vedas

abiding in himself, be meditated upon? Please tell us how he who gives all objects of human pursuit, and who is inaccessible even to the meditating sages, is meditated upon. Those who have not propitiated Govinda, do not know the accomplishment of their well-being. He who has not tasted the drink from the lotus-like feet of Govinda does not get an excellent fruit of penance, sacrifice and gifts. He would not know the rich fruit which is beyond desires. O sage, I do not see a greater expiation for beings than the propitiation of Hari, which removes streams of sins, (of Hari) at the dance (i.e. knitting) of whose eyebrows all accomplishments are known to exist.

19-25a. How is that Keśava propitiated who removes affliction? How is that lord Nārāyaṇa waited upon by men? Being pleased, tell all this to me for the good of the world. By which devotion is this lord, to whom devotion is dear, pleased? How would devotion to him take place? How is he propitiated by all? You are a devotee of Viṣṇu; you are dear to him; you know the highest truth. Therefore, I ask you, O excellent brāhmaṇa knowing the Veda. A question about Kṛṣṇa purifies the listener, the speaker and the questioner, as the water from his feet does. For human beings, human body which is perishable, is difficult to obtain. There also, I think, the dear sight of Viṣṇu is difficult to have. In this worldly existence, company of the good even for half a moment is a treasure of men, from which all the four goals of human life can be secured.

25b-29a. O revered one, your journey is (meant for) the good of all human beings, as that of the parents is for (the good of) children (going) along the excellent path of fame. The life of gods leads to the happiness or unhappiness of living beings. But that of good men like you, who are not fallen, leads to happiness only. Gods honour them in the same way, as (men) honour them. The good men, loving the distressed, are the companions of the acts (of human beings) like their shadow(s). Therefore, O venerable one, teach (us) the way of life of a great devotee of Viṣṇu, by giving which instruction one gets the fruit due to the (study of the) Vedas.

Nārada said:

29b-48a. O king, you, having devotion for Viṣṇu, have ask-

ed well. You know that the highest duty is the one of serving Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu); that when Viṣṇu is propitiated everything is propitiated; that when that Hari full of (i.e. containing) all gods is pleased, the mobile and the immobile (world) is pleased; that by merely remembering Hari the heap of major sins perishes that moment only. Hari alone should be served. O king, who having senses and facing death on all sides, does not worship Mukunda's lotus-like feet which are the object of worship of the sages and deities? The powerful way of life of the good, when heard, studied, reflected upon, honoured and approved of, instantly purifies even those who seek to harm all. That Hari who is the cause even of the cause of the cause, effect etc., who is the unique cause, who is a meditating saint, who is the soul of the world, who is full of the world, who is subtle and gross, who is lean and strong, who is qualityless and has qualities, who is great, who is unborn, who is beyond birth and death, should always be reflected upon. O best among men, you have done this properly, since you are asking (me) about the practices of the followers of Viṣṇu, which promote the welfare of the universe. The spotless stories of Kṛṣṇa who deserves to be glorified, are due to their devotion, the elixir to the soul, mind and ears of the good. This god is to be obtained through devotion. You yourself know it. Yet I tell (about him) for the good of the world and through regard for you. He is Acyuta, whom they describe to be the highest Brahman, and beyond Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti) and Puruṣa, and who controls everything spread through (his) Māyā. The unconquered one, propitiated with devotion, would give everything desired like sons, wife, long life, kingdom and heaven or salvation. O best king, due to love for you, I shall tell you (about) the vows of those men who, through their deeds, mentally and through their speech are devoted to him. Harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, freedom from impurity—these are said to be mental vows in order to please Hari. O lord of men, eating once, eating at night (only), fasting, (eating what is had) without begging—this is said to be the bodily vow of men. Study of the Vedas, glorifying Viṣṇu, speaking the truth, absence of slandering—this, O king, is said to be the best vow of speech. A man should always and everywhere recite the names of (Viṣṇu), having the disc as his weapon. In

his glorification there should be no impurity, since he brings about purity. The highest man (Puruṣa), viz. Viṣṇu is propitiated by a man who follows the practices of castes and the (four) stages of human life. There is no other path causing delight. Vāsudeva, the treasure of compassion, is propitiated by means of vows and restraints of mind, speech and body by women to whom the good of their husbands is dear.

48b-52. Even women and śūdras should worship the moon-like Kṛṣṇa, having the excellent form of a brāhmaṇa, according to the manner laid down in sacred texts. The (first) three castes are engaged in worship according to the manner laid down in Vedas; women and śūdras etc. are intent on propitiating (Viṣṇu) by (uttering) his name. Mādhava is not pleased with worships, sacrifices, and even vows. He is said to be merely loving devotion. To women who are loyal wives, their husbands are their deities. The husband should be honoured with Viṣṇu's devotion (i.e. as much devotion as is shown towards Viṣṇu) by means of mental and physical acts and acts of speech. Acts pertaining to Viṣṇu should be performed by thinking (i.e. keeping) in mind the husband.

53-55. The worship of a deity by śūdras also is (done) by (uttering the deity's) name. All should do (the worship) according to the mode laid down in the sacred texts following the Veda. Even women engaged in doing what is dear to their husbands are entitled to the worship etc. of Viṣṇu. This is (what is laid down in) the ancient sacred texts. A man should practise the ritual laid down according to the mode proper for his family. By that Keśava is pleased.

56-60a. The wise worship Hari everyday in the fire with oblations, in water with flowers and in the heart with meditation, and in the Sun's orb with the muttering (of a prayer). Harmlessness is the first flower. Control of senses is the second flower. Compassion to beings is the third (flower); and forgiveness is the fourth (flower). Tranquillity is the fifth flower; restraint is the sixth (flower). Meditation is the seventh (flower). Truth is the eighth flower. Keśava is pleased with these. Hari is pleased only when worshipped with these eight flowers. O best of men, there are also other external flowers, using which Viṣṇu, when worshipped, is pleased.

60b-63a. (They are:) Water is a flower of Varuṇa. Ghee, milk and curd are a flower of Soma. Food etc. is a flower of Prajāpati. Incense and lamp are a flower of Agni. Fruits, flowers form the fifth flower and it is called Vānaspadya (i.e. of herbs). Kuśas, roots etc. form the Pārthiva flower (i.e. of the Earth). Fragrant substances and candana form the Vāyavya flower (i.e. of Vāyu). The flower of Viṣṇu is called faith; and a musical instrument is said to be the feet of Viṣṇu. When Viṣṇu is worshipped with these, he is pleased.

63b-69a. The sun, fire, a brāhmaṇa, cows, a devotee of Viṣṇu, the sky, the wind, the water, the earth, the soul—all these are the places of Viṣṇu's worship. A man should worship with a sacrifice, with the muttering of a hymn in the sun, with an oblation in fire, with hospitality towards an excellent brāhmaṇa, and with a mouthful of water etc. in (i.e. towards) a cow, with the good deeds of a brother in (i.e. towards) a devotee of Viṣṇu, with firm meditation in the heart, with the thought that Vāyu is the chief in Vāyu, with substances accompanied by water in water, with main parts of hymns on a bare ground, with enjoyments in the soul; and he should worship the individual supreme soul as being equal (i.e. the same) in all beings. On these subordinate altars his form is endowed with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus; it has four arms; is calm. Being devout and reflecting upon the form he should worship it. When he is worshipped by brāhmaṇas, he is (properly) worshipped; there is no doubt about it. When, O king, the lord is censured by them he would be censured.

69b-74a. O brāhmaṇas, that form of Viṣṇu, due to whose support the Vedic texts and the code of laws proceed, is regarded as highly purifying. Everything that is auspicious in the world should be obtained through moral merit only. O king, from (the point of view of) the Vedic texts and the code of laws, moral merit alone is the recourse. Even of the two, the brāhmaṇas are the refuge on the earth. The lord of the world would be worshipped here (i.e. in the world) if he is worshipped by them. The lord, the god of gods, is not that pleased with sacrifices, austerities and meditation or worship as he is with the brāhmaṇas being pleased. A brāhmaṇa is well-versed in the Vedas; knows

the Vedas; promotes them. The lord would be pleased through brāhmaṇas, when the deity in the form of a brāhmaṇa is pleased.

74b-80. When a son worships Viṣṇu, his ancestors from both the families (i.e. of his father and his mother), though plunged in hell for a long time, just then go to heaven. What is the use of their life here or their acts like beasts, whose mind is not disposed to Vāsudeva full of the world? I shall tell (about) the meditation of him who is not seen by anyone. O king, listen to (the description of) the final emancipation which is unique and free from impurity. As a lamp in a place sheltered from wind, being free from wind, is steady and, O highly intelligent one, it, while burning, destroys all darkness, in the same way the soul is free from blemishes, is untainted, is devoid of hope, is steady, powerful, has no friend or foe. So also he does not have pain or pleasure, or dejection, or greed or jealousy or delusion. He is free from confused talks and attractions and from pleasure or pain. He is also free from all objects of senses. Then he becomes one who has absolute knowledge and beatitude is produced (in him).

81-87. O king of kings, a lamp, all alone and free from wind, would dry up, with the help of the wick, the oil due to its contact with the act of the flame. O highly intelligent one, later on it ejects soot of the lamp; a black line is seen. Having drawn up the oil it would be pure in lustre. Similarly, the soul remaining inside the body would dry up the oil in the form of (one's) deeds. Making the objects of senses the soot, he would himself illumine. Free from the breezes called wrath, greed etc. and being desireless and steady, he would brighten up his own lustre. Remaining in his own place, he sees the three worlds by means of his own lustre. I have described to you this (soul) that is of the form of absolute knowledge.

88-95. Those great souls, intent upon the knowledge about Brahman and endowed with abstract meditation, who do not see him, the omniscient one, manifesting everything are ignorant. Without hands and feet he moves everywhere; and grasps all the three worlds (with) the immovable and the movable. O king, bereft of nose and mouth he smells and eats. Without ears he hears everything. He, the lord of the world, is a witness to everything. (Though) formless, he is connected with a form; is under

the influence of the group of the five (senses). He who is the life of the entire world, is worshipped by the movable and the immovable. Tongueless, he speaks everything as (laid down) in the Vedas and the sacred texts. Though skinless, he gets the touch of all. He is always joyful; has a judicious eye; has one form; and no prop. He is qualityless; does not have the feeling of mineness; pervades (everything); has qualities; is spotless and sinless. He is not influenced by anyone; everything is under his influence; he gives everything; he is the best among the omniscient; he does not have a mother; the mighty one is full of everything. He who, not having any other thought, meditates thus on him full of everything, goes to the formless highest place resembling nectar.

96-109. I shall tell you another (meditation). O very intelligent one, listen to it. O prince he is called Vāsudeva, since the matchless universe, having an embodied form, having a form and formless and pure is perfumed by his dwelling (in it). He has that lustre which would be the one of a showering cloud. In the right hand of him who resembles the sun in lustre, who has four arms, and who is the lord of gods, shines a conch decorated with gold and jewels. O brave one, in the left hand of that magnanimous one shines the Kaumodakī mace which destroys great demons. In his right hand is a great lotus rich in fragrance. It always shines with a weapon and the beauty of the lotus. His neck is like a conch; he has a round face; his eyes are like lotus-petals; he, Hṛṣīkeśa, is shining with teeth like kunda(-petals). The lower lip of Guḍākeśa resembles a coral. He, having eyes like lotuses, looks charming due to a bright crown. Janārdana shines with large, charming chest, marked with Kaustubha only. He also shines with ear-rings resembling the sun in lustre. Hari always shines with the auspicious mark of Śrīvatsa. The best among the victorious shining with armlets, bracelets, necklaces and pearls (bright) like stars, and with his body, is victorious. That Govinda also shines with a garment resembling gold. He shines with rings on his fingers. Hari, endowed with all, complete and divine weapons and ornaments, mounted upon (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, is the creator of the worlds and the lord of the world. A man who, with a concentrated mind, meditates upon him, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

I have thus completely told you about the meditation of the lord of the world.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

Greatness of Vaiśākha

Ambariṣa said:

1-2. Well (done), well (done), O greatest sage who favour the world, since you told (me about) the meditation of Viṣṇu, with and without qualities. O you who favour the good, now explain (to me) devotion—of what kinds (it is), by whom (it is done), how (it is done), where (it is done), and when (it is done).

Sūta said:

3-4a. Hearing these words uttered by the best king, the delighted sage again spoke to the king: “O king, listen; I shall (now) properly tell you (about) devotion to Hari, which removes all sins. (Now) I shall tell you (about) devotion of various kinds, which destroys sins.

4b-13a. Devotion is said to be of various kinds: mental, of speech and of body. It may also be (divided as) secular, Vedic and spiritual. Mental devotion is said to be the one in which recollection of the Vedas is done with the idea of having meditation and concentration which brings about devotion to Viṣṇu. That which is done through utterances of prayers and (hymns of) the Vedas, through untired reflections, and mutterings in the forest, is called verbal (devotion). That which accomplishes all objects and is done through vows, fasts, restraints and curbing of the five senses, is said to be physical (devotion). That devotion which is the worship done by men through (offerings made) with ornaments, marked (i.e. decked) with gold and jewels, so also with beautiful words, with ribbons of garments put round the waist, with large purifying fans, with dancing, musical instruments, songs, with all offerings and presents, with eatables, food and drinks, and which is intended

for Nārāyaṇa is said to be secular. The same, accomplishing all objects is said to be physical. That devotion in which mutterings of hymns from the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda are done, and studies of the hymnical texts of the Vedas are done with reference to Viṣṇu is said to be Vedic. (So also) the act (of devotion) done through the Vedic hymns, and sacrifices where offerings are made (into fire) is looked upon as Vedic (derived from the Vedas).

13b-18. Offering into fire should be done on the new-moon day and the full-moon day. (Offering) food, giving gifts, a sacrificial oblation made of ground rice and offered in a vessel, an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled (and presented to) gods and manes, sacrifices, drinking Soma—are all sacrificial acts. All rites performed in honour of Fire, Earth, Wind, Sky, Light, Śaṅkara and the Sun, (reach) the deity Viṣṇu. O king, spiritual devotion is of various kinds: One is called Sāṃkhya; (another) has come up from Yoga. O king, listen as it is described. The principles like Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), twentyfour in number, are insentient and are objects of enjoyment. The Puruṣa is the twentyfifth (principle) described to be sentient, and is the agent of acts and the enjoyer (of their fruits). The soul is eternal, immutable, controller, and employer. Puruṣa is unmanifest and eternal and Maheśvara would be the cause.

19-25. Really (there are three creations): Creation of principles, psychic creation and physical creation. The Pradhāna of the Sāṃkhya is of the nature of guṇas (constituents). The similarity and difference and that the Pradhāna is of a different nature should be known; so also the cause of Brahman is said to be desire. The being directed of the Pradhāna is said to be the difference. Brahman is all action; Puruṣa also has absence of action. This is said to be the similarity with the insentient Pradhāna. There is a difference among the principles, and they are related to one another as cause and effect. The wise who ponder over all true principles call it Sāṃkhya, knowing through the number of the principles, the employment and the state of being employed (of the principles). Knowing in this way its existence, and the number of principles correctly, the wise know that the physical principle is in addition to the principle of Brahman. This devotion formulated by the Sāṃkh-

yas is known as spiritual devotion. O king, I shall also tell you (about) the devotion, due to (i.e. in accordance with) the Yoga (school).

26-30. A man always given to controlling his breath, (always) reflecting and controlling his senses, eating what is obtained by begging, having controlled all senses, having reflected upon the mental representation (of Viṣṇu) in his heart, reflects upon the great god seated in the pericarp of the lotus of heart, wearing a yellow garment, and having charming eyes, and seeing (the lord) with a bright face, and having the sacred thread round his waist, of a white complexion, having four arms, and having the hand giving boons and fearlessness. This mental accomplishment due to Yoga is said to be great devotion to Viṣṇu. He who is thus devoted to the lord, is called Viṣṇu's devotee. O prince, I have thus explained various kinds of devotion, according to these divisions, viz. Sāttvikī (endowed with the quality of sattva or goodness), Rājasī (endowed with the quality of rajas or passion) and Tāmasī (endowed with the quality of tamas or darkness).

31-35. Many kinds should be known (of devotion) to Viṣṇu of unlimited lustre. As fire with highly blazing flames reduces fuel to ashes, in the same way devotion to the lord burns sins at that moment only. Till a man does not, on the earth, hear about devotion to Viṣṇu which is actually nectar, the essence of all other liquids, he obtains hundreds of striking afflictions (in the form) of old age, death, birth, due to many bodies (i.e. many existences). The endless lord, when described, when his fame is thought about, when his majestic lustre is heard (i.e. known) internally, destroys all sins, as wind does the clouds, or the sun does the darkness. The heart does not obtain that purity by means of gifts, worship, sacrifice, bath at a sacred place, behaving as laid down in sacred texts, and austerities, which it has when the eternal lord is in the heart. O lord of men, the stories are pure; they are true; these true stories about Hari are alone wholesome.

36-41. (As) these stories of him of a pure form are heard here by you whose good fame is heard, you are blessed. O brave king, you are the leader of the right path. Your heart is concentrated on Puruṣottama, since your firm heart, your good

luck, have become prone to listening to the good deed of lord Śrīkṛṣṇa. O king, how can a self-respecting man have religious merit without propitiating with devotion Viṣṇu who grants boons and who is immutable? He, the guileless one, is born of illusion, and is won over through sincere devotion. You being a good man, know it yourself. O king, the truth about the way of life is not unknown to you. Yet you are asking me about the pure sacred place on this occasion. There is no greater sweetness than this, viz. the glorification of Viṣṇu's devotee. I do not see greater nourishment of delight and proper religious merit mutually (i.e. enhancing each other). The good having greater devotion very much enjoy his unlimited qualities, having unending religious merit.

42-47. Brāhmaṇas, a cow, truth faith, sacrifice, austerities, sacred texts, Smṛti-texts, compassion, initiation and tranquillity are the bodies of Hari. The lord (occupies) the sun, the moon, wind, earth, water, the sky, quarters, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra—is full of all beings. He, of the form of the universe, himself created this mobile and immobile world. Having entered (the body of) a brāhmaṇa, he himself always eats food. Therefore, worship the brāhmaṇas, the dust of whose feet is a sacred place, who are gods on the earth, the abode of the mountains, who are high-souled, who are all-in-all of the auspicious Lakṣmī, and the souls of all. He who properly looks upon a learned brāhmaṇa as Viṣṇu, and who is attached to his own duties, is alone the devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told a secret (to you). It is time for me to go and bathe in Gaṅgā. There is (now) no more time for the story (to be continued).

48-51. The auspicious month of Vaiśākha, dear to Mādhava, has come. In it also the seventh day (for bathing) in Gaṅgā is extremely difficult to get. Formerly on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) was drunk through anger by Jahnu, and let out from the cavity of his right ear. A man should, after having bathed in her (water), propitiate Gaṅgā, the girdle of the sky, according to proper rites. Such a man is blessed and fortunate. A mortal (i.e. a man) who would, according to the proper rites, gratify deities and manes in her (water), would see (himself as) the one who has had ablution there, and whose sins have gone away.

52-59. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is no river like Gaṅgā. Such a difficult combination is secured only through devotion to Hari. She (i.e. Gaṅgā) has sprung up from the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu; she came (down) from Brahmā's heaven. She is not tired (though flowing) in three streams, and she purifies the three worlds. She is a ladder for climbing to the heaven; she always gives joy; she removes the streams of many sins; she helps to surmount a difficulty. She remains in the twisted hair of Śiva. She removes grief. She destroys the lover's sport (i.e. lust) in the heart of the man who worships her. She is the cause of the emancipation of Sagara's family. She sustains Dharma (righteousness). The goddess moves along three paths; she adorns the worlds. By means of her sight, touch, bath (in her water), recital (of her virtues), reflection (on her) and resorting to her, she purifies, in thousands, virtuous and non-virtuous men. Even when those away from her say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' at dawn, noon and sunset, she destroys their sins earned (i.e. committed) during three existences. If a man at (a distance of) thousands of yojanas remembers Gaṅgā, he, even though a sinner, obtains the highest position (i.e. salvation).

60-67. Especially on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, she is difficult to reach; (but) is obtained through the favour of the brāhmaṇa in the form of Hari, the protector of the world. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is none so supreme as Mādhava (Viṣṇu or Vaiśākha). The stream of the water of the sins of him who dips (in Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha) is gone. O king, that which is given, uttered, offered, or the bath taken devoutly (in Gaṅgā) in the month of Vaiśākha, would become inexhaustible religious merit hundreds of crores of times more (that what is given etc.). As among gods is the soul of the universe, viz. god Nārāyaṇa Hari, (or) as Gāyatrī is among the muttered hymns, so is Jāhnavī among rivers. As Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) is (best) among all females, or as the sun is (best) among those that shine, as the gain of health is among gains, as Brāhmaṇa is among bipeds, as obliging others is among the acts of religious merit, as the Vedas are among lores, as Om is among the prayers, as self-reflection is among reflections, as truth and abiding by the rules of one's own class are superior to austeri-

ties, as purity about wealth is among purities, as grant of fearlessness is among gifts, as the end of greed is said to be the chief among virtues, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is said to be the best among months.

68-77. The śrāddha (offered in it), (or) the sacrifice (performed in it), (or) the gift (given in it), (or) a fast (observed in it), so also austerities (practised) in it, or study or worship etc. done in it—all this is said to have inexhaustible fruit. Sins end in Vaiśākha; darkness ends with (the rise of) the Sun; harm done to others and wickedness end with good deeds. O king, all that bath, gifts etc. (done or given) in the month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra, would be a parārdha-fold more (meritorious). Thousand times more (is the religious merit) when (bath etc. is had) in the month of Māgha when the Sun is in Aquarius. It is hundred times more when, in Vaiśākha, the Sun is in Aries. Those men who having bathed in the morning worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, in the month of Vaiśākha, according to the proper rites, are fortunate and blessed. Taking morning bath in Vaiśākha, (offering) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (observing) fasts, (offering) oblations, and practising celibacy (in Vaiśākha) destroy great sins. Again, O king, in Kaliyuga the greatness of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) is to be kept secret (like) Aśvamedha etc. The meritorious Aśvamedha (i.e. the horse-sacrifice) does not take place in Kali (age). This rite of Vaiśākha is similar to that of Aśvamedha. The sinners of wicked minds do not realise in Kali (age) the religious merit of the horse-sacrifice, viz. attaining heaven and salvation. Men born in it being sinners, must go into the ocean of hell. Therefore its spread is made rare by him.”

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Acts to be Performed in Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of the high-souled Nārada, the royal sage Ambariṣa who was amazed, said (these) words:

Ambarīṣa said:

2-11. O great sage, leaving auspicious months like Mārga-śīrṣa etc. why do you praise Vaiśākha as the month superior to all (other) months? Why is Vaiśākha most dear to Viṣṇu? What are the rites (to be done) in it? What are the gifts (to be given)? What is the penance (to be practised) and the deities (to be invoked in it)? O sage, please be graceful by favour of your advice, to me who am purified by the dust of your lotus-like feet. O great sage, you alone know the way of life; you emancipate (men) on the ways of religious life. You know the entire truth, you teach the way of life. You are an author, you are an instructor; you are a thinker; you respect (others); you are an employer. O best sage, those who distribute equally, are remembered by those who know sacred texts. All that fruit which is obtained by vows, sacrificial sessions, penance, gifts, is obtained by (giving) instruction in the way of life. O sage, he who prompts another, is also the sharer of the fruit of a bath at a sacred place, penance, and sacrifices which he (who is prompted) gets. Other people do what the pre-eminent people do. The people follow the authority accepted by them. Therefore, you deserve to teach (i.e. please teach) me that wonderful way of life. The advice of a teacher proper for the place and occasion is difficult to get. There are no other objects such as gaining a kingdom, which cool us (i.e. me) down as a meeting with you.

Sūta said:

12. Then the best sage Nārada, with his teeth shining due to a gentle, soft smile said to Ambarīṣa.

Nārada said:

13-19. O king, listen. I shall narrate, for the good of the world and of you, the rites (performed) in the month of Vaiśākha, which I formerly heard from Brahmā. It is difficult to get birth in Bhārata. (More difficult) than that is to be (born as) a human being. Proceeding according to one's own way of life is (more difficult) than being born as a human being. O king, more difficult than that is devotion to Vāsudeva. There also, the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, is difficult. Those

men, who, having come across that month, perform (acts like) bathing, (giving) gifts and muttering prayers according to rules, are blessed and fortunate. Merely by seeing them, sinners, desiring religious merit and purified by devotion to the lord, become free from sins. Those who, with voluntary religious observances, have bathed (according to rules) in the month of Māgha, sport for a crore of years in the Nandana grove. As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, in the same way there is no other month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu.

20-29. Sins remain in the bodies of men till the Vaiśākha month, destroying impurity, does not come. The remaining five days of that month, beginning with the eleventh day are equal to the entire month. Those who have, with various articles, worshipped god Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, have obtained the fruit of their existence. What more and more difficult (gain) is not obtained by means of bathing and properly worshipping the highest lord in the month of Vaiśākha? O king, the existence of those who have not given (gifts), who have not offered oblations into fire, who have not muttered prayers, who have not met with death at a sacred place, who have not at all reflected upon Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of all sins, is fruitless. The wealth of that man who is a miser, when there is wealth with him and he dies without giving (gifts), is useless. Birth in a good family is obtained by bathing at a holy place etc. and penance. (But) O king, nothing (of these) serves (a man) without (i.e. unless he gives) gifts. Due to the importance of a (regular) bath during the five days in the month of Vaiśākha birth in a good family is obtained, so also wealth of various kinds (is obtained). So also, O king, a good son, a good family, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth, (painless) death, nice enjoyments and pleasures (are secured).

30-34. O king, by the grace of that god—the high-souled Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, greater love for giving gifts, generosity, excellent courage, and desired accomplishments take place. A man having bathed in the month of Kārtika or Māgha or Vaiśākha and having especially devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, and having given gifts according to his capacity, and having had pleasures of this world, would reach the place of Viṣṇu. As darkness disappears at sunrise,

similarly the series of sins earned (i.e. committed) during many existences would disappear by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) himself told me these words. Viṣṇu gave a great currency to the month named Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) and considering secretly Yama's words, made it go to the human world.

35-40. Therefore, O great king, when this month of Vaiśākha has arrived, the devotees of Viṣṇu should bathe in the holy water, purifying men, of Gaṅgā, or of Revā, or Yamunā or Sārādā. O best king, having got up before sunrise, and having worshipped, according to sacred injunction, Mukunda or Madhusūdana, the lord of gods, and having enjoyed all desired superior pleasures along with sons, grandsons and wealth, and having practised penance, one would obtain heaven which is inexhaustible. O glorious one, having known like this, having bathed, worship according to proper rites Madhusūdana, especially in Vaiśākha. Having worshipped Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and Viṣṇu's position. O king, having saluted the god of gods, Viṣṇu, destroyer of sins, a man should begin this vow of the full-moon day of Caitra.

41-47. Endowed with curbs and restraints, and having given something according to his capacity, eating food fit to be eaten during these days, sleeping on the (bare) ground, remaining in the vow of celibacy, emaciated due to austerities like bodily mortification, meditating on Nārāyaṇa in his heart, he should, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha has arrived, offer honey, sesamum seeds etc. He (should also give) food to the chief brāhmaṇas devoutly and a cow along with presents. He should also request the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in the (effect of) the bath. O king, as Lakṣmī is dear to Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, so is the month of Vaiśākha dear to Madhusūdana. A man, having thus bathed (in every Vaiśākha) according to the rites for twelve years, should, according to his capacity, bring it to conclusion to please Madhusūdana. O king, I have told you this importance of the month of Vaiśākha, which I had formerly heard from the mouth of Brahmā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

*Subtle Are the Ways of Dharma**Sūta said:*

1. Having heard these words of Nārada the king who was amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu said (to him):

Ambariṣa said:

2. O sage, we are confused. How can a very difficult fruit be obtained by a little exertion—merely by means of a bath?

Nārada said:

3-5a. O king, you have spoken the truth that with little exertion great fruit is obtained. Have faith in it. It is the statement of the Creator. The ways of religious merit are subtle; for they are difficult to understand even for the masters. (Even) the learned are bewildered about the act of Viṣṇu whose power is inconceivable. O king, kṣatriyas like Viśvāmitra attained brāhmaṇahood due to the excellence of religious merit.

5b-15a. Therefore, the ways of religious merit are subtle. O king, even Ajāmila who was known as a female slave's husband, had abandoned his religiously wedded wife and always remained on the path of sin. When he died, he, through affection for his son, called, 'Nārāyaṇa'. Due to that thought and utterance of the name (Nārāyaṇa) he obtained a position very difficult to be had. As fire, though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns (one's limb etc.), in the same way, the name of Govinda, though uttered under a pretext (i.e. non-seriously or casually), burns (the sins). The grandsons of sage Vyāsa cohabited with their brothers' wives. Similarly the sons of Pāṇḍu were themselves sons born of their mothers (Kuntī and Mādrī) by those (deities) other than Pāṇḍu. O king, all the five Pāṇḍavas enjoyed Draupadī. And (still) their fame is auspicious. Therefore, the course of religious merit is subtle. Strange are the deeds (of human beings); strange are the ideas of beings. Strange are the beings; strange are the potencies of acts. Perhaps a good deed which remained hidden, grows with some auspicious act, O king; and in a certain existence it gives a great fruit. Religious merit is subtle, and cannot

be gauged in any manner. O king, no positive evidence for the fruit of this (auspicious deed) is heard (i.e. available). A certain auspicious deed, covered by other sins, comes from somewhere and gives its fruit somewhere.

15b-23. There is no destruction of a good or bad deed in this world. Yet due to many auspicious deeds a terrible sin goes (away). O king, with regard to the statement which you made, that due to great exertion great religious merit is (had), listen from me about the cause thereof. If little or much exertion depends upon smallness or greatness (of an activity), then the cultivators etc. would always be men of great religious merit. The utterance of a hymn is a great exertion for a lion. The five products of a cow would not have been (mentioned) as constituents of a vow. Thus the greatness or smallness of an act that ought to be done would follow from another vow of (i.e. like) entering water or fire. There is no such rule that this is a small or this is a great (exertion). O king, the fruit alone which is mentioned in the sacred texts, would be great. As a small (thing) is destroyed by a great one, in the same way a great (thing) is destroyed by a small one. A heap of grass (i.e. hay) is burnt even by a small spark of fire. A thousand formidable sins connected with killing, crores of violations (of the modesty) of the teacher's wife, sins like theft, committed by devotees of Kṛṣṇa through ignorance, come to an end.

24-31. (Even) a small good act, done by Viṣṇu's good and wise devotee, would obtain an inexhaustible fruit, O hero. No doubt should be entertained in this (matter). A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. By means of devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, gems, a wife, a mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven, salvation are not away (from the devotee). Thus, there is no doubt that even by means of (an act done according to) rite told in sacred texts, there would be the destruction of a great sin, and the nourishment (i.e. enhancement) of good deeds. The fruit would increase, O king, due to the excellence of devotion and deeds. Even by means of the various (fruits), the course of religious merit should be understood to be subtle. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to the great-souled Viṣṇu. Even if one is observed (i.e. even if bath etc. is done in only

one Vaiśākha) by people, it gives the entire desired (object). O king, this is my view that a man who is given to bathing (right) from his birth with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper time and place, who is void of devotion and yet is a giver, does not become pure. Creatures live at holy places on Gaṅgā etc. and flocks of birds always live in temple(s). (Though) they observe fasts, they, being bereft of devotion, meet with death, and do not get the (highest) position (i.e. salvation).

32-38. We are not able to describe the religious merit of him who devoutly keeping Viṣṇu in his heart, who intent on bathing and thus being pure, worships Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha. He, defective in devotion, having entered fire at the time of his death, after the fire which is sprinkled with ghee and oil, whose flames are turning round, is enkindled, does not go to heaven, nor does he obtain any other (good) fruit. Therefore, O king, have faith in the fruit of (i.e. given by) Mādhava. Even a small auspicious act destroys (the fruit of) hundreds of impious acts. As due to the fear of Viṣṇu's name the hosts of all sins perish, and O king, as they perish by bathing in the morning at a holy place when the Sun is in Aries, similarly they certainly perish by taking a bath at dawn (every day) in Vaiśākha, as serpents perish by the lustre of Garuḍa. He, O king, who bathes in Gaṅgā or Narmadā when the Sun is in Aries, and devoutly recites the hymn removing sins, once, twice or thrice, at dawn, noon and evening, goes, being free from sins, to the highest place (i.e. salvation).

39-40. O Ambariṣa, for getting great religious merit, take care to observe the rule of taking bath in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha. What is said to be obtained by those living in the city of Ānarta for crores of years, is obtained by a single morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

41-48. O king, listen to an old account in this regard, viz. the conversation with his wife of the brāhmaṇa Devaśarman. On the bank of Revā, in the very auspicious holy place Amarakaṇṭaka was born the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman as the son of Kauśika. He was sonless, had no wealth, and was having (i.e. suffering from) many afflictions. He was always troubled by the great grief of poverty. Day and night he would think about a means of (getting) a son and wealth also. Once his beloved wife, of a good vow, named Sumanā, saw her husband full of anxiety

and with his face hung down. Seeing her husband at that time she, the glorious one, said: “Your mind is agitated by numberless troubles. You are confused with delusions. O you very intelligent one, give up your anxiety. Tell me your grief, be calm, be happy; for there is no other grief like anxiety that dries up the body. He who would give it up, becomes happy. O lord, O brāhmaṇa, tell me the cause of your anxiety.”

Nārada said:

49. Having heard the words of his dear wife, the very intelligent Devaśarman, having the chaste wife as his companion, though afflicted, said (these) words:

Devaśarman said:

50-51. O good one, I shall tell you all about the cause of my worry, which you have thought about; having heard it, listening (to me), understand it accurately. O you of a good vow, I do not know for what sin I am wealthless and sonless. This is the cause of my anxiety.

Sumanā said:

52-66. Listen, I shall speak (that) which (instruction) will remove all doubt, and will contain all wisdom. Contentment alone is the great auspicious cause of happiness etc. Lack of contentment is a great sin. So said lord Hari. This greed is the seed of sin and its root is ignorance. Falsehood is its trunk; and the great trunks are there due to its great expanse. Its leaves are lustful passion and crookedness; it is always blossomed with bad thought. Its fragrance is falsehood, and ignorance is its fruit. Its walls are the heretics and thieves. The cruel, the fraudulent, the sinners are the birds that have resorted to the large branches of the tree of ignorance. Its great fruit is ignorance, and unrighteousness is the juice in the fruit. It is nourished by the water of emotion; and vehement desire loves its nourishment. It has delight in unrighteous acts, and becomes sweet due to being moist. With fruits like that the tree of greed is fructified. A man who lives by resorting to its shadow, every day eats its self-ripe fruits; being well-nourished by the juice of the fruits—unrighte-

ousness—a man would be well-fed; he (then) sets about for a fall. Therefore, O (my) lord, one should not, resorting to anxiety, have greed. One should not worry about wealth, sons and a wife. O dear one, he who is not wise, being deluded, day and night thinks in vain along the path (i.e. in the manner) of fools. ‘How shall I get good objects? How shall I get sons?’ The deluded one thinks like this day and night. While worrying he would find great pleasure (just) for a moment. Again he becomes conscious, and is troubled by great affliction. O Brāhmaṇa, giving up anxiety and delusion, follow him. O you very intelligent one, in the worldly existence (one) has relation with none else. Friends, relations, sons, father, mother, are related to themselves only. So also is wife and others.

Devaśarman said:

67. O good one, tell me in detail, of what kind is the relation due to which all—wealth, sons etc. and kinsmen—happen (to be related).

Sumanā said:

68-80. O (my) husband, five kinds of sons are born. I shall now tell about (i.e. explain) them. They are: one who snatches away what is deposited with him; the other is the one connected through debt; enemy; suitable; and neutral, O dear one. O lord, I shall narrate their characteristics separately. Sons, friends, dear wife, father, mother, kinsmen are born on the earth being related to themselves (only). He who has been robbed (of his wealth) on the earth by snatching away his deposit, that is the owner of the deposit; he would be born as a virtuous, handsome son in the house of him who had snatched the deposit. There is no doubt about this. He had passed (away) after having given (the son) the affliction of snatching away the deposit. The owner of the deposit was (i.e. would be) a virtuous, handsome son, endowed with all (good) characteristics, of him who had snatched away the deposit. Talking agreeably and sweetly, and being eloquent, he would show great affection. Being (born) as his son of great qualities, he would, O glorious one, give very fearful affliction, which he (i.e. the father in the present existence) had given him, after generating matchless love and after having seized his wealth,

by means of snatching away his deposit. Being short-lived he meets with death. Again and again striking him and giving grief to him, he departs. When he (i.e. the father) says: 'O son, O son', and laments, then he laughs: 'Who is whose son?' 'This wicked one snatched away my deposit; due to the snatching away of (my wealth), and due to great, unbearable grief, my life formerly departed. Then (I shall depart) by giving him grief, and seizing his excellent wealth'.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Sumanā on Kinds of Sons

Sumanā said:

1-11. (Now) I shall describe to you the son connected through debt. Someone having taken debt from someone dies. The giver of wealth (lender) being a son, or a brother, or a father, or a beloved, would, always wicked internally, remain in the form of a friend. He, of a rough figure, would not at all notice virtue(s). He always speaks cruel words to his relatives. He eats sweet (articles of food), and always enjoys pleasures. He is always engaged in gambling, and longs for stealing. He steals money from the house, and, when prevented, gets angry. Every day he abuses his father and mother. He is a thief; he frightens (others); he speaks very harsh words. Thus having seized his wealth, he remains happily. In childhood he takes formidable wealth through the ceremony performed at his birth etc. Again on the occasions of marriage etc. (he takes money) many times and in various ways. In this way the wealth is reduced, and he says this much also: 'All this—the house, the field—is mine. There is no doubt about it.' Every day he torments his father and mother with strong sticks, pestles and by ruthlessly plucking their hair. On the death of his father and mother the very cruel one becomes affectionless and harsh. There is no doubt about

it. He never performs the śrāddha-rites and never gives gifts. O king, dear sons become like this.

12-16a. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the inimical son. When childhood has come, he always behaves as a son. He, while sporting, would beat his father and mother. Having beaten them and again and again laughed he goes away. Again he comes there and is always angry with his father and mother, and abuses them every day. Thus, due to wealth he always indulges in inimical acts. Then again having beaten his father and mother, the wicked-souled one just goes away due to the power of the former enmity.

16b-21. Now I shall describe how the proper son would become dear. As soon as he is born, he would do what is agreeable, and by means of sportive beatings (he would do what is agreeable) in his childhood. Then, after he attains youth, he would do what would please his mother and father. Through devotion (to them) he would please them, and by means of affection, words, and conversing with them in a pleasing way, he would gratify both of them. Coming to know of the death of the elders, he weeps through affection (for them). Being extremely afflicted he performs all śrāddha-rites and offers them piṇḍas. He gives them support of life. Being resolute, he, having the three debts, would certainly, through affection, emancipate them. O dear one, since he would be a proper (son), he would give (to him from whom he borrows). There is no doubt about this. O very wise one, he becomes a son in this manner.

22-27a. Now before you I shall describe the neutral son, O dear one. He always behaves in a neutral manner. He does not at all give. He does not receive. He does not get angry, or is not pleased. O best brāhmaṇa, the neutral one does not go away after abandoning (his parents). Servants, beasts, so also horses, elephants, buffaloes—all these are connected (with a man) through debt. One of us, or both of us have not taken anything fraudulently, nor have we made any deposit with anyone in our former existence; I am not pleasing anyone. O dear one, listen for a moment. (Right) from our childhood I have not had enmity with anyone in the former existence; and O best brāhmaṇa, I have not abandoned my husband. Realising this, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. O lord, you never snatched (anything)

from anybody; nor have you given (anything) to anyone. How will (then) wealth come to you? Do not be surprised, for whatever is obtained by one who guards (i.e. tries to guard) it, does not remain (with him).

27b-32. Realising thus, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. To whom do the sons, dear wife, kinsmen and relatives belong? In this mundane existence nobody belongs to anyone (else). There is no connection (between two persons), O best brāhmaṇa. Men of wicked feelings, deluded by infatuation and illusion (say:) "This is my house; this is my son; this is my wife." O dear one, the bond of the worldly existence appears to be untrue.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Devaśarman's Life in the Previous Birth

Nārada said:

1-3. Thus addressed (by his wife) the best brāhmaṇa, Devaśarman, again spoke to his wife, having (his) welfare in mind, and talking wisely: "O good one, you have told the truth which destroys (i.e. removes) all doubts, for it has been said that good men, the truly wise ones, desire (the continuity of) their family. O dear one, I am not so much anxious about (getting) wealth as about (having) a son. With whatever means I shall produce (i.e. have) a son."

Sumanā said:

4-11. A man wins the worlds through a son. A son emancipates (his) family. O glorious one, due to a good son, the father and mother survive. O dear one, it is better to have one son (only). What is the use of (having) many worthless sons? One son emancipates the family; the others (i.e. many sons) cause torment. Formerly only I have said that (these) others (simply) enjoy relation. Due to religious merit a good son is

had; due to religious merit (birth in a noble) family is obtained. A good womb (i.e. being conceived by a noble woman) is obtained through religious merit, and a bad death is had as a result of sins. A heap of pleasures (is had due to religious merit), O dear one. I am telling the truth only. A man lives by celibacy, truth, penance, necessary means of living, gifts, restraints, forgiveness, purity, O dear one; so also by harmlessness, might and non-stealing also. By means of these ten constituents he produces Dharma only. By means of these constituents Dharma becomes complete as the foetus (becomes complete) by means of limbs in the womb. A righteous person produces Dharma with three kinds of acts (viz. of body, of mind and of speech). Dharma being pleased with him, gives him meritorious pleasures. The wise one obtains whatever he thinks of.

Devaśarman said:

12-14. O respectable lady, you have told me the entire excellent knowledge called Dharma. O glorious one, O you of a good vow, if you know, tell me how I would obtain a son devoted to Viṣṇu and possessing virtues. O sinless one, you have obtained (i.e. learnt) the whole way of Dharma from your father. O dear one, I know that due to the favour of Cyavana, with whom Viṣṇu was formerly pleased, you are one who expounds the Vedas.

Sumanā said:

15-20. O you who know religious merit, go to Vasiṣṭha. Request that great sage. From him you will obtain the son knowing religious merit, to whom religious merit is dear.

When these words were uttered by her, the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman (said:) “O auspicious one, I shall follow your advice. There is no doubt about it.” Saying so, that best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman went to Vasiṣṭha who knew everything, who was bright, who was the best among those who practised penance, who, the best brāhmaṇa, remained on a seat on the bank of Gaṅgā, who was surrounded by flames of lustre, who was, as it were, another sun, who, the glorious one, was shining, who was the lion among brāhmaṇas and the best brāhmaṇa. He

repeatedly and devoutly saluted, (prostrating himself) like a staff, that sage. That very lustrous son of Brahmā (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) said to the sinless one: "O you very intelligent one, be comfortably seated on the auspicious seat."

Nārada said:

21-23. The best among the meditating saints who was seated, said to (Devaśarman) the treasure of penance: "O dear man, O glorious one, in your house, your wife and servants are well, so also everything is well with fires, with which sacred rites are performed. You are healthy in all limbs; and you always practise righteous things." Saying so, the very wise (Vasiṣṭha) again said to the brāhmaṇa: "O best brāhmaṇa, what cherished desire of yours (should) I fulfil?"

Nārada said:

24-28. Having spoken these good words to the brāhmaṇa, he ceased speaking. Then that glorious brāhmaṇa said to Vasiṣṭha, the best among sages, the magnanimous one, and the best among those who practised penance: "O revered best brāhmaṇa, (please) listen to my words; you may interrupt (me). Due to which condition (I am suffering from) poverty? How (is it that I am) not having the happiness of (having) a son? O dear one, this is my doubt. Tell me due to which sin (I am poor and sonless). Perplexed by great delusion I was advised by my dear wife, O brāhmaṇa. O dear one, sent by her, I have come to you. Tell me all that which will remove all doubt. (Please) be my emancipator from the bondage of the worldly existence."

Vasiṣṭha said:

29-30. For a man there are five kinds of connections: Sons, friends, so also a brother and other kinsmen and relatives. These respective ones have been already explained to you by Sumanā. O best brāhmaṇa, those (sons) that are related (to the father) through debt, are bad sons.

31-36a. I shall explain to you the auspicious characteristic(s) of a son. He is attached to religious merit; his mind is always

engaged in the practice of truth: he is pure; he is endowed with knowledge; he practised penance; he is the best among the eloquent; he is well-adorned with all rites; he is intent upon Vedic studies; he well knows all sacred texts; he honours gods and brāhmaṇas; he performs all (kinds of) sacrifices; he is a giver and a donor; is sweet-speaking; he is always engaged in the meditation upon Viṣṇu; he is calm; controlled; he is always friendly; he is always devoted to his father and mother; he is learned; he maintains his family. A good son having these qualities gives happiness (to his parents). Others having relation (with a man) cause grief and torment.

36b-38. O sinless one, what have you to do with a neutral son (giving) no fruit? All of them come in the form of sons to the worldly existence, and all of them go after giving terrible grief, O best brāhmaṇa. I shall explain all the wonderful deeds you did and preserved in the former existence.

39-53a. Listen, O you very wise one, you were in your former existence a śūdra, and none else; you were a cultivator of land, you did not have knowledge; you were extremely greedy. You had one wife; you always hated (others); you had many sons; you never gave (gifts); you never knew righteousness and perfect truth. You never gave gifts; you never studied sacred texts; you never visited a holy place; you never undertook a pilgrimage, O you very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, you thus repeatedly practised cultivation (of land), and O you best brāhmaṇa, you also formerly reared beasts, so also again and again you reared she-buffaloes and mares. O best brāhmaṇa, you yourself did such deeds formerly (i.e. in your former existence). Similarly, you greedily amassed much wealth. But you never spent it in a righteous way, even after seeing a worthy but feeble recipient; having cultivated land you did not give wealth (to others). O brāhmaṇa, having sold all cowdung and your cattle, you amassed large wealth. You always sold butter-milk, so also ghee and milk and curd. Infatuated by the illusion caused by Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa, you thought of bad times and made this money (through making things) very costly. Indeed, you, the pitiless one never gave gifts at that time. O brāhmaṇa, you never worshipped the deities. On the parvan days (in a month) you never gave wealth to brāhmaṇas. On the arrival of

the time for offering a śrāddha, you never performed one devoutly. When the forenoon of the day came, your virtuous wife said to you: "O very intelligent one, it is the time to offer śrāddha to (my) father-in-law, so also the mother-in-law." Hearing these words of them (i.e. your wife and others), you left the house and ran (away). You never realised the path of righteousness, nor did you ever listen to it. Greed was your mother, father, brother. Greed was your relatives and kinsmen. Giving up righteousness, you always preserved greed only.

53b-65a. Therefore, you became unhappy, and were very much tormented by poverty. Day by day great avarice was produced in your mind. Whenever wealth always increased in your house, you were burnt by avarice of the nature of fire. (When) at night you slept, you thought more of greed. When you reached (i.e. when it was) the day, you were always filled with great delusions. (You thought:) When (would this money) be a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions in my house? Thus, a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions (worth of wealth) was (amassed); but (your) avarice never left (you). Thus, disregarding the time, it always increased. You never gave (gifts); you never offered oblations into fire; you never enjoyed (your wealth), O brāhmaṇa. Definitely you put (i.e. buried) it into the ground. (Your) sons did not know (it). O brāhmaṇa, you always adopted other means for the acquisition of wealth. Being intelligent you always asked people. Deluded by avarice, and asking other(s) about a spade, collyrium, having discussions, and asking (others) about alchemy, you wandered alone. You always thought about formulae that would give you success. You consulted the desire-yielding gem and (others) about entering into various castes. You were burnt by the fire of avarice, you did not move happily. You were blazing with the fire of avarice, you waited, and had lost your intelligence. O best brāhmaṇa, you who were (reduced to a condition) like this, were under the influence of destiny. When your wife and sons asked about that wealth, you never told them, nor did you give it to them, and having died you went to Yama.

65b-69. I have thus told you your whole former account.

Due to these deeds, you are not having wealth, you are poor, O brāhmaṇa. Viṣṇu is pleased with him, in whose worldly existence his sons are always devoted, are of good character, endowed with knowledge, always engaged in truthfulness and righteousness. He with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, enjoys wealth, grains, a wife, sons, grandsons endlessly. Without Viṣṇu's favour a (good) wife and (good) sons are not (obtained), O brāhmaṇa, to have a good birth in a family (i.e. to be born in a good family) is (indeed) the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETY

An Account of Devaśarman's Good Deeds of Previous Birth

Devaśarman said:

1-4. You have described to me these deeds done (by me) in my former existence; for, O brāhmaṇa, I earned wealth as a śūdra only. (But) O best brāhmaṇa, how is it that I attained brāhmaṇahood? Tell me the reason for all this, O you who are proficient in sacred and profane knowledge. Birth in the Bhārata country is difficult. More difficult is to get manhood (i.e. to be born as a human being). In manhood to be born as a brāhmaṇa is difficult; and extremely difficult is to be born in a good family. There also, due to what did I get a chaste wife, knowing everything, speaking agreeably, endowed with all virtues and difficult to obtain?

Vasiṣṭha said:

5-16. O brāhmaṇa, I shall now describe the righteous deeds that you did in (your) former (existence). If you think (like listening), listen. There was a brāhmaṇa who was highly religious-minded, who was of a good conduct, who was very wise, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who was religious-minded, who was always solely devoted to Viṣṇu. He always roamed over the earth for bathing at the holy places. While wandering the very intelligent one came to your house. Merely on seeing

good thought was produced (in your mind), since, when the arrival of the good takes place into one's house, what is not obtained by one, O brāhmaṇa? Whatever is difficult to be obtained in the world, even the stable place of salvation (is obtained) by service to Viṣṇu. O best one, he (i.e. that brāhmaṇa) asked for a place to stay in. Your wife and you, along with your sons, gave it to him. "O brāhmaṇa, come, come comfortably to my house." Thus you repeatedly said to that holy brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu. "Stay here comfortably; this is your house, O you of a good vow. Today I am blessed; I am meritorious; I have gone to a holy place. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you today I have obtained the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. You have shown me the great meritorious place where cows live." You shampooed his body, properly rubbed his feet, and washed them with water; and you bathed with the water (flowing from) his feet. You instantly gave ghee, curd, milk and many other substances to that brāhmaṇa, as you were urged by destiny. O glorious brāhmaṇa, with your wife and sons you thus pleased that brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, and proficient in sacred knowledge.

17-26a. Then, in the bright morning, in the month of Vaiśākha, he who, being pleased, was going to Gaṅgā, taught you through kindness, the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha; and he made you, with your wife and sons, bathe properly. "As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, similarly there is no (other) month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Till the month of Vaiśākha, destroying sins, does not arrive, sins remain without any obstacle in the body". O brāhmaṇa, having heard his words, you resorted (to bathing daily) in Vaiśākha, and with a pleased mind you worshipped Viṣṇu. Beginning with the eleventh day you took a morning-bath (every day) with proper rites, for the remaining five days of the month. Due to your devotion to the brāhmaṇa, you every day took bath in Revā (river) during the month of Vaiśākha. You worshipped the highest lord, the god of gods and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. You did not get (a chance) to bathe for a full month from the beginning. Thus, you could bathe (only) for five days. Due to that religious merit and especially due to the company

of that brāhmaṇa, and due to the favour of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) you obtained brāhmaṇahood.

26b-27a. Due to your contact with that month, you got (birth in) this great family which is endowed with truth and righteousness difficult to be obtained (even) by brāhmaṇas.

27b-33a. You also obtained a very chaste wife born in the house (i.e. family) of Cyavana and a teacher of the Vedas. O great sage, beauty alone is a great ornament of women. The second (ornament) is good character. The third is truthfulness. Always being noble is the fourth (ornament). The fifth (ornament) is excellent religious merit. Sweetness is the sixth (ornament). The seventh (ornament)—a full ornament—is their constant great purity within and without. Devotion to the husband is the eighth (ornament). Service (to him) is the ninth (ornament). Patience is the tenth (ornament). Affection is the eleventh (ornament) of women, O best brāhmaṇa. Your chaste wife, expounder of the Vedas, is adorned with these (ornaments). You have respectfully got her due to your bathing in the month of Vaiśākha.

33b-41. Which difficult things are not obtained by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and by duly worshipping the lord? You were deluded by attachment. Your mind was occupied by avarice. O brāhmaṇa, in the former existence you amassed wealth only. You never gave it to brāhmaṇas or to other poor people or to your relatives or sons or wife. While dying you thought of greed only. You did not give (gifts); you did not offer oblations into fire; you did not mutter (prayers); you did not die at a holy place. You did not meditate upon god Nārāyaṇa who destroys all sins. When there is wealth with a man, he becomes a miser. What is more painful than that he dies without giving (gifts). By bathing at a sacred place etc., by penance a birth in a (good) family is obtained. O brāhmaṇa, nothing except (the merit due to) the gifts stands by a man. Due to that sinful thought you were reduced to poverty. You were sonless and were always tormented by affliction. Due to the peculiar virtue of bathing in Vaiśākha even for five days and to worship of Viṣṇu at that time, and due to the company of that brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇa, you obtained birth in a (good) family.

42-47a. Even brāhmaṇahood is difficult (to have). A good

son, a (good) family, brāhmaṇahood, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth and death, good enjoyments, so also happiness, always to have a strong desire to give (gifts), generosity, excellent courage—(thus) O brāhmaṇa, all desired accomplishments are had by the favour of that high-souled god, Viṣṇu. Having bathed (daily) in the month of Kārtika, or in the month of Phālguna, or in the month of Vaiśākha, and having worshipped Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), having devoutly given presents, having enjoyed worldly pleasures, a man then goes to Viṣṇu. By taking a bath (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, the row of sins committed in many existences disappears, as, O brāhmaṇa, darkness disappears at sunrise.

47b-54. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) told me these words. Viṣṇu conceived a pure idea; (so) he first brought about the rite (in) the month of Vaiśākha, to make people go to heaven, after having mentally thought (i.e. known) Yama's secret. Therefore, in this month of Vaiśākha, that has now come, having bathed in a sacred place having holy water (every morning) before the sun has risen, and having, with proper rites, worshipped Madhusūdana, and having enjoyed (i.e. having had) sons, grandsons, wealth, good fortune and desired pleasures, you will, in the end, obtain heaven. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you all that (i.e. all those deeds which) you did in the former existence. O glorious one, having known like this, especially (the importance) of Vaiśākha, bathe (daily) and with proper rites worship Viṣṇu, Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, the god that should be worshipped. (Thereby) you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and immutable Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

55-57. The best brāhmaṇa, of great prowess, instructed by Brahmā's son (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), was glad, and the magnanimous one, having saluted Vasiṣṭha there, and having taken his leave of the brāhmaṇa, went home; and the great sage spoke to his wife, Sumanā: "Due to your favour that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) told me all the account of my former deeds. O good one, Vasiṣṭha brought to light all of them. Today only my delusion is destroyed. I shall devoutly worship Viṣṇu, after (daily) bathing in the month of Vaiśākha."

Nārada said:

58. Having heard these very pure, very auspicious words leading to an auspicious result, she, who was delighted, said to her dear husband: “You are blessed, since you have been advised by the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha).”

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Happy End of Devaśarman's Story

Nārada said:

1-6. That very wise Devaśarman along with that Sumanā took a bath according to proper rites at the very famous and holy sacred place called Kanakhala in (i.e. on the bank of) Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha when the Sun was in Aries. Observing curbs and restraints, he worshipped Viṣṇu according to the proper rites, and gave something (by way of gifts) according to his capacity. He ate food fit to be eaten during days of fast, slept on the bare ground, and practised the vow of celibacy. He became emaciated by the practice of penance like Kṛcchra (i.e. mortification of the body) and meditated upon Nārāyaṇa in his heart. When the full-moon day arrived, he gave honey, sesamum seeds etc., so also he devoutly gave food, a cow along with other presents, to brāhmaṇas, and requested the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in (the fruit of) bathing there. That beautiful, chaste wife, solely devoted to her husband, every day served her husband, after bathing and worshipping Viṣṇu.

7-14. The couple, undoubtedly looking upon themselves as fortunate, went home, well-pleased. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit, he had, after some time, unlimited wealth, grains, and (other) riches. He obtained four sons who were endowed with modesty, were proficient in sacred texts, knew the ways of the world, were devoted to Viṣṇu, were solely devoted to their mother and father, whose intellect was unbounded, and who were instructed for (having the fourfold) goal of human

life, were well-known, knew the Vedas and were devoted to Brahman, who were endowed with all virtues, and were famous. The couple, having enjoyed the full rich pleasure from the sons, took, after a long time, a great (i.e. auspicious) bath in Vaiśākha, due to devotion to him (i.e. Viṣṇu) and the favourableness of their religious merit, O king. As Viṣṇu is actually said to be the lord of Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) and of Lakṣmī (i.e. prosperity), in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is dear to Viṣṇu. O sinless one, I have told you in a slightly abridged form this importance of (the month of) Vaiśākha, which, O hero, I had formerly heard from (my) father (i.e. Brahmā).

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

Citrā's Story

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of that Nārada, that king, being amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu in his mind, said (to him):

Ambarīṣa said:

2-6. How should we err about it, since by means of little exertion a śūdra behaving sinfully obtained excellent brāhmaṇahood? O dear one, to obtain brāhmaṇahood, even by means of various acts of religious merit, is difficult. (Then) how is it that the mean one obtained it (merely) by bathing (daily) during the month of Vaiśākha? O lord, even rich kings like me do not obtain the lordship of the earth by (performing) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (practising) severe austerities, and other acts called (acts of) religious merit. That (Viśvāmitra, the) son of Gādhi obtained it after a long time and with great difficulty by practising continuously for full hundred years various kinds of severe austerities and with many efforts. How is it (then) that that sinful one belonging to the lowest caste, bereft of his own duties, poor

and non-giver obtained through this small religious merit done without exertion the essential nature of Rāma?

Nārada said:

7-12a. O king, you have told the truth. Brāhmaṇahood is very difficult to get. The ways of Dharma are subtle and difficult to understand. Strange are the deeds; strange is the thought of a being; strange are the beings; and strange are the powers of deeds. O king, at some time a good deed, done in secret, thrives due to some auspicious act. It gives great fruit even in the same existence. This is mysterious and subtle Dharma. It cannot be carried in any manner. No certainty about the time when it would give fruit is known. Whatever good deed concealed by other sins, comes from somewhere and at some place and gives a good fruit.

12b-18. In this world (the fruit of) a good or bad deed does not perish. Yet due to many auspicious acts (even) a formidable sin perishes. O king, you said that the fruit of a deed would be obtained there due to greater exertion; in that matter listen to what I say. If smallness and greatness of a deed depended on little exertion and much exertion (respectively), then there are men observing great vows and constantly doing deeds. There is great exertion to obtain the urine of a lion, a tiger etc. Therefore, in a rite the products of a cow are recommended. Thus if repetition of a deed would mean its greatness, then entering water, fire etc. would be smaller than (any) other vow. There is no rule which says this is small or that is great. The fruit of it that is laid down in sacred texts is alone its great produce, as a great thing destroys a small one or a small thing destroys a great one. The destruction of grass (i.e. hay) is seen (to take place) even due to a small spark.

19-24. O king, Ajāmila was known to be the husband of a maid servant. He had forsaken his religiously wedded wife; he constantly remained in (i.e. committed) sins. At the time of his death he called his son by his name Nārāyaṇa. And due to uttering the name (of Viṣṇu) he obtained a very difficult position (i.e. salvation). As fire though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns, in the same way, the name of Viṣṇu, even though it is uttered under some pretext, burns (sins). (Sins due to) myriads of killings, thousands of swearings, all thefts, crores of violations

of the teacher's wife are instantly destroyed by (uttering) the name 'Govinda' dear to Viṣṇu. O hero, whatever small good deed full of devotion to Viṣṇu is done by a learned man, would have an inexhaustible fruit. No doubt should be entertained about this.

25-33. A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. Due to devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, wife, land, mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (i.e. are easy to obtain). Thus by means of a small act laid down in the sacred texts, if it is done according to the proper rites, even a great sin would perish. There is no doubt about this. O learned one, due to the excellence of the devotion and the act, there would be greater fruit. The ways of Dharma are subtle, and are difficult to be known even by the wise. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to glorious Viṣṇu. Even all alone it gives all the desired objects in the three worlds. In my view a wise one who gives gifts without sincerity even from his birth, and one who somehow bathes with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper place and time, is not purified. A man of wicked thoughts, though at the time of death enters fire, blazing by the sprinkling of ghee and oil with its flames turning all round, and is burnt, yet he does not obtain heaven or any other (similar) fruit. Gods live at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., so also hosts of yakṣas live in temples. They, being bereft of devotion, observe fast and perish, (but) do not get the (desired) fruit. Therefore, we are not able to describe the religious merit of him who intent upon bathing (daily) and purified, would, having kept devotion in the lotus of his heart, devoutly worship Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O king, in this context also listen to an old account.

34-44a. I shall tell you about a certain queer fruit due to the favour of the month of Vaiśākha and of Viṣṇu, viz. that a certain brāhmṇa woman obtained. Formerly there was the lord of Kānti well-known as Divodāsa. His daughter, a great gem, always best among females endowed with virtues and beauty, of a good character and charming and auspicious, and matchless in beauty on the earth, was known as Divyādevī. Her father saw her endowed with form and beauty. Seeing his daughter Divyādevī, the king became anxious as to which good, glorious bride-

groom this daughter should be given. (Thus) thinking and properly knowing the king of Rūpadeśa the king called the magnanimous Citrasena and gave his daughter to that intelligent Citrasena. O king, when the time of his marriage came, that Citrasena died due to the perversity of destiny. The religious-minded king Divodāsa thought and, O king, having called brāhmaṇas, he asked them: “At the time of her marriage Citrasena died. (Please) tell me what kind of fate she will have.”

A brāhmaṇa said:

44b-58. O king, the marriage of a daughter is performed according to sacred injunctions. Another husband is enjoined by the scriptures in the case of a woman, when her husband dies, or when he forsakes her, or when afraid of a great disease he abandons her and goes away, or, O king, if he would renounce the world. Mainly it is the father who would get (his daughter) married. There is no doubt about this. This is, O king, what is ordained by the good people in law books.

The best brāhmaṇas said: “Get her married.” The religious-minded Divodāsa was urged by the brāhmaṇas. The king made up his mind to get her married. O king, again he gave Divyādevī away in marriage to the meritorious, magnanimous king Puṣpasena. That king too died at the time of marriage. Whenever the glorious father (king Divodāsa), extremely afflicted, made an effort at getting her married, at the auspicious moment (of marriage) the husband died. Then twentyone husbands died at different times. Then the king, of a known valour, being firm along with the minister, called him, and the lord of the earth decided upon her self-choice marriage. Then he invited many kings and chiefs devoted to religion for her self-choice marriage. Those foolish kings disturbed by her beauty and pounded by death fought among themselves. Thus, O lord, men, those kṣatriyas perished. Divyādevī, afflicted with grief, then wept piteously. Then king Divodāsa, seeing that girl very much afflicted and weeping, saluted, with his neck (bent) politely, his family-priest knowing law, having sacred knowledge, and practising penance (and said to him).

Divodāsa said:

59. Favour me and tell me what the great sin of my daughter Divyādevī is, that has done this (mis-)deed.

Jātukarṇa said:

60-76. O hero, I shall tell you the deeds of Divyādevī done in her former existence. Listen while I am telling them. There is a holy city called Vārāṇasī that destroys sins. In it there was a very wise man named Suvīra. He was born in the vaiśya caste and was endowed with wealth and grains. His wife, O very wise one, was quite well-known as Citrā. Abandoning the family-practices, she behaved badly. She did not care for her husband, and remained in (doing) fearful deeds. She, of a wicked mind, gave up auspicious acts, and acted sinfully. She, a wanton woman, loving quarrels, always censured her husband. Always given to staying in another man's house, she wandered much. The wicked one would always find the weak point of others among the beings. She was engaged in condemning the good; she always laughed very much. She was addicted to bad company; due to her speech she was dear to people of bad conduct. She was cunning; she hated religious people; she was a liar. Knowing her to be like this, Suvīra married another (woman). That pious Vīra (i.e. Suvīra) always given to truly holy thoughts constantly enjoyed, according to pious ways, objects of senses dear to his heart and happily along with that new wife. He was honoured by that unlimitedly truthful chaste lady of a good mind. That strange Citrā, of an excellent complexion, a wanton woman, hating piety in company of (i.e. with) virtues, was driven out by him. Moving freely and being shameless she moved with her paramour. She joined those who were engaged in (committing) sins; she was attached to the job of a messenger. She was skilled in the art of a go-between of other women. She broke families and had a crooked heart. Having called a chaste woman she would urge her by words generating conviction in stories about the desire for diversion and sports. The sinful one would stir the minds of good men and women. She would cause good women to be offered to other men (than their own husbands). Thus she caused fraud, bereft of the host of pious (acts), to be done (by others). Having

thus enjoyed for a hundred years. She lived like a prostitute. Always given to sinful acts she died in course of time. She was born as your daughter Divyādevī in your house. She was (born) as a beautiful girl endowed with a (good) form, as she was urged by her destiny in the former (existences).

Nārada said:

77. Hearing these words of him (i.e. Jātukarṇa), Divodāsa was extremely amazed. The king spoke sweet words to the sage Jātukarṇa.

Divodāsa said:

78-79. When she who was of such a bad behaviour and engaged in bad acts, died, how is it that she was born as a worthy daughter of mine, whose deity is Lakṣmī's husband (i.e. Viṣṇu) and who am born in a very noble family? And, O sage, due to which strange religious act, she doing (such) acts has obtained a lucky birth, difficult to get, in a large, royal, rich family?

Nārada said:

80. Having heard these words of enquiry of that king, the wise sage then spoke a few true and pleasant words.

Jātukarṇa spoke:

81-86. Citrā, deceiving covert, lustful paramours, bereft of wealth and intelligence, by means of strange sexual unions, and drinking poisonous drinks, went from here and became a prostitute in the very famous city (called) 'Nāga'. A certain brāhmaṇa, afflicted and troubled, (but) of a pure heart, one evening came to that city named Nāga. Not seeing any other place (for camping), the ignorant one went to the house of Citrā. (Merely) by looking at him, the prostitute very much deluded him. He was pleased by her with shampooing his feet, bathing him, offering him a tāmbūla, a seat and food, and diversions. Then he was free from dejection. Then with strange sexual unions, she, absolutely without having any purpose in view, served him well. The brāhmaṇa who was attached (to her) due to her peculiar devotion, passed the entire night with her. When, in the morning,

he was about to leave, he whose mind was somehow attached to Citrā and who was pleased by her being solely devoted (to him), with her acts and deeds (said):

The brāhmaṇa said:

87-98. O dear one, I who am pleased (by you) must do a good turn in return. I shall without any discrimination tell you my strong affliction. Listen with respect to that auspicious (act) which destroys all sins, a description of (i.e. told by) the brāhmaṇas, formerly telling a tale on the bank of Narmadā. He who in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun enters Aries, carefully bathes even for three days just before sunrise, is freed from heaps of sins. He who for the entire month of Vaiśākha would bathe outside (his house), and would worship Viṣṇu with due rites, also destroys his sins. A man is freed from great sins especially by such acts as bathing at a holy place and giving gifts (there) during the month of Vaiśākha. The heap of great sins freely remains in the body of a man till he gladly, at dawn, before sunrise, bathes (at a holy place), when the Sun has entered the Zodiacal sign Aries. Thus I heard from the brāhmaṇas that were talking, about the excellent boat (useful) in crossing the ocean of many sins. Nearby is the excellent river Śivadehā. To destroy that stream of sins I am going to bathe there. O dear one, if you like, or if your mind is detached (from the worldly existence) then come with me for the bath in Vaiśākha. This life, so also this extremely charming youth are transitory. They are the cause of the stay in hell, and it would be difficult for us to avoid it. You pleased me and caused me to fall into the ocean of sins, which is true even of the great who live with the wicked. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Delay for (even) a moment is not proper. I shall emancipate you also, if you have special attachment to Viṣṇu.

Citrā said:

99-100. O lord, due to luck I am having your company as a result of (my) religious merit. My mind is certainly detached. It has a dislike for the worldly existence. Indeed I have learnt in (i.e. from) the sacred texts about the company of the good. My salutation to him who is inconceivable and uncontrolled.

Jātukarṇa said:

101-109. Speaking like this and urged by the sage that Citrā, after having taken a little wealth that was there with her, then went with him. Then that brāhmaṇa also reached the body (i.e. the stream) of Śivadehā in the month of Vaiśākha, bathed (there), and the kind one gave her the joy of bathing on that day. Then the kind-hearted brāhmaṇa made that Citrā, talking beautifully, bathe according to the proper rite. When the brāhmaṇas were separately reading the Purāṇas, she gladly heard there the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha, by merely hearing which the darkness of sins gets exhausted, as at the sunrise the stream (i.e. the heap) of darkness perishes. She, due to the bath in that holy water causing cessation of birth, of Śivatānu (i.e. Śivadehā), had her mind pure and she became spotless like the sun's lustre. There in the Revā various people longing for the end of (the visits to) the worlds and engrossed in the service to Viṣṇu plunged in Vaiśākha. The men who clean their impure bodies in (the water of) Narmadā, giving happiness here (only), especially in the month of Vaiśākha, become those who enjoy the sports of the kings of mortals. (Merely) by (one's) remembering Revā she destroys the sin (committed) from birth. When seen, she (destroys the sin) of ten existences. If somehow (someone) bathes in her, she (destroys) the sins of a hundred births. When she is resorted to, she gives (residence in) Rudra's heaven.

110-123. During the entire month of Vaiśākha that Citrā bathed in the water of Narmadā, and every day, according to her capacity, gave something to brāhmaṇas. Due to the company of the brāhmaṇa she devoutly listened to the prayer to Viṣṇu, when the brāhmaṇas there recited it. Having bathed there in the water of Revā for the entire month of Vaiśākha, and having received, according to the proper rite, (a blessing) about absence of defect from the brāhmaṇas, she lived there for a month. That brāhmaṇa named Sudeva also made a new hut there, lived in the hut due to compassion for Citrā and favouring her incessantly bathed in the water of Revā. Then after some time the brāhmaṇa died. After him, O king, Citrā also died. Due to the religious merit of (i.e. collected during) the month of

Vaiśākha she, without seeing (i.e. experiencing) the torments inflicted by Yama, became your daughter at that time only. It is the result of the acts of (i.e. done during) that (month), that she obtained (birth) in a king's family which is devoted to Viṣṇu, which is pure, and which cannot be obtained by sinners, O hero; and O best among men, her excellent name was (fixed as) Divyādevī. She is enjoying the fruit of the food, enjoyments, pleasures and happiness that she formerly gave to the brāhmaṇa, though she was associated with him as a prostitute and of that little that she gave after having bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. She is drinking cold water and incessantly eating sweet food; and, enjoying divine enjoyments, lives in the house of the lord (i.e. you); and, being tormented by pain, grief etc. enjoys whatever is given by destiny. A little of the fruit of her act, viz. that she was engaged in breaking the houses (i.e. families of men and women), has (now) come up. O hero, that beautiful woman, though a great sinner, was born as your daughter without going through the torments inflicted by Yama due to the efficacy of the bath in the month of Vaiśākha. O hero, I have thus told you the behaviour of your daughter which was due to bad acts during her entire (former) existence.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Divyādevī Is Married to Virasena

Nārada said:

1. Having heard these wonderful words of Jātūkarna, the king having respectfully saluted the learned sage, said:

Divodāsa said:

2a. O sage, how would she now be free from this affliction?

Jātūkarna said:

2b-4. I shall tell you about a very meritorious (act) by (doing) which she would be happy. Though generally it is not

to be disclosed, I shall tell it to you. Though the act is small, it is wonderful (and) so would destroy (the fruit of) hundreds of bad acts. As due to the power of meditation upon Viṣṇu great and full sin perishes, in the same way a formidable (sin) perishes due to the (daily) morning bath and gifts (given) in the month of Vaiśākha.

5-6. As elephants flee due to the fear of a lion, similarly all heaps (of sins) perish due to morning bath at a holy place when the Sun has entered Aries and due to the eulogy of Viṣṇu. Certainly sins run away due to a (daily) bath at dawn in Vaiśākha, as serpents run away due to Garuḍa's lustre.

7-11a. Therefore, Divyādevī, after having listened to greatness of Vaiśākha, and having listened to the sin-removing eulogy of Viṣṇu, should again be given (in marriage). She will enjoy the happiness of the company of her husband. O king, that Sudeva also is born as the mighty king of the Pāṇḍya country due to the religious merit (obtained by him) by means of bathing in Revā in the month of Vaiśākha. Give him only your daughter purified like that by the (Vaiśākha) bath, and again by (her) listening to Viṣṇu's eulogy (in the month of Vaiśākha). No doubt should be entertained about this. O king, see the wonder. The fruit of a pious act is said to be the same in this world and in the next one.

Nārada said:

11b-15. Just on hearing this the king was delighted, and made his daughter perform the entire rite as told by Jātūkarna. He married Divyādevī to that Virasena only, the chief of the Pāṇḍya country and her only friend in her former birth. With Virasena, her friend due to her deeds in her previous existence, she who well practised vows, enjoyed many objects of senses. O Ambariṣa, I have in brief told you a little about the greatness of Vaiśākha. What else would you like to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The Means of Destroying Sins

Ambariṣa said:

1-5. O lord, I desire to hear that hymn which destroys sins (and) by merely hearing which the heap of sins melts away. I am lucky; I am favoured, that I was made to hear the auspicious rite by merely hearing which the (fruit of) bad deeds that is earned is lost; then what is wonderful there if (greater merit is earned) by auspicious ablutions in the month of Vaiśākha sacred to god Viṣṇu? By ablutions which are laid down as compulsory the heap of sins perishes. Even by the recital of his name, there would be (i.e. one would reach) his heaven. O sage, I think that which is called Viṣṇu's name is alone meritorious, great, pure, charming, to be attained in the world by good deeds only, and is present in the month of Vaiśākha. Oh! they are blessed who remember the name of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O (sage), tell me again his account which is pure and which is the friend of all.

Sūta said:

6. Hearing the words of the best king to whom Viṣṇu was dear, the sage was pleased, and though he was eager for having the bath in Vaiśākha, he said so because of his interest in the account of Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

7-8. O king, it is true that this rite of sweet talk about the account of Viṣṇu between ourselves is pure; and it is superior to the holy bath in the month of Vaiśākha, as (the talk is) with you whose deity is Viṣṇu. On the earth I look upon him as the devotee of Viṣṇu, whose life is for Dharma, whose Dharma is for Viṣṇu, and whose days and nights are (spent in doing) virtuous deeds.

9-10. O king, I shall tell you a little about the fruit due to the bath in Vaiśākha. Even my father would not be able to tell in detail the entire (account of the importance of Vaiśākha), by

merely bathing in which the dead got emancipation. Sinners bathed in the superior water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha.

11-17a. Formerly a brāhmaṇa who was known as Muniśarman, who was religious-minded, who was truthful, who was pure, who possessed tranquillity and restraint, so also forgiveness and contentment, who was engaged in rites in honour of the dead ancestors, who followed the injunctions of the sacred texts and the codes of laws, who was engaged in (speaking) sweet words, who was diligent in worshipping Viṣṇu, who was intent on the company of the devotees of Viṣṇu, who knew (what happens in) the three times, who was engrossed in his own duty, who was wise, tender-hearted, to whom his wife was dear, who was kind, very intelligent, who knew the essential nature of things, who was learned and dear to brāhmaṇas, while wandering for pilgrimage to the holy places went to Revā for bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and saw before him five men who were very much afflicted, who did not touch one another, whose bodies were dark, who were seated after having resorted to the shade of a banyan tree, who, with their hearts dejected, were looking in all directions.

17b-20. Seeing them the best brāhmaṇa, being amazed, thought: 'Who are these men here in the forest, who are frightened, and whose movements are timid? They appear to be thieves, with their forms changed, and sharing one another's company. These, having dark, lustrous bodies are talking to one another'. While the best and wise brāhmaṇa was thinking like this, all (the men) came there, and remaining away (i.e. at a distance) from him, and respectfully joining the palms of their hands and saluting him, spoke clearly thus:

The five men said:

21-30a. We are looking upon you as the best, bright man, venerable due to your behaviour, chief among the kind, O brāhmaṇa. Listen to our words. You are our friend. The good are the prop of the helpless who have become sinful due to fate. The good remove the suffering of the oppressed merely by their sight. I am a kṣatriya, named Viravāhana, and a resident of the Pāñcāla country. Through folly I killed a brāhmaṇa with an arrow hit-

ting an invisible mark, the sound of which was only heard. I was bereft of the lock of hair on the crown of my head and of the sacred thread, and was without a mark. I roamed on the earth saying, "I am the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Give alms to me who am a killer of a brāhmaṇa and who am very sinful." Thus wandering at all holy places, I have come here. O best sage, my (sin due to the) killing of a brāhmaṇa does not go away even today. O lord, doing like this I who am being burnt by sin, and whose heart is full of grief, have passed a year. O brāhmaṇa, this other one that is seen here, is a brāhmaṇa (named) Candrasārman. O brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of folly he killed his preceptor. He is said to be the killer of his preceptor due to his mind being full of folly. He lived in the country of Māgadha. He was abandoned by his kinsmen. Since then wandering due to (ill) luck, he has come here, O sage. He is without a lock of hair on the crown of his head and without a sacred thread. He is (also) bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa.

30b-32. I asked him his account; and the brāhmaṇa told me the truth that by him, staying in his preceptor's house, with his mind full of anger and being greatly deluded, was killed his preceptor. Burnt by that sin he lives oppressed by grief. O brāhmaṇa, this third one again is the composed Vedaśarman.

33-35a. Due to folly, and as a result of his attachment to a prostitute this brāhmaṇa became a drunkard. I asked him (his account), and he too told me everything that had taken place; (he) oppressed by mental torment told me all his acts. All people, his wife and relatives, drove him away. Smeared with that sin and wandering, he has come here.

35b-37a. The fourth one is a vaiśya, Vidhura by name, who violated the bed (i.e. the wife) of his teacher. Through ignorance he enjoyed his mother who had become a prostitute and who lived in Videha for three months. Then, having come to know the truth, he, being afflicted, moved from there and has come to this land, O sage.

37b-43a. This fifth one is a great sinner, keeping the company of sinners. Every day through greed for money he committed a sin like theft. This vaiśya filled with many sins, was abandoned by his (own) people. With his mind dejected, he, named Nanda, has come to one place. O best brāhmaṇa, none of us

touches one another by means of (having) food (together) or having the same covering, except talking to one another, O glorious best brāhmaṇa. We do not sit on the same seat; do not sleep on the same bed. Thus overpowered by grief, we went to various holy places; (but) O best sage, our formidable sin does not leave us. Seeing you, the bright one, our pleased minds say: 'Due to the auspicious sight of a good man like you, our sins have come to an end.'

43b-45a. O lord, tell us a remedy, by which our sins will perish. O brāhmaṇa, O lord, we know you to be kind and to be one who knows the meaning of the Vedas. You are certainly the emancipator of those that are oppressed and are seeking (refuge), that are repenting, and that have got (i.e. committed) sins through folly.

Nārada said:

45b-46a. Hearing these words of them, the sage Muniśarman, the ocean of compassion, said these words after thinking:

Muniśarman said:

46b-48. You have committed sins through ignorance. You are telling the truth. You are repenting. Therefore, now you deserve to be favoured by me. Listen to my true words. With my hands raised I am speaking. (Listen to) what I formerly heard from Aṅgiras in a conclave of sages. It is found in the Vedas, and is also heard from the mouth of the teacher.

49-57. Firstly you did not propitiate Viṣṇu. You have truly told it. There is no other satisfaction than eating. There is no other teacher than (one's) father. There is no other worthy recipient than brāhmaṇas. There is no god higher than Viṣṇu. There is no holy place like Gaṅgā. There is no gift like that of a cow. There is no prayer like the Gāyatri. There is no vow like that of the twelfth day. There is no friend like the wife. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no happiness like freedom. There is no excellent stage of a man like that of a householder. There is no better conduct than truthfulness. There is no greater pleasure than contentment. There is no better month than Vaiśākha which destroys sins when resorted to according to (proper) rites and through devotion, and which is dear to Viṣṇu.

It is especially very difficult to be secured at holy places like Gaṅgā (i.e. visiting holy places like Gaṅgā is very difficult in Vaiśākha). All expiations like (sacrifices) lasting for twelve years (are easier). Sins roar till the month of Vaiśākha has not arrived. He, of a pure heart, solely devoted to Viṣṇu, who bathes in the water (of Gaṅgā) that has sprung from Viṣṇu's feet during the entire month of Vaiśākha, alone destroys all his sins. The sinners have met him for the atonement of their sins. What should people say about him?

58-60. That man who now bathes in the water of Narmadā, which gives happiness and removes sins, in this month called Mādhava, when (the Sun) is in Aries, is freed from all sins. In the month of Vaiśākha big rivers are difficult to be found everywhere. Yet more difficult (to get) is Gaṅgā, so also Revā, so also Yamunā. He who, having gone respectfully at least to one of these three, bathes there in the month of Vaiśākha, becomes sinless and would go to Viṣṇu.

61. Therefore, you who have committed sins, should, along with me, go to Revā, and bathe there in the water of Revā, the only essence of religious merit, resorted to by hosts of sages, in the month of Vaiśākha, to remove your entire fear of sins.

62. Thus addressed, all the sinners, being delighted, went with the sage to Revā, praising her (power of) working wonders.

63-66. Muniśarman who was going from there, and who was followed like that by (those) men, saw on his way eight frightened (but) fearful goblins who were making various sounds, who were moving here and there, whose hair was raised and red, whose teeth were black and who were thin-waisted. Seeing them running towards him in the forest filled with thorns and without trees and water, he, with his mind disturbed by fear, said: "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa. (O Nārāyaṇa) protect (me), protect (me)."

67-69. Hearing the words, "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa" which are the great abode of piety, they who had obtained the condition of goblins, mentally went back to their previous existence. Seeing them of a modest mind, Muniśarman speaking sweetly, said: "Who are you, O deformed men? Who has done which deed due which this deformation has been obtained (i.e. has

taken place)? How is it that all of you are afflicted like this and are fearful?"

The ghosts said :

70-77a. We are always oppressed by hunger and thirst; we are overcome with a heap of griefs. O wise one, we are cruel of heart, we have lost our power of understanding and are confounded. We who are fools and kill human beings, do not know the directions anywhere. We have told (one) grief. This is again the absence of happiness. On hearing your loud (but) delicate utterance 'Nārāyaṇa', it appears as if the morning has dawned due to the sight of sunrise. Having seen you, O brāhmaṇa, we have attained purity of nature. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and having heard Viṣṇu's name, we have reached another existence, we have become kind. Generally the sight of a devotee of Viṣṇu removes disgrace, purifies the minds of men, and gives them courage. I am Paryuṣita by name. This sacred one is Sūcaka. The next is Śighraga; then is Rodhaka. This fifth one is Lekhaka. This sixth one is Vāgduṣṭa; this seventh is Vidaivata. This eighth one, giving trouble, is Nityayācaka.

Muniśarman said:

77b-78a. How do you who are goblins, have names which are due to deeds (performed by individuals)? What is that reason for which you have names?

The ghosts said:

78b. I always ate sweet (articles of food) and gave stale (food) to a brāhmaṇa, (and that too) without ghee, though there was ghee (in my house).

79-88a. This impure and overanxious one by nature looked for and reported real or unreal weak points and failings of others. Therefore, he is called Sūcaka. O best brāhmaṇa, this one, when requested by a hungry brāhmaṇa, would quickly disappear. For this reason, O best brāhmaṇa, he is (called) Śighraga. This sinful and bad-hearted one, sitting upon the top of the house, has always eaten all alone. Therefore, he is known as Rodhaka. This one has always resorted to silence and scratches the earth with (the toes of) his foot. He is the greatest sinner among us. He is

(called) Lekhaka, accompanied by (other) people. This one hates the virtues of the virtuous; (has) appreciation of virtues in one who does not have them; he attributes knowledge to one who does not have it. Therefore, he is called Vāgduṣṭa. This sinful one due to heresy does never care for manes, deities and men and for good deeds. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata. This one is always a suppliant; always shows real or unreal poverty; tortures beings; and is greedy. Therefore, he is (called) Yācanaka. These goblins—i.e. we—having formerly experienced torments inflicted in hells, have again become well-settled on seeing (you.) I have told you all this account about ourselves. If you believe, then ask a question. I shall tell you (something) else.

The brāhmaṇa said:

88b. All the beings that are there on the earth, are all dependent upon the food (they eat). I desire to hear about your actual food.

The ghosts said:

89-97. Listen to the food of (i.e. taken by) us, which is condemned by all beings, and on hearing about which you will always repeatedly censure us. (We subsist on) phlegm, urine, excrement, and the dirt from the bodies of women. We enjoy at those houses where purity is abandoned, and enjoy there things like burnt utensils etc. thrown out by women, and which are censurable due to dirt. The goblins enjoy in those houses where they do not worship Viṣṇu, which are controlled by women, which are without kindness and forgiveness. Goblins enjoy at that house where indecent language is used, where the women are impure, and where struggle is constantly going on. We enjoy there where the daughters (and sisters) are not honoured, so also excellent women (are not honoured), and where contact with bad people is frequent. The goblins enjoy there where no service is (offered) to Viṣṇu; where no story about Viṣṇu is (told); where there is no love for Viṣṇu. Those also in whose house goblins, being delighted enjoy, become goblins, and due to that sin become the destroyers of their own family. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, I who am talking, get my food.

98-99a. Nothing more sinful than this can be told. Being dejected due to the condition of a ghost (i.e. due to my being turned into a ghost), I am asking you of a firm vow so that I should not continue to be a ghost, and I would be free from this existence as a ghost.

The brāhmaṇa said:

99b-105a. By means of auspicious vows like Ekādaśī etc., by means of narrations of (the tales about) Viṣṇu, by means of worshipping deities and guests, so also by means of worshipping the teacher (or the elders) etc., by means of practices followed by good people, (by observing vows on auspicious) days as told in the sacred texts and codes of laws, so also by means of performing śrāddha rites and giving gifts: as performed according to the wise by practices like these there would be no ghosts in the family. He who being polite to his kinsmen, repeatedly salutes a cow, a brāhmaṇa, a holy place, the top of the Amara mountain, a river, a big river, and the aśvattha tree, does not become a ghost in the world. That man also who, being controlled, worships (these) in this order at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., has inexhaustible religious merit. Even a powerful person like me would not be able to describe it even in thousands of years. He would be free from his existence as a goblin merely on seeing (these).

105b-109. The month of Kārtika is great and is dear to Viṣṇu. The best month for austerities is Phālguna, dear to Viṣṇu. The month of Vaiśākha is Viṣṇu's month, and has Viṣṇu as its deity. The deities knew it to be the best of all months, in which all rites are accomplished. The esteemed knowledge of Brahman comes (then). (Thus Brahmavidyā) is Lakṣmī, the cause of everything, since she stays there in this month. Therefore, this month is known as Mādhava. As it is certain that among gods there is no god like Viṣṇu, similarly among all months there is no month like (Vaiśākha) dear to Viṣṇu.

110-118. Even by devoutly listening to the greatness of that month of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) one becomes free from the existence as a goblin; then what (would happen) by performing rites (in this month)! A man who is solely devoted (to Viṣṇu) is freed from all sins merely by means of conversing with the good

resorting to a holy place, reciting (the name) Nārāyaṇa, or even by means of hearing that name. O goblins, I shall try for your freedom (from this existence as goblins), since religious merit due to doing good turns to others could not be had even by means of sacrifices. O goblins, I go to bathe in the water of Revā in the month of Vaiśākha when the Sun is in Aries. I am followed by these five men. Those five only had become the heaps of sins through folly. They will come for bath by my words, who am kind. Till then, by my order, stay there in this forest, (and be) free from grief. Going (there) and after bathing in the water of Narmadā, having fashioned men of darbha, I, bound by kindness, shall merge the helpless ones according to proper rites into the water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha. Thus, there is no doubt that merely by bathing the lads made of darbha, you will be free from your existence as goblins in three days only.

Nārada said:

119-122. Having spoken like this, and being honoured by them who were firmly resolved, Muniśarman followed by these five (men) went (to Narmadā). Having gone there in the morning and having bathed there, he gave bath according to proper rites to the goblins fashioned from darbhas and by pronouncing the name (of each one of them). The goblins, remembered and bathed at the holy place by the sage pronouncing their names, became pious thereby, and being instantly free, went to heaven. When those five sinners of pale bodies, plunged by his word (i.e. on being told by him) in the water of Revā in the glorious month of Vaiśākha, they instantly became (men) of the lustre of gold only.

123-129. In the presence of all people Muniśarman made them hear (i.e. recited to them) the hymn destroying sins (and) they became men of great brilliance. But the men there did not touch them, though they were free from dust merely on bathing, due to the fear of the contact of sinners. Due to consideration for Muniśarman, and due to his religious authority, there was heard all of a sudden a divine voice: "These (men) are free from sins. What wonder is there that freedom from a heap of sins takes place in the case of those who, having Mukundy (only) as their heart and soul, have bathed in the month of Vaiśākha, and

have been here respectfully hearing the hymn removing sins? For all sinners this is a great hymn removing sins. For all sinners this is a great expiation, viz. to plunge in the morning into (the water at) a sacred place with devotion in the month of Vaiśākha, since, even those sinful goblins who were bathed (i.e. whose darbha-representations were bathed) by merely pronouncing their names, were remembered and made free by that pious Muniśarman.”

130-133. Having heard these very wonderful words being (produced) in the sky, the men there instantly praised those five holy men, the month of Vaiśākha and the sage (Muniśarman) and (river) Revā. Then the king heard the hymn of praise which destroyed sins, devoutly hearing which a man is free from heaps of sins, and by merely hearing which sinners attained purity. Many others also became free from the sin caused by ignorance. When the mind of men is occupied with (copulating with) another man's wife, (snatching) another's wealth, and harming a being etc., then the expiation is eulogy (of Viṣṇu).

134-150. (One should say:) “I am always saluting Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu (only). I salute Viṣṇu who is in my mind, who is the controller, who is unmanifest, who is endless, who is undefeated, who is fit to be praised of all, who is without beginning or death, and who is powerful. Since Viṣṇu is in my heart, since Viṣṇu is in my mind, since Viṣṇu is the cause of (my) ego, since it is Viṣṇu, the author of the immovable and movable, who remains in me, therefore a sin perishes when he alone is reflected upon. Since, when reflected upon, or seen devoutly in a dream, he removes the sin, I salute that Upendra, that Viṣṇu, to whom a salutation is dear. In this propless world, I salute this eternal Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Acyuta, who supports my hand. My salutation to you, O lord of all, O controller, O powerful one, O supreme being, O Viṣṇu, O Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, O Nṛsimha, O Govinda, O Bhūtabhāvana (i.e. cause of the beings), O Keśava. Bring to an end bad words, bad deeds and sins. Salutation to you. O Keśava, appease that very severe sin which ought not to have been done, which bad (deed) I, being under the sway of my heart, thought of. O Brahmanya, O god Govinda, O you who are solely devoted to the highest truth, O Jagannātha (i.e. the lord of the world), O Creator of the world,

O Acyuta, put an end to my sin. O Hṛṣikeśa, O Puṇḍarikākṣa, O Mādhava, let all my sins—committed in the afternoon, in the evening, in the mid-day or at night, through body, mind or words knowingly or unknowingly, perish by means of the utterance of the three names. O Hṛṣikeśa, O Puṇḍarikākṣa, may my sin committed through body, mind and words come to an end, O Mādhava. Let that sin which I committed while eating, drinking, standing, sleeping, keeping awake or seated, for getting money through body, mind or words, whether it is small or big, and which leads to a bad birth or to hell, be appeased by means of the narration of (the virtues of) Vāsudeva. When that Viṣṇu who is the highest Brahman, who is the highest abode and is pure, is praised, let the sin that there is, perish. That is Viṣṇu's position, having reached which the wise, free from (the sensations of) odour, touch etc. never return (to this world). Let him put an end to all that''.

151-159. That man who would recite or listen to the eulogy putting an end to sins, is freed from sins due to body, mind and speech. Freed from (the influence of) evil planets, he goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, when a sin is committed, the eulogy crushing all sins should be muttered. Best men should recite (the eulogy)—the expiation for the streams (i.e. heaps) of sins. By means of expiations, excellent hymns of praise and vows the sin perishes. Then the deeds should be performed for excellent success, enjoyment and salutation. O lord of men, the sin committed during former existences, so also the sin committed in this world, melts away (i.e. disappears) instantly on hearing this eulogy. This is an axe for the trees in the form of sins. This is a wild fire for the fuel in the form of sins. O king, this eulogy is the sun for (i.e. dispelling) the darkness in the form of the heap of sins. I have disclosed this hymn—this secret—which I respectfully received from my father (i.e. Brahmā) to you and also due to compassion for the world. Even Viṣṇu himself is not able to describe the greatness of the religious merit of him who, O king, hears this auspicious account. Well-being to you, O great king, I am quickly going to Gaṅgā to bathe (in her water, as) this great month of Vaiśākha has arrived.

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

*More Rites and Rituals to be Observed in Vaiśākha**Sūta said:*

1. Then the king joyfully asked the sage, after saluting him who was ready to go for his bath, the rite in brief, proper for bathing, giving (gifts) and other performances.

Ambariṣa said:

2-3. O sage, in this month of Vaiśākha which rite (should be performed)? Which is superior penance? Which gift (should be given)? How should a bath (be taken)? How should Viṣṇu be worshipped? O brāhmaṇa sage, please tell it (to me). You know everything, and you are dear to Viṣṇu. Tell (me) in particular about the procedure of worship at a holy place.

Nārada said:

4-7. O best one, when the Sun enters Aries in the month of Vaiśākha, a man, remembering Viṣṇu, should bathe in a great river, at the bank of a river, in a big river, in a lake, in a spring, in a natural pond, or a reservoir that he would come across by chance. Having observed a fast, on the eleventh day of the bright half of Caitra or on the fifteenth day when the Sun enters Aries, he, with the consent of a brāhmaṇa, and after having taken a good bath and having worshipped Viṣṇu, should take up the vow of the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha.

8-11. “During the entire month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries, I shall bathe in the morning with (certain) restraints. May the killer of (the demon) Madhu (i.e. Viṣṇu) be pleased. May my bath on every day during the month of Vaiśākha be free from difficulty by the favour of (Viṣṇu,) the killer of (the demon) Madhu and the favour of the brāhmaṇas. O Murāri, O Madhusūdana, give me the fruit (as told in the sacred works), O lord, due to my bath (every) morning in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries. O Madhusūdana, since this month of Vaiśākha is dear to you, be a giver of fruit, and a killer of (my) sins due to my (daily) morning bath during that (month).”

12-13. Having uttered these words at that holy place, having washed his feet, and being controlled in speech, he, remembering god Nārāyaṇa, should bathe according to the proper rules. A man should prepare a holy place by reciting this basic hymn: 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa'. This is said to be the basic hymn.

14-19a. Taking darbha in his hand, having sipped water according to the rules, and having bowed, a man should fashion a quadrangular having the measure of four cubits on all sides, and should invoke Gaṅgā by means of this basic hymn: "You have sprung up from Viṣṇu's feet. You belong to Viṣṇu. You have Viṣṇu as your deity. Therefore, protect us from the sin (committed by us) from birth to death. Vāyu has stated the number of holy places to be three crores and a half. O Jāhnavī, your holy places exist in heaven, on the earth and in the intermediate region between heaven and earth. Your name is Nandinī; among gods it is Nalinī. You (are) also (called) Dakṣā, Pṛthvī, Vihagā, Viśvagāthā, Śivapriyā, Vidyādhari, Mahādevī, so also Lokaprasādinī, and Kṣemaṅkarī, Jāhnavī, Śāntā, Śāntipradāyini."

19b-23. He should pronounce these names at the time of bathing. Gaṅgā moving in the three worlds, is present there. Having with the cavities of the hands (i.e. palms) joined and put on his head, and having put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head four, five or seven times, then one should like that bathe with clay, after having invoked it according to the rules (as): "O you earth, O you day, O you who are trampled over by horses, O you who are trodden over by chariots, O you who are trampled over by Viṣṇu, remove my sin—the misdeed I have done. You have been upheld by Viṣṇu, (in) the Boar (incarnation), having a hundred arms. Salutation to you of a good vow, and the araṇi (the cause) of the rise of all people."

24-27a. After thus having bathed, and having sipped water according to the rules, he should stand up and wear pure, white garments. Then for the satisfaction of the three worlds he should offer libations. He should first gratify Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Prajāpati, gods, yakṣas, [so also serpents, gandharvas, celestial nymphs and demons, cruel snakes, eagles, trees, creatures and birds, vidyādharas, clouds, so also those moving in the sky.

27b-29a. (He should say:) "For the satisfaction of (these

and) the beings also who have no support and who are engaged in sinful deeds, this water is offered by me.” A man should wear the sacred thread on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, and wear it round the neck while making offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify men, sons of sages and sages.

29b-51. (He should say:) “Sanaka, Sanandana, so also Sanātana as the third, and Kapila, Āsuri, Voḍhu, and Pañcaśikha also. Let all of them always be satisfied with the water offered by me.” With sacred rice-grains and water he should gratify all divine and brāhmaṇa sages like Marici, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, and Nārada. Then he should make the sacred thread hang down towards the left part of the body over the right shoulder and then wear it on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, after going (down) to the ground (i.e. after touching the ground) with his knees. With sesamum seeds, water and sandal, he should devoutly gratify the manes like: Agniṣvāta¹, Saumya, Haviṣmanta², so also Uṣmapa³, Kavyānala, Barhiṣad⁴, and Ājyapa⁵ also. (He should say:) “Salutation to Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, and Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla, Sarvabhūtakṣaya (i.e. who destroys all beings), to Udumbara, Dadhna, Nīla and Parameṣṭhin; salutation to Vṛkodara, Citra, Citragupta.” Then, with darbhas in his hand, he should gratify the manes. Having, with proper rite, gratified his manes (mentioning them) with their names and family, so also his grandsires on the mother’s side, he should recite this prayer: “May all kinsmen (in this existence) and the kinsmen in former existences, desiring (libations of) water from me, be fully gratified.” Having sipped water according to the rules, he should, in front (of him) properly draw a lotus with sacred rice-grains, flowers, water and red sandal. By mentioning

1. Agniṣvāta—A class of manes who, on earth, neglected the sacrificial fire.

2. Haviṣmanta—Name of a class of manes regarded as progenitors of kṣatriyas and descended from Aṅgiras.

3. Uṣmapa—Literally, imbibing the stream of hot food; a class of manes.

4. Barhiṣad—Deceased ancestors.

5. Ājyapa—A class of manes who are the sons of Pulastya or of Kardama, and the ancestors of the vaiśya-order.

the names of the Sun, he should carefully make respectful offerings (to the Sun): "Salutation to you of the form of Viṣṇu, of the form of Brahmā, to you, O Sun, having a thousand rays, and who are all-lustre; salutation to you, having the body of Rudra; salutation to you, to whom devotees are dear. O Padmanābha, salutation to you, adorned with ear-rings and armlets; salutation to you who are the lord of all the worlds, who awaken the sleeping ones. You always observe all good and bad deeds. O Satyadeva, salutation to you. Favour me, O Bhāskara. O Divākara, I salute you. O Prabhākara, my salutation to you." Having in this way saluted the Sun, and having gone round (the lotus drawn in front of him) keeping it to his right seven times, he should touch a cow, a brāhmaṇa, and gold, and then go home. Having worshipped the (venerable ones) in the hermitage, he should then worship the image. Being restrained and self-possessed, a householder should first devoutly only worship Viṣṇu and again at both places, with devotion, and according to the rules. He who would especially worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha, has worshipped him all the year round. He should perform the group of the vows in honour of Viṣṇu, for pleasing him, when the month of Vaiśākha has arrived and when (the Sun) the witness to (all) deeds has entered Aries. He should give many gifts like sesamum seeds, ghee etc., which destroy sins produced (i.e. committed) during crores of existences. A rich person should give, for the fulfilment of his desire, gifts like water, food, the (representations of a) cow made of sugar, sesamum etc. With his senses controlled one who bathes daily during the entire month of Vaiśākha, who mutters (prayers), who eats food fit to be eaten on days of fast, is freed from all sins.

52-60a. He who, being careful, eats once only (in a day), or eats at night, or eats without asking for the food during the month of Vaiśākha, gets all his desired objects. The rule is that one should have daily two baths outside (his house), at a river etc., according to proper rules, should eat food fit to be eaten on days of fast, should observe celibacy, and sleep on (bare) ground. (Observance of) a vow, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, and worship of Viṣṇu burns terrible sin committed during thousands of existences. As Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu)

when reflected upon, destroys sin, similarly (daily) bath in Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) done according to rules (destroys sins). A man should bathe every day at a holy place, should gratify his dead ancestors with sesamum seeds, should give gifts of jars of fragrant water etc., and should worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha. This gives satisfaction to Viṣṇu. He should give water with sesamum seeds, gold, food, sugar, garments, ornaments; he should devoutly worship thrice a day lord Viṣṇu who is actually accompanied by pure Lakṣmī. He who gratifies brāhmaṇas with many golden pots containing sesamum seeds, or with jars full of water according to his capacity, removes (the sins of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

60b-81a. A man, being concentrated, should bathe in a river in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship Viṣṇu with devotion with seasonal flowers and fruits. Free from heretic talk, he should honour a brāhmaṇa according to his capacity. He should gratify him by giving gifts of garments, cows, jewels etc. and heaps of wealth, or should give him other valuable things in small quantity according to his capacity. Then, the man who has no possessions left, should worship Viṣṇu by offering him flowers in the month of Vaiśākha. He, being free from all sins, would emancipate a hundred of his dead ancestors. He would not experience grief for a hundred thousand existences. He has no fear from a disease; he is not bound by poverty. He would become a devotee of Viṣṇu, and is blessed in existence after existence. O hero, he would live in heaven for one hundred and eight thousand yugas and would again be (born) as a king. Enjoying various pleasures of a king happily, he, due to Viṣṇu's grace, then merges into Viṣṇu. O king, listen; I shall tell you in brief about the worship of Viṣṇu. (It is of three kinds:) as laid down in the Vedas, as laid down in the Tāntric works and that which is of mixed types (all of which) destroy sins. There is no end to him whose fullest extent is limitless; O king, there is no end to the rite of worship. Now it will be in due order explained properly. The worship of Viṣṇu is of three kinds: As laid down in the Vedic texts, as laid down in the Tantras (i.e. religious treatises teaching magical and mystical formularies for the worship of a deity), and mixed. The Vaidika or the mixed one is laid down for brāhmaṇas and others. The Tāntrika is enjoined

for even a śūdra who is Viṣṇu's devotee. A man having attained brāhmaṇahood as laid down in his own Veda (i.e. the Veda looked upon as most authoritative by him), should, being composed and practising celibacy, worship Viṣṇu according to the proper rite. By his teacher's consent, he should worship him on an altar or in (i.e. by offering oblations to) fire or the Sun, water, or his own heart or a brāhmaṇa, with devotion and wealth. Having brushed his teeth, he should first take bath for the purification of his body. At both times the bath should be taken to the accompaniment of hymns and with clay. The rites like the morning and evening prayers are prescribed in the Vedic texts and the Tantras. At the end of the worship he should properly fix the solemn vow to perform the observance, which purifies the rite. The image (of the deity) is said to be of eight kinds: (made) of a stone, of wood, of iron, smeared (with clay, i.e. of clay), drawn, of sand, metal and of jewels. It is of two kinds and said to be the abode of life (i.e. alive): movable and immovable. The invocation and allowing (the deity invoked) to go are not (necessary) in the case of the immovable (image) at the time of the worship of Viṣṇu. In the case of a movable one, there is an option. Both these (i.e. invocation and allowing it to go) take place on the altar (itself). In the case of that which is not smeared (i.e. which is not made of clay) bath is (enjoined). In the other case (i.e. in the case of one made of clay) only sprinkling (with water should be done). A sincere devotee should devoutly worship the deity with well-known articles as become available. O king, in the worship, bathing and decorating (the image) is best. They (i.e. articles) may be put on the altars or oblation with ghee (should be offered) into fire. Or the worship offered into (i.e. to) the Sun is the best, or on the altar with water etc.

81b-96a. Even water offered with faith by a devotee is best. Being pure, and having first got his seat prepared with darbhas, he should, after having collected material like fragrance, incense, flowers, lamp, food etc., sit facing the north, or facing the deity, for worshipping (it). Having made the nyāsas¹, he should then

1. Nyāsa—assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.

touch with his hand (the materials of) worship of Viṣṇu. He should properly make ready the pitcher (from which water) is to be sprinkled. With that water he has to worship the deity and sprinkle the materials of worship and himself. Sprinkling the three pots with water he should (fill them) with the material and offer them. He should cause to be given (i.e. should give) three pots for water for washing the feet, material of worship and sipping water. With the tuft of hair on the crown of the head, from which the (head-)dress is removed, he should consecrate them with the Gāyatrī-hymn. At the end of the recitation (of the hymn), he should meditate upon a small portion representing the life of the lord, as is (conceived) in the lotus of his heart, and cherished for the fulfilment (of his desires) on a lump made ready with air and fire. When the lump is occupied by the image as conceived by himself, he being devoted to it, should invoke the deity to the (place of) worship etc. and with its body placed there, he should worship it. He should keep ready the articles of worship like water for washing the feet, for bathing, and the materials of worship etc. Having prepared, in nine ways, a seat for Viṣṇu—a lotus with eight petals, bright with a pericarp and filaments—he should, for success at both places (i.e. in this world and in the next), worship according to the ways laid down in the Vedic texts and in Tantras, worship Viṣṇu's (disc called) Sudarśana, (conch called) Pāñcajanya, mace, sword, arrow, bow, plough, pestle, Kaustubha, garland and (the mark called) Śrīvatsa. He should also worship by sprinkling etc., at their respective places, with their faces turned towards him, Nanda, Sunanda, Garuḍa, Pracanda and Caṇḍa. So also Mahābala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudekṣṇa, Durgā, Vināyaka, Vyāsa, Viśvakṣena (i.e. Viṣṇu), teachers and (other) gods. He, Viṣṇu's devotee, should always, when he has the money (to do so), adorn Viṣṇu with sandal, (fragrant root of a plant called) uśīra, camphor, saffron, agallochum, and fragrant water, with (proper) hymns—like the Vedic Svarṇagharmā, or the incantation in honour of Viṣṇu, or the hymn called Puruṣa-sūkta, so also with waving the light etc. before the deity, with garments, sacred thread, ornaments, leaves, garlands, fragrance and unguents.

96b-101a. The worshipper should give, with faith, water for washing the feet, for sipping, sandal, flowers, sacred rice-grains, perfumes, incense, and other articles to be offered. He should keep ready jaggery, rice boiled in milk, ghee, baked cake, small round cakes of flour, sweetmeats, milk, curd, ghee, and offering of eatables. Day after day there should be anointing the body, massaging it, showing the mirror, brushing the teeth, bath and all songs. In a basin as laid down according to the rules and with a round belt and altars, he should lay fire and gather it on all sides, and having diffused water with his hand, and sprinkled it, should offer fuel according to the rules. Taking the articles with holy water, he should sprinkle ghee with water used for sprinkling.

101b-119. He should meditate upon and worship (Viṣṇu) who resembles heated gold, whose four hands shine with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, and who is calm and who has put on a garment (soft) like the filaments of lotuses, who has put on a bright crown, bracelets, a girdle, and excellent armlets, who has the Śrīvatsa on his chest, whose Kaustubha is shining, who has put on a garland of wood-flowers. Having worshipped the wooden pieces having ghee (sprinkled over them) along with the oblation, having thrown two portions of ghee, and having sprinkled clarified butter and having offered oblation covered with ghee, having then worshipped and saluted he should offer the oblation to his associates. O brāhmaṇa, remembering Nārāyaṇa, he should mutter the basic prayer. Then having given (water for) sipping, he should keep the leftovers for Viṣṇu. Always singing and describing his deeds with words he should offer him perfume used to scent breath, and fragrant tāmbūla etc. Causing to hear and listening to good stories he should have leisure for a moment. Having praised him with hymns, and with various eulogies from the Purāṇas and Prākṛita (provincial or vernacular) panegyrics, he should, (prostrating himself before him) like a stick, salute him, saying, 'O lord, favour me'. Putting his head on his (i.e. of the image) feet and joining his hands, (he should say), "O lord, protect me, who have taken refuge with you, and who am afraid of the ocean having a shark-like death." With these words he should put on his head the leftovers of the articles offered to Viṣṇu, and should cause

to stay in himself the lustre fit to be put into (his heart). A man with faith should worship wherever there is a foot-mark of the idols etc. A man should worship him who dwells in all beings and in himself also, by means of purificatory rites and abstract meditation. Due to this he obtains desired welfare from Viṣṇu. Having installed the idol, he should get constructed a strong temple, so also charming flower-garden for accomplishing the worship (of the idol), so also should (introduce) worship, pilgrimage, festivals etc. for the continuation of the worship etc. on the parvan days and also every day. Having presented a (piece of) land, a market, a city, a village etc. (to the deity) he should reach intimate union with it. By means of the installation (of the idol), one would get sovereign empire; by (building) a temple one would get (happiness in) the three worlds; by worship etc. one would reach Brahmā's heaven; and by the three he would attain similarity (with the deity). By means of firm, desireless devotion, one obtains him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only. He who worships Viṣṇu like this obtains loyal devotion. That (really) is the body (of a man) which is white due to the dust (clinging to the body) while saluting Kṛṣṇa; it is auspicious like him. Those are the very charming eyes earned by means of penance, by which Viṣṇu is seen. That (alone) is the pure mind, which is white like the moon and a conch, and which pervades Mādhava. O king, that is the tongue, speaking softly, which repeatedly praises Viṣṇu. Women and śūdras also should worship (Viṣṇu) with the basic hymn, with devotion and according to the manner advised by the teacher; so also by other devotees of Viṣṇu. I have told you all this worship of Mādhava which is purifying. O king, do it especially in the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

120. Having heard these words of Brahmā's son (Nārada), which were lovely, auspicious, and pure, the king, best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, being curious, saluted him with the palms of his hands joined, and said:

Ambariṣa said:

121-124. I am the lord of the entire earth; my order is always obeyed; I serve the wise; I have dedicated my heart to

the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu; I have pleased the brāhmaṇas heartily. I am the gem from the family of well-known kings; I always have a liking for piety. I am successful. I am given to (appreciation of) beauty, appearance of bravery and to charity. I am having good sons. I have conquered a host of enemies. Due to some religious merit I have been born of a pure mind, and have been associated with the wealth of such virtues. From where again have I obtained this beautiful wife, the embodiment of religious merit and resembling Lakṣmī? O sage, tell me all these good deeds I did in the former existence. O you treasure of compassion, you know everything.

Nārada said:

125-132. This one who is your extremely beautiful wife, of a good conduct, was in the former existence a prostitute named Rūpavatī. This beautiful lady, performing auspicious deeds by the direction of a brāhmaṇa, would live (i.e. lived) as a prostitute as indicated (below). You were a goldsmith known as Devadāsa. You were, in a former existence, the lord, the paramour of her (who was then known as) Ruci. This Rūpavatī remained on the path of righteousness—the best knowledge—for (i.e. while) spending money (obscure!). Once on hearing about the religious merit due to the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha she, following (the path of) righteousness bathed when the Sun had entered Aries. The diligent, beautiful, prostitute Rūpavatī, always devoutly and respectfully saluted and gave gifts to a brāhmaṇa. You, Devadāsa, bound by love (towards her) were always advised by her. You intentionally and respectfully bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. At that time, at the beginning of Tretāyuga, on having got the third day (i.e. when the third day arrived), she spoke to the goldsmith Devadāsa, with respect:

The prostitute said:

133-135. Fashion an excellent (image of) Madhusūdana, Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). Having worshipped the deity with these barley grains and having gratified fire, I shall give it to a brāhmaṇa, with the consent of brāhmaṇas. In Purāṇas, this gift is said to be inexhaustible there (i.e. in the next world). I have heard from the brāhmaṇas that this Tṛtīyā (i.e. the third day of

Vaiśākha) is called 'Akṣaya (tṛtīyā)' of the bright half of Vaiśākha. It gives inexhaustible fruit. On this day I shall give this (image of) immutable Viṣṇu (to a brāhmaṇa).

Nārada said:

136-144. Hearing these sweet words of her, the goldsmith, truthfully and free from theft (i.e. without taking away a portion of the gold), fashioned an extremely beautiful image of Viṣṇu, thinking it to be meant for a religious purpose. She gave that beautiful image, having the characteristics of the (beautiful) moon as indicated, after she had taken bath, to a brāhmaṇa according to the proper rites, after worshipping it on that day of Akṣaya (tṛtīyā), O king. After some time, that prostitute, devoted to religion, died. Then that Devadāsa also died when (the span of) his life was over. Due to that religious merit, O king, that Devadāsa, reached (i.e. was born on) the earth as you, endowed with all virtues. That Rūpavatī too, due to that religious merit became your wife, full of love, named Kāntimatī. O hero, many desires are due to former deeds. Their courses are varied. O dear one, they are not known even by the wise. Therefore, there is no doubt that (the rites) should be performed during this month of Vaiśākha. It was kept as a secret by that god Brahmā and by Viṣṇu.

145-148. The religious merit due to the month of Vaiśākha is not obtained by those who have the company of the bad, who have no other knowledge (like that of religion), who are not restrained, who are bereft of the practices of the stages (of the human life), who have not visited holy places, who have not practised vows. The vow of the month of Vaiśākha is not (possible) for them in whose mouth the words, 'Govinda, Keśava, Mukunda, Hari, Murāri, Lakṣmī-nivāsa, Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu' do not find a place. Those who do not properly listen to the words of the good, which are very beneficial, and are the nectar in the form of the deeds of Viṣṇu, and who do not see (i.e. visit) the temples of (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī, do not obtain (the religious merit of) the vow in the month of Vaiśākha. They, who have not served their teachers, who have not given (in marriage) their adorned daughter to the bridegroom on his arrival, and who have not taught their sons the practices of

modesty etc. do not get (the religious merit of) the vow of the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

149-150. O brāhmaṇas, having thus advised the lord of men, the sage, the foremost among the knowers of hymns, took his leave, and, honoured by him (i.e. the king), went to Gaṅgā to bathe (in accordance with the vow) in the month of Vaiśākha. The king too, of a pure fame, thinking of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, performed, along with his wife, and with a religious mind, the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, as ordained by the sage.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Deeds Leading to Hell and Heaven

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, O Sūta, O you very wise one, live for a hundred years, since we were made to hear (i.e. you told us) what is beneficial to the world. Again talk the most. We (shall) drink your words. Again and again drinking those words, we are not satisfied, O Sūta.

Sūta said:

3-6a. In this case also there is known an old account—a dialogue between the prime world among the worlds (i.e. the Earth) and the lord of the world. The height of the Earth was six thousand yojanas and the expanse is three thousand yojanas. Thus making the Earth to have (an area of) nine thousand yojanas, he first held the Earth with his large left tooth and lifted her. He held the Earth for a thousand divine years. In course of the legendary account of religious importance she politely said to the lord:

The Earth said:

6b-11a. These twelve months and three hundred and sixty days (constitute a year). Which of these is the best, (most) auspicious, and dear to you? The month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra is sacred. The month of Māgha when the Sun is in Capricorn is said to be sacred in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. The wise say that when the Sun is in Aries, it is the (sacred) month of Vaiśākha. Mārgaśīrṣa is also said to be purifying among the (twelve) months. Thus these are said to be the sacred months. Certain days also are (said to be) sacred. There are the beginnings and ends of the yugas. So also there are the beginnings of the kalpas also. Tell me the most sacred month among all the months. O you who are full of all sacrifices, O you glorious one, tell me (about) any one chosen by you.

Varāha (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

11b-19a. I am always to be adored with devotion by those mean men who worship me in the month of Vaiśākha with or without rites. O you beautiful one, in Vaiśākha Hiraṇyākṣa was killed, so also Madhu. Having killed these two first demons, I lifted you up. The religion based on the three Vedas, and the settlement about knowledge and the castes took place in the month of Vaiśākha in Tretāyuga. Therefore, Vaiśākha is dear to me. On the third day of the bright half of Vaiśākha Tretāyuga commenced. So also the practices based on the three Vedas started, and they advanced. That day is called Akṣaya (i.e. inexhaustible) in the world. It is dear to Viṣṇu for bathing, giving gifts, worshipping, offering śrāddhas, muttering (names of the deity) and offering oblations to the (dead) ancestors. To them who worship Viṣṇu with barley-grains and carefully perform a śrāddha I give all excellent things desired by their minds. Those religious men are fortunate who give gifts, who every day worship Viṣṇu by means of various sacrifices. The fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who worships me in Vaiśākha, is greater than (the fruit obtained) by those.

19b-27. O venerable lady, listen to the meritorious fruit of that which is done in Vaiśākha, such as a bath, gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, penance, sacrificial rite and other vows. For

ten, five and seven crores of the periods of Manu they have obtained my proximity and remain without fear. Even if all the cruel Planets are situated in the twelfth and the eighth (places in the horoscope of a man) all of them become pleasing by means of the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha. The dead ancestors in number(s) like four of him who being solely devoted feeds brāhmaṇas in the month of Vaiśākha, are satiated by each lump of rice. Those who give very sweet foods, or meals consisting of barley-grains or with water mixed with sesamum seeds, so also umbrellas and garments, so also (shoes) capable of protecting the feet, are blessed, and give delight to Viṣṇu. Here (i.e. during the month) especially sesamum seeds with honey should be given for great religious merit and for the destruction of long(-standing) sin. Who can measure even for hundreds of crores of years the religious merit obtained by men when such (things) are done? A man (doing as above) obtains in this world the wealth in the form of sons and grandsons, long life, and whatever is desired, and in the next world he comes to me only. The series of sins of (i.e. committed during) many existences of a man melts away by bathing at dawn at a holy place according to the rites or of him who resorts to it.

28. He who, abandoning the Vaiśākha-vow, would practise some other vow, gives up a great gem in his hand, and asks for a clod.

Sūta said:

29-39. In this way the lord of the world, the mighty first god spoke in the world with reference to the month of Vaiśākha. What is the use of talking much in this matter, O brāhmaṇas? There is nothing that is not obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. In this matter listen to a very wonderful, ancient account, and the dialogue between a brāhmaṇa and the glorious Yama. In Madhyadeśa at the foot of the Yāmuna mountain between Gaṅgā and Yamunā there was a village called Mahāgrāma of brāhmaṇas. There many learned brāhmaṇas lived. Yama said to a man who was dark and tawny, had red eyes, whose hair (stood) up and whose shanks, eyes and nose were like those of a crow: “O you, go to Mahāgrāma, and having gone there, bring a brāhmaṇa, Yajñadattaka by name, who is

born in Vasiṣṭha's family, who is settled in tranquillity, who is learned and who is skilled in sacrificial rites. Do not bring the other one who belongs to the same family, (and who lives) by his side, for he has similar qualities, is like him, in learning and birth. In form and characteristics he, the best one, is like him. Bring him, I have to worship him as advised." He went and did (exactly) the opposite of Yama's order. He brought him only whom Yama had disallowed. Yama got up (when he came) and honouring him, he, knowing religious merit, said: "Take him (back). Bring that other one".

Sūta said:

40. When Yama said these words, the brāhmaṇa, disgusted with going (i.e. unwilling to go), said to Yama.

The brāhmaṇa said:

41. Why was I brought here (and) why do you impel me (to go back)? O lord, I am not at all eager to go to the mortal world again.

Yama said:

42-46. Here the meritorious persons whose life has ended, would stay. This is known as Dharmaloka, belonging to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). This entire land is full of happiness. I am Dharmarāja, its lord; I give the beings happiness or unhappiness according their religious merit or the opposite of it. I am of the form of Yama who gives hell (i.e. who sends to hell) the sinful men. In the same way I am religious merit embodied, who gives heaven to the meritorious. O brāhmaṇa, today only go (back) to your house as you had come (here). Still ten years' span of your life remains (to be enjoyed). When your life comes to an end, you will obtain this world. You (may) ask anything else that you want to ask. I shall explain it to you.

The brāhmaṇa said:

47-49a. Tell me (about) that great religious merit, having done which heaven would be (obtained). In deciding what is religious and what is irreligious, you are the authority, O god, I

have duly to go back to my house, then tell me due to which act men fall into hell. Please tell me (also) all that by which men go to heaven.

Yama said:

49b-76a. Those men who are averse to religion through their deeds, mind and words, and who are without (i.e. who do not have) devotion to Viṣṇu, go to hell. Those men who look upon Brahmā, Śaṅkara and Viṣṇu as different (from one another), and who are detached from knowledge about Viṣṇu, go to hell. That man who, through lust or delusion, gives up the act proper for his family or country, and would do something else, goes to hell. A man who worships what should not be worshipped, and does not worship what should be worshipped, and is disinterested in the knowledge about Viṣṇu, suffers in many hells. That sinner who dies as a wealthy man without giving to his dead ancestors, deities, brāhmaṇas, or his mortal relatives, goes to many hells. He who discriminates in (the distribution of) food, when all kinds of food are ready, and eats without making an offering to all deities, goes to (lives in) hell for a long time. O brāhmaṇa, those rich men who earn wealth by too much deceiving beings and the religious hypocrites experience grief. Those who, when proper time has come, do not devoutly offer śrāddha through atheism or greed or delusion are roasted in hell. That sinful man who causes obstruction when wealth is being given to brāhmaṇas, would go to hell. That man who, when the presents made in common, being deluded, takes them all alone, and who is inclined to atheism, would live in the abode of hell. His not being patient with other's virtues would be the cause (of his falling into hell). The great sin that has arisen is the cause of (his falling into) hell, who, after (some) time abandons his faultless, good-hearted wife and goes (away). That man who would not support their glory would fall into hell. That man who, being deluded, describes impiety as piety, is a sceptic, is an atheist, lives in hell. That man who has one idea in mind, and would speak in a different way, and would make the heart (of another person) displeased, would live in hell. Those men who, having showed disrespect for the narration (of the virtues) of the lord, go to the terrible hell due to

that sinful deed. Those who, even after seeing the door of (the temple of) the lord or (even after hearing) his name or the sacred text or (even after seeing) his attendants, do not salute etc. become the residents of hell. Those men who torment their wives without their faults, or abandon their good wives, go to hell. The man who does not listen to the words of his teacher or to the sacred texts, and who torments the hearts of others dwells in hell. One who feeds his own belly with sweets while his relatives and children are looking on, is merely a glutton, and goes to hell. The atheist who would not take bath in the morning in rivers etc. (when the Sun is) in Libra, Capricorn or Aries, would live in hell. O brāhmaṇa, he who does not, through love or respect, stand up on seeing Viṣṇu's devotee, is the guest in hell (i.e. goes to hell). Those who obstruct the ways by means of (pieces of) wood, spikes or darts or stones, go to hell. Those who do not reflect upon Viṣṇu, the first god, the controller, the great lord of the entire world, go to hell. Those men who cut off the livelihood of (a man through) farming, who break a family, who cut off (the bond of) love, so also (of) hope, go to hell. That foolish man who would test the brāhmaṇas who are distressed for want of livelihood, and who have come for eating food, should be known as a guest of (i.e. would go to) hell. Those fools who do not show compassion for a forlorn, poor, old devotee of Viṣṇu, afflicted by a disease, go to hell. Those who have not restrained their senses, having taken up vows, and who later give them up, go to hell.

76b-100. O brāhmaṇa, listen as to how the kind men go to heaven. I shall tell something in brief and through respect for you. This is (what) the ancient text (says): "Those who worship god Hari, Jīṣṇu, the ancient Viṣṇu, the unborn Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, the four-armed Viṣvaksena (i.e. Viṣṇu), who meditate upon the divine man, and remember Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu), obtain the position of Viṣṇu. Narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu—this alone is auspiciousness, this alone is earning money, this alone is the fruit of life. By means of the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu, the god of gods and of unlimited lustre, sins melt away as darkneess (melts away) at daybreak. Those men who, full of faith, every day sing the verse about Viṣṇu, and who are always engaged in their own duties, who, having given up

all worldly occupations, glorify Viṣṇu only, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, the fearful messengers of Yama do not approach the men who, even though they are sinners, are devoted to the muttering of prayers. They do not see anything else in case of the beings except the narration of the virtues of Viṣṇu, which is an expiation putting an end to all sins. Those men who, when solicited, are delighted, who, having given gifts, speak agreeably, and who abandon the fruit of gifts (made by them) go to heaven. Those mortals who avoid sleep by day, who put up with everything, who are the asylums on the parvan days, go to heaven. Those men who never mention the faults even of their enemies, (but) mention their virtues (only), go to heaven. Those men who, having seen the wealth of others are not distressed through jealousy, (but,) being delighted, congratulate them, go to heaven. Those who, of a firm resolution, show respect for the statements in the sacred texts, in active worldly life or in resignation of worldly acts, go to heaven. Those men who, born in any family, are kind, successful, tender, and of a good behaviour, go to heaven. Those men who, being pure and good, never take delight, through act, mind, or words, in the wives of others, go to heaven. Those men who knowing their capacity, always do the acts that are laid down (in the sacred texts), as told (in the sacred texts), go to heaven. He who always has faith in the religious act performed mentally, physically, or through words, and who is liked by the good, would become a guest in (i.e. goes to) heaven. That man who puts up with the impulse of his speech, his mind, his belly or his generative organ (i.e. impulse of sex), becomes a resident of heaven. Those wise men who take delight in virtues, whose speech is (directed) towards the sacred texts, whose mind is (interested) in true spiritual knowledge, go to heaven. Those men who preserve their vow from (the influence of) anger, who protect wealth without (being influenced by) jealousy, who preserve their knowledge from (being influenced by) pride or insult, and preserve (i.e. keep) themselves (away) from faults, who keep their mind free from greed, from lust, who protect (i.e. keep away) piety from (the influence of) bad company, go to heaven. Those men who, on the eleventh day of the bright or the dark half of a month are engaged in observing a fast, go to heaven. The day

of Ekādaśī (the eleventh day of a fortnight) is created as a mother for all children, as a medicine for the sick, and for the protection of all people. There is no other protection for the feet like Ekādaśī (since it makes one go along the right path).

101-110. Men fasting on that day according to proper rules, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, having quickly shaken off the sin committed by the eleven organs of sense and action, a man, being pleased, would go to heaven. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the Ekādaśī-fast. All sacrifices, all holy places and austerities, gifts like the great gifts are on one side, while the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu is on the other side (i.e. the sacrifices etc. do not stand comparison with the vow in honour of Viṣṇu). The creator had weighed together the religious merit due to the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu and the religious merit due to sacrifices etc. The former would be heavier. O brāhmaṇa, I do not control those who are devoted to Viṣṇu's day (i.e. the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight) and who talk endlessly about Viṣṇu; I am especially afraid of them. Their son or their grandson who observes a fast on the eleventh day strongly emancipates, along with himself, a hundred men (of his family). Therefore, a man should observe a fast on the eleventh day of both the fortnights. He is the only abode of enjoyment and salvation. Jayā, Vijayā and Jayantī, Pāpanāśinī, Trisprśā, Vañjulī, and the excellent Pakṣasaṁvardhinī, the other one to be known as Tiladugdhā, so also Akhaṇḍadvādaśī, the one called Manorathā, so also the excellent Bhīmadvādaśikā—these are the many varieties of Dvādaśī (the twelfth day of the lunar fortnight).

111-114. Those who are capable of (observing) these vows have remained in Brahman. Those who listen to religious texts, are convinced of piety, who do what is agreeable to children, go to heaven. The dead ancestors of those men who on one day—on the new-moon day—of every month, are engaged in the vow of a śrāddha, are gratified; and they are blessed and go to heaven. Those good men, when suitable meals (are ready), respectfully offer eatables without changing the complexion on their face (i.e. without showing unwillingness), go to heaven.

115-117a. Those men who are bereft of truth and even full of passion, (but) are devoted to Madhusūdana, Nārāyaṇa, the

lord of everything, having endless religious merit, go to heaven. Those who, of a good conduct and solely given to bathing and giving (gifts), resort to Vitastā, Yamunā, Sītā, and the auspicious Godāvarī river, never see the path to hell.

117b-120. Those who dip in Narmadā, giving happiness in this world, and are even pleased at her sight, go, after having shaken off their sins to the world of the great lord, and enjoy there for a long time. Those men who, for three nights (i.e. three days) have bathed at the bank of Carma-river, and especially in the hermitage of Vyāsa, are said to be the residents of heaven. Those who die in the water of Gaṅgā, at Prayāga, Kedāra and Puṣkara, in Vyāsa's hermitage, Prabhāsa, go to Viṣṇu.

121-124. Those who die while practising abstract meditation at Dvāravatī, Kurukṣetra, and those who have the letters 'Hari' in their mouths, are not reborn. O brāhmaṇa, those who have stayed, even for three nights, at the city of Dvāravatī, and take bath at the bank of Gomatī, are blessed, and are dear to Viṣṇu. Those who have stayed at the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa, and have resorted to Nanda on the earth for three nights are dear to Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, those men who have lived near Viṣṇu for six months, have indeed become one with Viṣṇu, and would remove the sin (of a person) on merely looking at him.

125-127a. Those men who bathe in the water of Maṇikarṇikā, the holy water secured after many existences, and having reached Kāśī salute Viśveśa, are venerable even to me. Those men who die according to the sacred command after having worshipped Viṣṇu on the earth with darbhas and sesamum seeds, after having spread sesamum seeds on the ground and after having given iron and milch cow (to a brāhmaṇa), go to heaven, O brāhmaṇa.

127b-142. Those who die after having produced sons, and having installed them on the position that has come down from the father, grandfather etc. (i.e. which is hereditary), and who are not having the feeling of mineness and egotism, also go to heaven. Those men also who have turned away from stealing, and who are content with their own wealth, who derive their livelihood due to their good luck, go to heaven. Those men, who, at the time of welcoming (a person) speak gentle, sweet and natural

words, not afflicting (the person) go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, those men who know the consequence (of their deeds) on the heaping up of the fruits of their auspicious or inauspicious deeds, go to heaven. Those men who increase the enthusiasm of those who are occupied with (earning) wealth and religious merit and follow the path of righteousness, are delighted in heaven. He who gives fire (i.e. warmth) in the cold season, so also he who gives water in summer, who gives shelter in the rainy season, is delighted in heaven for a long time. He who devoutly offers a śrāddha at all auspicious times, also at the time of all regular and occasional rites, enjoys the world of gods. Giving gifts to a poor man, forgiveness in a lord, penance of the young (i.e. in youth), silence of the learned, cessation of desires in the case of those used to happiness, and compassion to beings, take (men) to heaven. The connection (of a being), with deeds is twofold: it is due to sin and to religious merit. The decision in this matter is done only after resorting to truth only. Penance accompanied with meditation leads to the crossing of the ocean of the worldly existence. Sin is said to lead to a fall. This is true. There is no doubt about it. That (merit) of a man, void of religious merit, and (though) endowed with might, service and valour, melts away with force. In the difficult places on the mountains there are tall and well-nourished trees. Though dense, they fall along with their roots due to the force of wind. Similarly, those who do not practise truth, go to Yama's abode. Everything else is common to all beings. Righteousness alone is the strength (that differs from individual to individual), due to which a being is rescued in this world and in the next world. I have narrated to you in brief all this giving (i.e. leading to) the path to heaven. What more do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

More Sinful and Meritorious Deeds

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-4. Even a fool knows that a man doing auspicious deeds does not go to hell; in the same way a man engaged in doing sinful deeds does not go to heaven. By those skilful in (good) conduct is obtained the happiness of heaven by means of various sacrifices, and desired vows, gifts, muttering of prayers and truthfulness. Heaven is obtained by sages who have the wealth of knowledge and (good) conduct and who are the masters of the Vedas, due to religious merit and not by means of sacrifices. By a man who is attached to his family, even though having much wealth, much wealth in charity cannot be given without (i.e. unless he has) liberality.

5-9. In Kaliyuga the rites especially like Agnihotra (keeping the sacred fire continuously) are difficult to perform. O lord, the merit due to charity also is thought to be difficult. O you who show what is righteousness and what is non-righteousness, especially tell me that by which pious acts of little exertion religious merit can be stored. So tell me that pious act, the best among all such acts, having done which the entire sin is exhausted, due to which wealth, grains, glory, religious merit, and (span of) life increases, by which there would be intimacy in the mortal world, and heaven would be inexhaustible (i.e. would be obtained permanently), by which actually Nārāyaṇa, causing fearlessness to his devotees would be pleased. Due to his favour desire is on the palm of the hand (i.e. can easily be controlled).

10-13. O Yama, tell me that (rite) by which a fruit greater than that of all sacrifices, penance, gifts, resorting to sacred places, is obtained. If I am to be favoured by you by means of teaching me about religious merit, then please tell me that which is the essence of all pious acts. The wise ones have, after recollecting, narrated the expiations of sins as and when (they are to be taken). O god, it is not possible for men to do each one of them. So if there is (only) one pious act that would remove all sins, then tell it (to me).

Sūta said:

14. Having spoken thus, the best brāhmaṇa, being self-subdued, and desiring to know the subtle moral merit, praised Yama who was Righteousness embodied.

The brāhmaṇa said:

15-23a. Salutation to you, who destroy everything. Salutation to you, O lord of the worlds. Salutation to you of the form of a god, who give (i.e. show) the path to heaven, who are of the nature of the sacred texts; salutation to you, O Dharmarāja. You protect the earth, the gods, the atmosphere, the heaven, (the worlds like) Mahas, Jana, Tapas, and Satya. So also everything is protected by you. There is no world—immobile or mobile which is devoid of you. The world seized by you instantly perishes. You are the soul of all the beings. You have the nature of goodness. You are the rajas (i.e. passion) of the rājasa people (i.e. people endowed with the quality of rajas or passion). You are the tamas (i.e. the quality of darkness) of the tāmasa ones (i.e. those who are endowed with the quality of darkness). Of the quadrupeds, O god, you are one having four horns and three eyes. You have seven hands; you are bound in three ways; salutation to you, O you of the form of a bull. Righteousness, full of all sacrifices, is the expansion of your body. O lord of the worlds, you are (now) actually seen (by me). O god, my repeated salutations to you. Remaining in the hearts of all you are the observer of religious merit and sins. Therefore, you are the ruler of the beings. O god, you are a donor and a controller. O god, you are the founder of righteousness. On the earth you hold the sceptre. Tell me the well-determined essence of all the meritorious deeds.

Yama said:

23b-29. O brāhmaṇa, I am especially pleased with your eulogy. So also, O best one, you are respectable to me due to your following the practices laid down in the sacred texts. O brāhmaṇa, I, being pleased by your modesty shall tell you the great secret of me, though it should not be told, which I have determined after taking out the essence of all (sacred words), which greatly banishes (i.e. takes out one) from the group of

great hells. Those Purāṇas and sacred texts are for (i.e. lead to) the delusion of the mobile and immobile world. Let them speak about that great deity only in their sacred precepts and rites. (But) in the established view of the thinking people Viṣṇu alone is decided to be the lord when (the views of) all sacred texts are put together. Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu—these three only are looked upon as the Trinity. As the lamp is (burning) due to fire, the wick and the oil, in the same way, O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu (shines with these). Having devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu, a man should obtain the auspicious Goloka. When Viṣṇu is propitiated, all desires remain on the palm of the hand.

30-32. O brāhmaṇa, of all pious acts giving (gifts) alone is the greatest. Sin perishes by means of giving (gifts), and everything is obtained through giving (gifts). Giving (gifts) is said to be of five types: regularly prescribed, occasional, optional, and the other one is of the nature of prosperity, and the last one is the highest (type of) charity. Something should be carefully given in the morning, in the noon and afternoon. This is said to be regularly prescribed.

33-41. A man, desiring his well-being should not pass a day without (giving gifts). Gift given (by the members) in a family, stands by here or there (i.e. is useful in some way or the other). In him who, being thoughtless, would, through folly eat (all alone) I produce a disease keeping off his enjoyments. That door contented with the deeds (of the inmates), giving great trouble, having gentle breezes (i.e. not fully opened for guests), is tormenting. Those who have not given to brāhmaṇas and gods at the three times (of the day), and who eat (all) alone, have (indeed) committed great sin. I purify them by means of fearful expiations and fasts like those that dry up the bodies etc., O brāhmaṇa. As the shoe-maker would mercilessly cleanse the hide in the bowl by means of whips etc., or would tear open a bad substance, similarly in the form of a physician I purify a sinner by means of proper use of herbs, and by means of astringent, bitter (medicines), hot water (etc.) tormenting him, and in no other way. There is no doubt about this. Before him (i.e. in his presence) others enjoy pleasures as desired by them. What should I do? I am capable. He has not given excellent

gifts. In the form of a great disease he would be prohibited (from enjoyments).

42-43a. O brāhmaṇa, the sinners have not with faith and capacity, given the gifts which should be regularly given. I will burn with terrible means, those who have come like that (i.e. without giving gifts).

43b-51. Before (i.e. to) you I shall explain the occasional gifts. That gift which is carefully given when the day of Mahā-parvan has come, or when one has reached a sacred place, or on a day like the death-anniversary of a dead ancestor, or in months like Vaiśākha, is called occasional. I shall explain to you the time of an optional gift, which gives fruit, has a vow etc. for its object and which is intended (to have) the desired fruit. A man overcome with a feeling of devotion, gets the fruit like that (gift) (i.e. proper for the gift) due to the purifying (nature) of the gift which is duly said to be harmonious in all its constituents. I shall (now) explain (the gift) called *Abhyudaya* (i.e. leading to prosperity), which is said to be in the sacrifices etc., so also the rites like the ceremony performed at the birth of a child or thread ceremony or marriage; O brāhmaṇa, the gift of the nature of (i.e. leading to) prosperity is said to consist in careful installation of a flag, (images of) deities in a palace etc. It brings about growth in progeny, and gives enjoyments, glory, and happiness in heaven. And (now) I shall explain the last (kind of) gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, listen. Realising the loss of sex (i.e. sexual desire) and being oppressed by old age, a man should carefully give gifts. He should entertain hope about nothing.

52-58. 'What will happen to these my sons, wife, relatives, brothers (and sisters) and my friends without me when I die? How shall I again continue to live like a poor man?' Thinking like this, he, a fool bound by hundreds of bonds of hope due to his (ill) luck only, dies; and then his sons weep. Being oppressed by grief, and with their hearts full of confusion, they do not devise even a small gift at that time. When this time has passed, and when their great grief has gone, they forget (to give) the gift, or through delusion, do not give it. Knowing that the father is dead, the bond of love recedes. O brāhmaṇa, he who is dead, and who is controlled by Yama's nooses, who is over-

come with thirst and hunger, who is very much oppressed by many agonies, is, for a long time, roasted in an awful hell.

59-68. Therefore, there is no doubt, one should give gifts. To whom do the sons and the grandsons belong? To whom does the wife or the wealth belong? In this world nobody belongs to anybody else. There gifts should be given. O brāhmaṇa, one should according to one's capacity, give various gifts like a drink, food, tāmbūla, water and gold also. So also garments, a cow, a (piece of) land, an umbrella, vessels etc. in many ways. So also fruits and grants of land. No doubt should be had in this matter. O brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the characteristics of holy places. (These are) the holy places: This Gaṅgā that appears (here), holy Sarasvatī, Revā and Yamunā, the river Tāpī, so also Carmaṇvatī, and excellent Sarayū, Venī, and Pūraṇā, the destroyer of sins. Other are: Kāverī, Kapilā and Viśalyā, Viśvatāriṇī, (the river) known as Godāvarī, Tuṅga-bhadrā and Gaṇḍakī. The river Bhīmarathī is said always to cause fear to sins. Devikā and Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, and other excellent rivers—these become, in many ways, the holy places on auspicious occasions. Rivers, whether they are in a village or in a forest, are everywhere purifying. Rites like a bath, giving gifts should be done there only. O brāhmaṇa, when the name of a holy place is not known, then these words should be uttered: 'This is a great holy place of Viṣṇu'.

69-73a. There is no doubt that everywhere the (presiding) deity of a holy place is Viṣṇu. One who wants to secure (salvation) should remember the name 'Nārāyaṇa' at the holy places. The proper fruit of the holy place is produced merely by Viṣṇu's name. There is no doubt that a man should give Viṣṇu's name to those holy places and deities which are not known. All sanctifications are auspicious. An ocean, lakes like Mānasa, springs, small pools etc., so also all small rivers become holy places due to the name of Viṣṇu (being given to them). The mountains are of the nature of holy places, so also a sacrifice and the sacrificial ground.

73b-81. That (place) where learned brāhmaṇas have remained with eagerness, is alone said to be a very great holy place, removing all sins. Śrāddha, the place where a śrāddha is offered, a temple, a sacrificial ground, the place where the proper sound

of (the recital of) Vedas (is heard), where auspicious tales about Viṣṇu (are narrated), one's own house endowed with religious merit, so also the holy place of cows, a forest where there is the Aśvattha tree, a place where there is a sanctifying dwelling—all these and others are holy places, so also one's mother and father. There is no doubt that that place where (food) is cooked for moral merit, where the teacher himself stays, where there is a chaste wife, is a holy place. That is his holy place set up for his liberation, where his son, learned and interested in piety (lives). These and others are the holy places, so also the king's palace. It is certain that at these and other holy places, nobody among all the human beings would obtain anything, anytime, without propitiating Viṣṇu, the giver of everything. Children, wealth, wife, a high mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (from a man) by means of devotion (i.e. when he is devoted) to Viṣṇu.

82-89a. Nārāyaṇa is the highest god; he, Janārdana, is of the nature of truth. That highest lord, dividing himself into three parts, created (everything). The lord became united with Rajas (i.e. activity) and Tamas (i.e. darkness or ignorance). The lord had Rajas and Sattva (i.e. goodness) more (than Tamas). In the lotus in his navel he created Brahmā. The lord created Rudra possessed of Rajas and Tamas. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (together) are said to be the Trinity. Due to Sattva a being is freed. Sattva is of the form of Viṣṇu. A man with Rajas joined with Sattva would be rich and superior due to glory. That which practises the rites by alluding to the Vedic words is known as Rudra (and) is said to be distinctive of men. Due to that a man would be a king in the world, and again due to Rajas and Tamas. Those practices which are bereft of Rajas (i.e. activity) and are only Tāmāsa (i.e. done through ignorance), give (i.e. lead) men (to) a difficult situation in this world and in the next world. He who is Viṣṇu, is himself Brahmā, and he who is Brahmā is himself Śiva. In the sacrifice all the three gods are present. Worship should daily be offered to the (three) gods.

89b-101. O best brāhmaṇa, he who differentiates among these three, is a sinner, is of a sinful mind, and would have an undesirable mode of existence. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu alone is the highest Brahman. Viṣṇu alone is the world. This month of

Vaiśākha is said to be dear to him in (i.e. for) all rites, and gives the fruit of the great sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. It is excellent for a bath at a holy place, penance, giving (gifts), muttering prayers and sacrifices. O brāhmaṇa, those who, when the Sun has entered Aries, continuously bathe at daybreak in a river, and worship (him) at a holy place, do not get punishment from me. Again and again killing the stream of sins before me, again and again destroying the writing of Citragupta, again and again bathing in the month of Vaiśākha, men emancipate their ancestors from sins. This great secret cuts off fear. Therefore, it is not disclosed. It is the cause of expulsion from the abode of hell and the cause of the end of my authority. Bhāgīrathī, Narmadā, and Yamunā and Sarasvatī, Viśokā and Vitastā are to the north of the Vindhya (mountain). Godāvarī, Bhīmarathī, Tuṅgabhadrā and Devikā, Tāpī and Payoṣṇī are said to be to the south of Vindhya. He who would duly bathe in the morning in (any) river, has plunged into these twelve rivers. All rivers are holy; all excellent mountains are holy; all abodes (of deities) are holy; and resting places in the forests are holy. They are seen to have been plunged into by him, saluted by him, and very much resorted to by him, who, being controlled, would bathe in Vaiśākha where the Sun has half-risen. O brāhmaṇa, his religious merit cannot be described even if one has thousands of thousands mouths.

102-107. O best brāhmaṇa, it would be possible to describe the fruit of Vaiśākha if one would have a long span of life (given) by Brahmā. As Viṣṇu is the fire dragging (one away) from hell, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha, properly observed, would burn sins (committed during) thousands and hundreds of crores of kalpas, like the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder, illicit intercourse, sin committed willingly or unwillingly, a secret minor sin, great commingling (of castes), the great sin of loss of caste, so also (giving gift to) an unworthy person, sin causing filth and confusion due to speech, mind and body. He who would worship Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha, would live in Viṣṇu's city.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

*The Greatness of Vaiśākha**Sūta said:*

1-3. Having heard these words of that Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the brāhmaṇa again asked him about the auspicious rite of Vaiśākha.

The brāhmaṇa said:

O magnanimous Dharmarāja, you have properly disclosed the secret of the religious merit due to a bath in Vaiśākha which gives salvation to men, and is great. Tell me the manner in which a man, being calm and having bathed in the morning, should worship the god (Viṣṇu) and with which flowers in the month of Vaiśākha.

Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) said:

4-11a. Of all kinds of leaves Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Holy places like Puṣkara, so also rivers like Gaṅgā and gods like Viṣṇu live in the leaf of Tulasī. Always and at all times Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Leaving the flower of jasmine and abandoning a lotus, and taking a Tulasī leaf a man should devoutly worship Viṣṇu. Even Śeṣa would not be able to describe the fruit of the religious merit due to it. All that—plucking a Tulasī leaf in honour of a deity or for a rite in honour of the dead ancestors without bathing—becomes fruitless. (Such a man) becomes pure by (drinking) the five products of a cow. As yellow myrobalan removes diseases, so Tulasī quickly removes very many sins like poverty and experiencing calamities. A man, a devotee of Viṣṇu, who especially worships Viṣṇu with (leaves of) Tulasī called Kṛṣṇagaurā, would become Viṣṇu. He who, being restrained, would worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of Madhu at three times of the day during the entire month of Vaiśākha, has no rebirth.

11b-17. A man should always worship Viṣṇu even with food etc. if flowers and leaves are not available, or with rice grains or wheat. He should gratify, after bathing in the morning, with proper rites deities, dead ancestors and men along with the mobile and the immobile. He who always would sprinkle profuse

water at the root of the Aśvattha (tree), and would go round it full of all gods, or he who would worship with water god Aśvattha on all sides, has liberated a myriad (members of) his family. There is no doubt about it. All griefs like poverty, misfortune, bad dreams and bad thoughts melt away by gratifying Aśvattha, O dear one. He, the hero, who would worship Aśvattha has gratified his dead ancestors, has worshipped Viṣṇu; he alone has worshipped the Planets. He should touch white flowers, so also śamī (leaves), fire, sandal, Sun's orb and Aśvattha tree, and then should perform the duties of his caste.

18-21a. After scratching (the body of a cow), giving a morsel to a cow, after having bathed and gratified a pippala, and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not face misfortune. A woman or a man, though quite weak, who, observing rules already stated, bathes according to her or his capacity in the morning for the three days of Vaiśākha—the thirteenth, the fourteenth (of the bright half) and the full-moon day, gets free from all sins and obtains inexhaustible heaven (i.e. obtains heaven eternally).

21b-26a. If a man, being restrained and pure, gets up on the three nights (i.e. the days, viz. the twelfth, the thirteenth and the full-moon day), and feeds, according to his capacity, ten brāhmaṇas, and, offering white or black sesamum seeds with water to twelve brāhmaṇas, would perform a solemn observance saying 'May Dharmarāja be pleased with me', and would gratify the dead ancestors and gods, (then) the sin committed by him during his life perishes at that moment only. He would happily stay in heaven a myriad after a myriad (years). He, honoured by all deities, would not see me only. O brāhmaṇa, he who, to gratify the dead ancestors and deities, devoutly gives cooked food, jars full of water etc. on the three days, viz. the thirteenth, the fourteenth (days of the bright half) and the full-moon day, is freed from great sins.

26b-28a. He who, every day, would gratify brāhmaṇas with golden vessels full of sesamum seeds and water, destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be given on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha with devotion, for the good of the children.

28b-31. In this matter, listen to an old account, O you of a

good vow. The fruit of the month of Vaiśākha is very wonderful (when a gift is given) on the full-moon day (of that month). Thirty days beginning with (the Sun's) passing through Aries are excellent. They are said to be superior to all sacrifices and holy. Especially (holy) are the three days (viz. the thirteenth, fourteenth the full-moon day) which are to be secured with a difficulty by sinners. The full-moon day of Vaiśākha is still more holy and is dear to Viṣṇu. This day is the day of the beginning of the period of the duration of the world called Vārāhakalpa.

32-36a. Formerly on this day Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) killed these two pre-eminent demons—Hiraṇyākṣa and Madhu, and lifted up the earth. This lord performed these three (feats) only on the thirteenth, fourteenth and the full-moon day, in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha. Since then, O best brāhmaṇa, due to the speciality, this full-moon day, the beginning of the period of the duration of the world, is called purifying and the proper witness of the feat. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of the life of him, indeed harming himself, who, controlling himself, has not bathed in the morning in Vaiśākha?

36b-38a. A woman or a man who restraining herself or himself, has, according to proper rites, bathed in the morning on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is freed from all sins. He who has passed the full-moon day of Vaiśākha without bath, gifts, worship, śrāddha, or (other acts of) merit, has indeed hell as his abode.

38b-44a. There is no other sacred treatise like the Veda; there is no other holy place like Gaṅgā; there is no other gift like a cow or water; and there is no other day like the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. He who being solely devoted to Viṣṇu, gives a cow with water (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is especially the fourth of (i.e. in addition to) the three gods. A man who has killed his mother or father, or who causes abortion, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), gets free from all sins on seeing a cow along with water. Those who, in this earth, give a cow along with water according to the proper rite (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, liberate ten earlier and ten later members of the family. Those who give to the best brāhmaṇas sugar, fruits, tāmbūla, shoes and documents, are declared to be fortunate in this world. He who gives jars with gems and water, cooked food, and golden presents on the full-

moon day of Vaiśākha, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

44b-49a. Here also they relate an old account, and the conversation of a brāhmaṇa with ghosts in a great forest. O sinless one, formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman by name. When he had gone to the forest for (collecting) kuśa, he saw a wonder. He who was frightened, saw three wicked and very awful ghosts whose hair was raised, whose eyes were red, whose teeth were black, who were emaciated, who were making various sounds, and were running here and there. Seeing them, the brāhmaṇa, afflicted with fear, speedily ran away. They too, crying, went after him at that time. Being overpowered by the ghosts, he spoke sweet words (to them).

Dhanaśarman said:

49b-53. Who are you? Due to what have you been reduced to this condition suitable for hell? Please protect me, afflicted with fear, fit to be pitied, afflicted, a devotee of Viṣṇu, very much frightened, a poor brāhmaṇa who has come to the forest. That Viṣṇu, the lord, Brahmanya, Keśava pleased with you through compassion towards me, will give you felicity. That Viṣṇu is like the hemp-flower, has put on a yellow garment, and by merely hearing his name great darkness goes (away). The god is without origin and death, holds a conch, a disc and a mace. He is endless; his eyes are like lotuses; he gives salvation to the dead.

Yama said:

54-55. The goblins were pleased by merely hearing the name of Viṣṇu. They lived in religious merit. They were controlled by compassion and generosity. They were pleased by his words and were impelled by his direction. The goblins, afflicted with the flood of hunger and thirst, said these (words) to the brāhmaṇa:

The goblins said:

56-64. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and on hearing the name of Viṣṇu, we have reached another condition. We have become kind. Indeed the union with the good removes sin, and joins (a man) with virtue, and quickly spreads fame. Whom does the

moonlight of the nectar of a devotee of Viṣṇu, which is full of the elixir of life, and which gives great delight, not give joy? This is named Kṛtaghna. This second one is Vidaivata. This third one is Avaiśākha, who is the (most) sinful of the three. This sinful one always practised ingratitude. Therefore, his name is fixed as Kṛtaghna due to his (ungrateful) actions. This Kṛtaghna was a śūdra named Sudāsa in the former existence. Due to that sin (of ingratitude) he has reached this condition. There is an expiation for a very great sinner, a rogue, or for one who acts malevolently to his teacher or master; but there is no expiation for an ungrateful person. O brāhmaṇa, having experienced (i.e. lived in) groups of many hells with bodies enduring torments, he has come to this stage. Without worshipping the deities, so also without giving to the teacher and brāhmaṇas, he ate food all alone. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata.

65-76a. This one known by the name Harivīra in the former existence, was the king of ten thousand villages. Through anger, egotism and atheism, he was always bent upon violating his teacher's orders. He who censured brāhmaṇas, ate without offering the (five) great sacrifices. Due to that sinful act, he, having experienced the great peril of hell, was then born as a ghost called Vidaivata. I am the third one, Avaiśākha by name. I am (most) sinful of the Gautama family, known by the same name. I lived in Viprovāsapura, and was a sacrificer in the former existence. I who follow the path as laid down in the Vedic texts, did not bathe in honour of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. I did not give (any gift), or did not offer any oblation, especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. During that month I did not worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of (the demon) Madhu. Nor did I please the learned men. I also did not gratify dead ancestors and deities with the gifts of jars containing water; and I did not offer sesamum seeds with water to learned brāhmaṇas. In that month I did not honour, in order to gratify the dead ancestors and deities with flowers, fruits, tāmbūla, sandal, fans and garments. Not a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, giving complete fruit, did I (even) observe by good deeds like a bath, giving gifts or worshipping (Viṣṇu). Therefore, all my deeds done according to the Vedic texts have become fruitless. Then I totally became

a ghost named Avaiśākha. I have fully told you this cause of (the turning into ghosts of) all the three of us.

76b-80. (Please) be our emancipator from (our) sin, since you are a restrained brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, brāhmaṇas, auspicious due to having done good deeds, are superior to holy places. They liberate great sinners even though they have resorted to (i.e. fallen into) hells. Between the two, viz. the man who always bathes at the holy places like Gaṅgā and the man who keeps the company of the good—he who has the company of the good, is better. Or, you who are exerting for us, (please) go to my son, well-known as Dhanaśarman, and inform him, O lord. He, who exerts when some work of others has come up, obtains much more fruit than obtained by sacrifices or giving gifts.

Yama said:

81-82a. Having heard those words of the ghost, Dhanaśarman was extremely pained. Having recognised him to be his father, fallen into hell, he entirely censured himself, and said these words.

Dhanaśarman said:

82b-87. O lord, I am the useless son of you—of Gautama. That son who would not carefully liberate his father, would not purify himself, or being rich, would not give (gifts, is useless). Even an intelligent person has to note carefully that religious merit is difficult (to understand), as you who are my father, have reached this misfortune. You have not secured continuous happiness from me. He, due to whom continuous happiness is obtained in both worlds is called a son due to that. According to law, a man has two teachers in this world—his father and his mother. Of the two also, the father is superior as his superiority due to his (depositing the) seed is seen. What should I do? Where should I go? O father, how (i.e. what would be) your condition? I do not know the true nature of propriety. I depend upon your words.

The ghost said:

88-96. O son, listen to my true words. Due to the force of future interest, I shall have bliss as a result of some religious

merit. I who was performing the rites as laid down in the scriptures arrogantly, dishonoured the words of my teacher; (and thus) I insulted my teacher. Due to the teacher's insult, and the man's great delight, anger or pride, the religious merit perishes, like glory due to bad conduct. A rite which is not against the Vedic rites (should be performed) according to the rules laid down in the Purāṇas. (But) through ignorance I performed only the Vedic rites. O son, I never duly observed even a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which is a flame like that of the wild fire for the fuel of sins, and an axe for the tree of sins. That man who does not observe the vow of the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, would be Avaiśākha. After that for ten existences he is born in the stocks of animals. Then in course of time he would become a ghost in the end. He somehow gets the human existence which is hard to get. I shall tell you a great means which brings about the liberation of a ghost; I had heard this in my former existence from the mouth of my own teacher. O son, go home and bathe duly in Yamunā. That full-moon day of Vaiśākha, the beginning of kalpa, and the giver of all good conditions, has come today. The full-moon day is beneficial for the worship of the dead ancestors and the deities in the later part of the day. A man should devoutly give on this day even water mixed with sesamum seeds, with water jars and food, to the dead ancestors.

97-103. That śrāddha offered here (i.e. on this day) lasts for a thousand years. He who feeds brāhmaṇas on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, has his dead ancestors satisfied with each ball of rice for a life time. Having duly bathed on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, one should feed ten brāhmaṇas with milk. There is no doubt that by (doing) that he gets freed from all sins. Having given white or black sesamum seeds along with water, he should invoke their blessings. Saying, 'May Dharmarāja be pleased', he should gratify his dead ancestors and deities. Just at that moment only the sin that he has committed throughout his life, perishes. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be offered (to a brāhmaṇa) with devotion on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha and should be applied to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa. To him who bathes with sesamum seeds mixed with barley grains (applied) to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa, Brahmā gives a desired boon, so also does Dharma.

104-114. He who gives, to please Dharmarāja, water-jars, there is no doubt that he has liberated seven (members before) him and seven (after him of his family). O son, give us that fruit which is produced by devoutly bathing, muttering (prayers), offering oblations, giving gifts and worshipping (Viṣṇu) on the thirteenth, the fourteenth and on the full-moon day (of Vaiśākha). Abandoning these two ghosts I shall resort to a position in the heaven; for, the end of the sin of these two has also come by.

Yama said:

Saying 'All right' he left. Then the brāhmaṇa took a bath and gave gifts very much devoutly on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. Having devoutly bathed and being very much pleased, he, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha arrived, gave many gifts and gave them separately for his religious merit. Just at that moment only, they, seated in an aeroplane, went to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, they were pleased with his having given his religious merit to them. The best brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman also, who knew the sacred texts, the law-codes and the Purāṇas enjoyed many pleasures for a long time and obtained Brahmā's heaven. Therefore, with great regard (for you), I describe in brief this most meritorious full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which purifies all. Those men who, of a pure heart, bathe duly in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship (Viṣṇu) the destroyer of Madhu, are alone fortunate, blessed and they alone are born in the world as men having a purpose. The man who, having bathed in the morning, worships (Viṣṇu) the lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī), and is endowed with (i.e. observes) all controls and restraints, indeed destroys his sin.

115-128. Those who, being controlled, bathe in the month of Vaiśākha have alone overcome death; are alone fortunate among men; they alone are free from sins; they alone do not enter (a mother's) womb (i.e. are not reborn). That month of Vaiśākha, even a small meritorious act alone in which would be equal to (merit done in) a day of Brahmā, roars with sacrifices and austerities and giving of gifts. Even the quality of viciousness of a man who bathes and worships Viṣṇu at sunrise in the month

of Vaiśākha, tends to make his body pure due to his contact with a drop of water. Till that Virāṭ, Viṣṇu, the dear lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī) does not arrive, sins, having got upon a man's body move there. The steps which a man puts for going to a holy place in the month of Vaiśākha, again become equal to horse-sacrifices, due to recollection of Śrī Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) and by reciting his name. The month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, burns, when a (daily) bath is taken during it, many grave sins like (the mountains) Meru and Mandara. O brāhmaṇa, to favour you, I have, in brief, told you this greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, which destroys the sins of the listener. He too, who will devoutly listen to this account narrated by me, will be free from sins and will not see me. The many sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa committed (by a man), definitely perish by performing the rites (narrated above) in Vaiśākha. A man who has duly bathed during Vaiśākha would liberate thirty former, thirty later dead ancestors, so also thirty far and near ancestors. On one side are all holy places and sacrifices with presents, and on the other side is the month of Vaiśākha (in) which (the vows are) properly observed. Since this month of Vaiśākha is very dear to that lord Viṣṇu of excellent deeds, it is superior to all (sacrifice etc.). O lord of the earth, having got what I told about the month of Vaiśākha, do not entertain any doubt whatsoever. In this matter listen to a wonderful, old account. Though the account should not be told (to anyone), I shall tell it to you.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Kaśyapa's Advice to King Mahāratha

Yama said:

1-7. Formerly there was a well-known king named Mahāratha who had obtained great power and wealth due to his former religious merit. He merely confined himself to amorous play with his wife who subjected him to lust. He was addicted

to that vice only, and was not settled in piety. Having transferred (the administration of) his kingdom to his minister, the king enjoyed the objects of senses. He, moving in the company of beautiful women, and averse to royal offices, did not consider (i.e. care for) his subjects, wealth, religious rites, material welfare and (other) acts. He only had desire for the amorous play with beautiful women. After a long time his family priest, Kaśyapa, thinking in his mind that a preceptor who, through folly, does not ward off the king should be known as a sharer in the sin, spoke righteous words to him. (He also thought:) 'If he disregards the words of the family priest though admonished by him, then the family priest is not at fault. The king shares the entire fault':

8-13. "O listen, O king, listen to the words of me—your teacher—which are accompanied with piety and substance, which are unbroken (i.e. clear) in meaning, which are significant and are free from (selfish) desire and passion. This alone is a great religious merit to live in (i.e. abide by) the words of the preceptor. A small order of the teacher (if followed) increases the life, wealth and happiness of kings. You have not gratified brāhmaṇas with gifts; you have not worshipped Viṣṇu. You have not observed any vow; you have not practised any penance; you have not visited a holy place. You who were under the influence of lust, did not think of Viṣṇu's name. Oh! due to the company of cowards you did not keep contact of the learned. To whom are beloveds, carrying the chowries of Cupid, not dear? But they are fickle like the leaves of kadali due to violently moving wind. Men of large hearts are not satisfied with things unsteady like ripples, pleasures transitory like the knittings of eyebrows, and youth that is drunk (i.e. enjoyed) for a short time.

14-17a. What is the use of knowledge, penance, sacrifice, political wisdom, or what is the use of a discriminating mind to him whose heart is taken away by women? Religious merit alone is the friend that follows (a man) after (his) death. All else perishes along with the body. (A man) should collect religious merit gradually, as the ants put up an anthill. With religious merit as his companion, he crosses darkness difficult to cross.

17b-19a. O best of kings, do you not know the flurry of men's life which is unsteady like the violent billows on water sent up by wind? What is the use of senseless ornaments to them who have politeness as their jewelled crown, truth and piety as the ear-rings and sacrifice as the bracelet? The kinsmen leave the dead body on the ground like (a piece of) wood or a clod and turn away.

19b-26. Religious merit (alone) goes after him (i.e. the dead man). Why do you not get up and run, when all (your relatives) are going away, your (span of) life is decreasing and your existence is being cut off? The family, the sons, the wife etc., the body, collection of wealth belong to others and are uncertain. Good or bad deeds alone are yours. When, leaving everything, you who are helpless, should go, why is it that you are attached to worthless objects? Why do you not do your duty? How will you, the dead one (i.e. after death), go all alone along the path in the forest where there is no rest, no support, no provisions for the journey and without a spiritual teacher? Nobody will go after you who have started (along the path after death). (Only) your good and bad deeds will follow you who will be going. Being careful, resort to the deed which is told by the sacred texts and the codes of law, which is proper for your family and place, which is beneficial; and resort to good conduct based on piety. One should give up worldly prosperity and love of sensual enjoyment if they are bereft of virtue. All pleasures like worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyment are had by means of virtue.

27-29. Day and night one should practise the control of senses and deep abstract meditation, for one whose senses are controlled is able to keep his subjects on the (right) track. Wealth which is very fickle like glances of a very bold woman lives with kings for a long time through discipline due to great effort. (But) the wealth of those who are given to lust and pride, who do things thoughtlessly, and who are fools, perish along with their life.

30-36. Large-hearted persons do not dance (with joy) due to prosperity which is (first) seen and which (later) disappears. An ocean does not increase in size due to rivers that come or go. Between an evil habit and death, evil habit is said to be trouble-

some, for the addicts to a bad habit go down and down, while a king who is not addicted to a bad habit, goes to heaven. Vices, especially due to lust are difficult to end. Give up this lust which is hostile to piety. There are also the kingdoms of the foolish, thoughtless demons of bad conduct, which are enjoyed due to their luck. Those accompanied by sins, are not stable in this world. They vanish as fuel does due to the contact of fire. He whose heart, while he walks, stands, is awake or sleeps, is not given to thought is certainly dead. Since a teacher is said to be the adviser of the learned those near whom stand calamities, should hold on their head (i.e. should honour) words of advice.

37-41. A wise man accomplishes his objects after giving up the fever of the (addiction to) objects of senses by means of his mind which is in equilibrium, which is steady, and through a practical scheme. The mind of beings like a child, (though) taken (away) from foul things goes to good things and (again) from them to the other (i.e. foul things); therefore one should drive it (away) with force. A king, accepting the opinion of the old who see (i.e. know) the righteous conduct, should control one's mind going astray. Riches do not help, nor friends, nor kinsmen; the movement of hands and feet (does not help); going to another country (does not help); freedom from bodily suffering (does not help); so also resorting to holy places. One can get the highest position by muttering (prayers) with mind devoted to Him.

42-46. Therefore, a wise man should certainly strive to control the mind remaining in the objects of senses, as the driver (of a chariot) controls the horses. O king, you, being restrained, should do that of which you are deprived, and (which was done) by devotees getting the respective fruits. Therefore, also listen now. A man who is erring should ask (i.e. consult) his wise friends. It is proper to do what they would say when asked. He who desires bliss, should, by all means, curb his lust and anger, since they are bent upon harming his bliss. O king, lust is a great, powerful enemy residing in the body. A man who longs for bliss should not go under its sway.

47-50a. This Cupid (i.e. lust) was formerly burnt with the fire from his forehead by the trident-holder, god of gods (i.e. Śiva), and was rendered bodiless. Such was the situation. When this mind-born one desires to strike a woman, he resorts to the

body of men, and manifests his nature. He maddens a man by invisibly resorting to his body when he again and again thinks of the form of a woman. In the same way he also maddens the body of a woman. There is no doubt about it.

50b-69a. Therefore, O king, his name has come to be *Smara*, due to his being remembered (i.e. thought of). O hero, he has any colour. He would resort to (i.e. put on) any garment. Due to the light of his lustre he would go to a condition free from the stream of tears being drunk. Having taken up the form of a woman he would delude even a courageous man, and having resorted to (the body of) a man he would cause a woman to melt. O king, he is but natural; (though) bodiless is present in a body. How is (then) sin done in the case of the body? Who is more impure than him by reaching whom the pure products of a cow and the oblations become impure (just) in a moment. The (people in) this world, smelling their own foul odour, seeing their own feces, troubling their own noses, do not get disgusted. Who is more impure than him reaching whom agreeable food, fragrant food and drinks become impure? Food, reaching his belly would give up its nature; its impurity mixed with insects is quickly realised. Yet, O king, in the body he gives up his own nature, and goes to a dog's condition in the body full of the foul smell of insects. There is no doubt that lice or insects are produced there. That insect causes bursting; and there is an awful itching. It would create agony; and would shake the entire body. That scratching rubbed by the tips of the nails is allayed. Like that is the pleasure of a sexual union. There is no doubt. Thus a man enjoys pleasures. He also drinks (i.e. eats) good eatables. The fire (in the body) digests (the food) that is there, and would drop the feces at the anus. The fluid there that has become strong, becomes excessive. Being pure, and of a pure vigour he goes to the place of Brahmā. The vigour does not obtain a seat, and remains unsteady. He is dragged by samāna (i.e. vital air having its seat in the cavity of the navel and essential for digestion); and is carried by that air. In the skull of beings there are five insects. These two are at the root of the ear. Then there are in the seat of the eyes; O king, they are of the size of the small finger. They are red-tailed. The black-tailed have the colour of fresh butter. There is no doubt about this.

Well-being to you, hear their names from me who am telling them. The two insects *Piṅgalī* and *Śrīṅgalī* are at the root of the ear. The other two, *Śrīṅgalī* and *Jaṅgalī*, remain in the interior of the eyes. There is no doubt that there are a hundred and fifty insects like that. All remain in the forehead and are of the size of a mustard. There is no doubt that all suffering from skull-disease get disturbed.

69b-77. I shall (now) tell about another great insect *Prājāpatya*. It has the size of a rice-grain and its colour. There is no doubt about it. O king, listen, there is a couple of hair in his mouth. The intelligence of beings is perishable at that moment only. There is no doubt about it. That vigour falls in the form of a fluid into the mouth of that *Prājāpatya* remaining in its own seat. There is no doubt about this. It happily drinks that vigour (i.e. that fluid) and becomes intoxicated due to that. Breaking the place of palate only, it remains unsteadily. The arteries (called) *Idā*, *Piṅgalā* and *Suṣumnā* are stationed there. By its own power the artery is shaken for a moment. (Then) O king, there is the itching for sex in all beings. The penis of the man expands, so also the vulva of the woman. The woman and the man, getting mad, are then united. Due to rubbing of one body with another, there is a momentary pleasure. Then there is the same kind of itching. O hero, such a feeling is indeed seen everywhere. This consequence of the (enjoyment of the) objects of senses is unpleasant.

78-82a. Virtue alone, practised duly is better. Resorting to firmness then, practise virtue alone. This is the unsteady breath which, in a moment, has hundreds of goings and comings. The life of men is dependent on it. Who causes delay in (the practice of) virtue? Oh! the heart of a man who has reached even a hundred (years) would not keep away from the prohibited senses of objects. Sexual desire can never be pacified by enjoying senses of objects. Like fire with oblation it again enhances.

82b-93. Who else, but the soul-lord Rāma—the lord Viṣṇu, is able to free the mind taken away by an unchaste woman? Therefore, due to the foulness of lust everything becomes fruitless. You have age (i.e. you are young) even now. Practise what is beneficial to you. On one side are all virtuous deeds causing the destruction of the sins of sinners, and on the other side,

there is always the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, cohabiting with one's teacher's wife are declared to be great sins by best sages. The month of Vaiśākha would destroy all the great darkness of sins committed by men through mind and body by means of a vow; as the sun would totally destroy darkness, in the same way the month of Mādhava would remove (sins). Duly practise (the vows) in that month. O king, having abandoned, due to the powerful religious acts performed in the month of Vaiśākha, the great, awful sins committed from birth, men, being delighted reach the city of Viṣṇu. Even sinners, if they practise (vows during) even one Vaiśākha with devotion, go to Viṣṇu's abode. Therefore, O king, you too, bathing (every) morning, duly worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, during this month of Vaiśākha. As the cover of a rice-grain or the blackness of copper go away due to the act (of pounding or rubbing), in the same way, O hero, the sin of a man goes away (by means of a rite). Like (the cover of) a rice-grain, the natural impurity of a man is abundant. There is no doubt that it perishes. Therefore, do a bright deed."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Carnal Enjoyment Is Sinful

The king said:

1-4. I have been advised by you with words that are like the water of the milky sea, that have a viewpoint that is cool and pure, that are true and beautiful. O dear one, you have made me drink the nectar which has not come up from the ocean, which is not a substance, which is a medicine for the calamity, and which removes the disease in the form of the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, it is said that contact of the good gives delight to men, removes their sins, is a medicine for their life, and destroys old age and death. Due to the association of the good only, those desired objects difficult to obtain, are obtained.

5-11a. For him, who has bathed with (i.e. in the water of) Gaṅgā in the form of the company of the good, which removes sins, what is the use of (giving) gifts, (visiting) holy places, (practising) austerities and sacrifices? The good who know the ways of the world, who are tranquil, are the final emancipation for men who sink and come up in the ocean of the worldly existence, are a strong boat for those who sink in the water (of the mundane existence). O lord, that my feeling desiring the happiness through lust only which was formerly there, has been reversed due to your sight and your words. One would lose a thousand existences for the happiness in one existence. A wise man collects the (fruit of) thousands of existences by means of (i.e. in) one existence. Oh! O brāhmaṇa, by me, a fool, whose heart was longing for carnal pleasures, my own good has not at all been done. Oh! (great was) the delusion of my mind due to which I threw my soul into an awful calamity, ending in misery and difficult to overcome. O holy one, I am pleased (as) I have been roused by your words.

11b-14. Please liberate me by giving me advice. Since you advised me due to my former meritorious deeds, I am (now) especially purified with the dust of your feet. O best among speakers, describe to me the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, which you have said to be removing all sins. O brāhmaṇa sage, for my emancipation from the sins (please) tell me: What are the gifts in that month? What (kind of) bath is prescribed? Who is the deity? Which are the rules?

Yama said:

15. O brāhmaṇa, that glorious Kaśyapa, the treasure of compassion, who was thus addressed, said words which were meritorious, auspicious and beneficial to all.

Kaśyapa said :

16-19. A wise man has to explain to you what is asked with a mind capable of putting together the earlier and later (ideas), and not to mean person of a wicked mind. There is no doubt that by giving in that way a good (i.e. proper) opinion to him who is engaged in sinful activities, the proper

fruit of giving knowledge is obtained. One should not speak to anyone when not asked; so also to him who is asking unjustly. A wise man, even though he knows (the truth), should behave towards the people like a dumb man. (But) he should speak to his learned disciples and sons, though he is not asked. The good of those who have faith is (always) superior.

20-28a. O king, due to my words and due to certain religious merit you had acquired before, now you have become one of a pure heart. Your body having a sinful condition has now gone due to (your) having resorted to me. Due to your having heard the knowledge of religious merit, it has (now) become one having a meritorious condition. A body is of a sinful condition; it is known as unrighteous and is without knowledge. The other which is of (i.e. practises) good vows should be known as righteous. The third one intended for enjoyment of religious merit, and suffering (fruit of) impiety is beyond the senses. Thus those who know religious merit say that the body is of three kinds. As there is the enjoyment of the good deeds and there is salvation, it is of three kinds. The body of a sinful condition is called sinful. Now, the body of you who are having devotion to your teacher, who are following my words (of advice), and who are hearing the nature of religious merit, has become of the nature of religious merit. By that only spotless purity, proper for religious rites, has been produced. Due to luck the minds and acts of bodies of men undergo a change from time to time. Now indeed your body moves on to piety. Therefore, I am inviting you to the excellent bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

Yama said:

28b-32. Then that family priest Kaśyapa urged the king to bathe, (give) gifts, worship (Viṣṇu), and perform proper rites, as formerly told in the sacred texts, in the month of Vaiśākha. The sage spoke to the king as told (in the holy texts). He made him hear the essence of (Viṣṇu's) hymn, and taught him Viṣṇu's worship, having heard and studied which he would obtain the proper fruit. He made him (a man of) pure devotion. The king also performed (the rites) according to the rules. The performance (of rites) in the month of Vaiśākha is praiseworthy. He listened to it with respect.

33-39. The best king devoutly performed morning bath, (got) water for washing the feet with, (offered) oblations and worshipped Viṣṇu. He also made an offering of eatables (to Viṣṇu). That best brāhmaṇa who gives gifts according to the rules and with respect, and who performs the rite like this, who devoutly, every day and every year does like this, goes to the abode of Viṣṇu. Then in other months he again becomes one sporting with the breasts of beautiful women, and has the only desire of enjoyment, according to his liking. He being under the influence of lust, does not follow the rule of piety nor does he consider the royal affairs, except in the month of Vaiśākha. O best brāhmaṇa, even for the great, this mind-born (one), born with the body, is difficult to resist. The course of desires is beginningless, since the women who are endowed with (beautiful) hair and collyrium, whose touch is bad, who are dear to the eyes, who have flames like those of fire, burn a man like grass (i.e. hay). Carnal desire is an awful enemy duly living in the bodies of men. It is full of the smoke of delusion, is sinful. Whom has he (i.e. it) not blinded?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

King Mahāratha Goes to Viṣṇu's Abode

Yama said:

1-7. Then the king, observed by the glance of Death, and with his body emaciated due to consumption caused by extreme sexual enjoyment, died. He was being taken by the attendants of Yama, was repeatedly being beaten, was wailing with loud cries, and remembered his sins. Then Viṣṇu's messengers, having come, beat my followers, and saying, 'He is righteous', they put him into an aeroplane. The king, with his sins exhausted due to the morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha, and being praised by the hosts of celestial nymphs, was taken to Viṣṇu's city. Then, thinking that he was unrighteous, the king was again put by the divine messengers at the behest of Viṣṇu, not far from the

path to hell. While going, he heard the various wailings of beings, being roasted in hell. Hearing the very awful cries of the sinners being boiled, the king was amazed and became extremely afflicted.

8. He said: "O messengers, what is this awful wailing that is heard and is not heard again. Please tell me the reason of it."

The messengers said:

9-17. Beings who have abandoned bounds of morality, who are sinful, and who are bereft of (good) behaviour are thrown into awful hells like Tāmisra. Those who have committed sins here (i.e. in this world), after death resort to the path of (the abode of) Yama, suffer very terrible grief. Being dragged by fierce men of Yama, and fallen into darkness, they are eaten up by very awful dogs, foxes, carnivorous animals, crows, herons, cranes etc. and by wolves and tigers having fire-like mouths and by serpents, scorpions etc. Being burnt by fire, being pricked by thorns, being cut off by saws, being troubled by thirst, and being oppressed by hunger, so also by awful hosts of diseases, fainting at every step due to the odour of pus and blood, they are at times boiled in oils, at times beaten with pestles, are roasted in iron-vessels or at times on stones. At times they eat what is vomitted; at times (they eat) pus and blood. At times they eat feces; at times awful flesh at places with a foul smell. At times they are eaten by insects with fire-like mouths.

18-24. They, wailing in various tones, are again and again roasted in houses where, in the heaps of hair, blood, flesh, marrow and bones, the dead bodies are scattered in a disorderly manner and are clearly eaten by insects, which (houses) are destroyed by the mouths of crows, herons and great vultures and have crores of bodies put very closely without interstices, which have saws and small flat stones for grinding and have no oil, which are made of trees with sharp thorns, and have the pillars of iron, oil and marrow, which are bright with pillars with fierce flames and razors, thorns and nails, which are full with the hot pus of Vaitarapī, and the breasts of men and women cut off with swords, and which are awful on account of being seized with fearful darkness. They have nooses tied round their necks; at

places they are surrounded by serpents; at places they are squeezed by machines, and at places they are dragged with their knees (seized).

25-29. O king, the sinners, doing bad acts, and wailing, with their backs, heads and necks broken, with their throats choked, (appearing) very awful, they with bodies capable of suffering torment, being whirled in an apartment on the top of the house, are troubled. They wail along with the enjoyment of sensual objects. All beings suffer this (due to) what they have done before. The union (that was had) for love with another's wife, gives pain. The enjoyment of objects of senses for a short while, has turned out to be giving pain for many years. O best king, having got the touch of the breezes coming from the body of you who bathed duly in the morning in Vaiśākha, they are delighted for a moment and due to your lustre have become strong. Therefore, they who remain in the hell are free from wailing. Even the name of those who have a meritorious character is said to lead to happiness. The touch of the breezes that had the touch of their bodies causes delight.

Yama said:

30-32a. Hearing these words, the king, the treasure of compassion, said to the messengers of Viṣṇu of wonderful acts: "The heart of the good is indeed soft like fresh butter, which heated with fire, certainly melts."

The king said:

32b-39a. Abandoning an oppressed and unhappy being, I am not able to go. Fie upon him who, though capable, does not remove the affliction of the oppressed. If these beings became happy due to the touch of the breezes that left after touching my body, then you may take me there. As the sandal-trees that remove the torment of others purify sandal, in the same way those men who remove the affliction of others purify their mother, are blessed. Those alone are the good, who, in this world remove the affliction of others, and for whom their life is (as insignificant) as a blade of grass in the matter of removing the affliction of the afflicted. This earth is sustained by those

men who are bent on (doing) good to others. The constant happiness of mind is heaven; it may resemble hell (outwardly). Therefore, the good are always happy with (i.e. due to) the happiness of others. It is better to fall into hell, it is better to die, than having pleasure for a moment except the one that is had by removing the affliction of the afflicted.

The messengers said:

39b-45a. Sinful beings are roasted here in the awful hell. They live by (the fruits of) their own deeds. There is no place for misunderstanding. Those who have, in the other world (i.e. on the earth), not given (gifts), not offered oblations, or (have) not bathed at a holy place, (have) also not obliged (any one), or (have) not done, with devotion, a great meritorious act, (have) not offered sacrifices, (have) not practised penance, (have) not muttered (prayers) with joy, are roasted in awful hells. Those who are of a bad character, whose practices are bad, who are condemned due to their diversions and food, who harm others, who commit sins, who amuse themselves in a bad manner, who cut asunder the hearts of others with words cutting the vitals, so also those who sport with the wives of others, are roasted in a hell. Come on, O king, we shall go to Viṣṇu's abode. It is not proper for a meritorious person like you to stay here hereafter.

The king said:

45b-57. O messengers, if I have done meritorious deeds, then why am I brought along this path leading to hell? Or what is my great religious merit? I, given to carnal pleasures, have not done any meritorious act like that. (Then) how shall I go to the city of Viṣṇu? I have a doubt.

The messengers said:

It is true, you, with your mind influenced by lust, did not do a meritorious act, did not perform sacrifices, did not eat the leftovers of a sacrifice; but, formerly, you, impelled by the words of your teacher, bathed duly in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha for three years and devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. He to whom his devotees are dear, destroys the stream

of major and heinous sins. O lord of men, by means of that, the essence of all religious practices, he being honoured by the hosts of gods, is taken to an auspicious place. Viṣṇu, when worshipped, destroys even major sins. In the same way the month of Vaiśākha is declared (to be destroying sins) by Brahmā. As by a spark of fire a heap of grass (hay) is burnt, in the same way by the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha the stream of sins is burnt. As long as a man does not bathe in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, even the major sins originate in his body. A man who is engaged in vows as laid down (in sacred texts), is freed from streams of sins due to devotion to Viṣṇu and would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of men, since, formerly you did not do meritorious acts from your birth, you were taken along the path to hell. Now, O lord of the earth, being praised by us and the hosts of gods quickly go by an aeroplane to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

King Mahiratha Gives Part of His Merit to the Sufferers in Hell

Yama said:

1-4. O brāhmaṇa, then the king, the ocean of compassion, afflicted by their grief, spoke politely to Viṣṇu's messengers: "The good ones look upon the protection of the frightened one as the fruit of affluence, nobility of birth and meritorious deeds. If I have some religious merit (to my credit) then, by means of that let these beings, free from their sins, go to heaven. I shall live in their place." Having heard these words of the truthful king, they, thinking of his truthfulness and generosity, said these words to the king:

The messengers said:

5-11. O king, due to this your kind deed and your words, your religious merit, especially the accumulated one, has in-

creased. They know that a bath, gift, muttering, sacrifice, penance, worship of deities etc. which is done in the month of Vaiśākha, gives an inexhaustible fruit. A sacrificer or a donor plays in heaven with the gods in ponds having golden lotuses and at the root of the desire-yielding tree. Being sung by the bevy of divine young beautiful damsels he is delighted. By giving water and food a man obtains the auspicious heaven of Varuṇa. One who gives a cow easily liberates seven (members) of his family. By giving a horse a man goes to the Sun's heaven. A man who imparts knowledge goes to Brahmā's heaven. Similarly by giving gold a man goes to the abode of gods. In the same way, one who gives his daughter (in marriage) goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man who bathes in the month of Vaiśākha, gives gifts after worshipping Viṣṇu, obtains all his desired objects and reaches an immutable place.

12-14. On one side are penance, gifts and rites like sacrifices and extraction of Soma juice, and on the other is the great month of Vaiśākha observed properly. O king, the good deed which you formerly did even on one day of the month of Vaiśākha is more than all gifts. O king, O treasure of compassion, give, through pity, your religious merit of a day to the afflicted ones being roasted in the hell.

15-20. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no penance like compassion. There is no gift like compassion. There is no friend like compassion. A man who gives his religious merit (to others) always gets religious merit a lakh times (more); especially due to pity your religious merit would increase. A man who removes the affliction of afflicted beings, is alone blessed in the world; he should be known as born from a portion of Viṣṇu. Give duly, repeating thrice, the religious merit of your bath, gifts etc.—destroying all sins—which you did on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, to these, by keeping lord Viṣṇu as the witness; by that they would obtain heaven. Śibi, the ocean of fame, gave formerly, through kindness, his flesh for (saving the life of) a pigeon, and the ocean of compassion shines in the heaven.

21. The royal sage Dadhīci also gave the collection of his bones, and obtained glory, the moonlight to the three worlds, and inexhaustible heaven.

22-32. The royal sage Sahasrajit abandoned his dear life for a brāhmaṇa, and he of a great fame went to the best heavens. We think that a man does not get that happiness even in salvation which he gets by offering complete satisfaction to an afflicted being. O king, O wise one, due to this deed you have, employing your courage, become the foremost among donors in the tales (about donors). Seeing (i.e. knowing) your intention, your religious merit, pity and your very firm gift, we also, speaking meritorious things, have made an effort to speak. O king, if you like, then without delay, give your religious merit, burning their torment and affliction, to these.

Thus addressed, the kind one, making the mace-holder (Viṣṇu) the witness, duly gave, repeating thrice, his religious merit to them. All those beings, free from the torments inflicted by Yama, got into an excellent aeroplane, and being delighted and saluting, praising and looking at him, went to heaven, when he gave them the religious merit that he had earned on a day of the month of Vaiśākha. Having accepted the religious merit given by the king, which was earned (just) on a day of the month of Vaiśākha, all of them, freed from hell, got into an aeroplane and went to heaven. This is the wonder. Strange is the host of beings on the earth, and strange in many ways is the devotion arisen in them. In the same way, the path of action is strange; (and) the heap of its powers is strange. He who is being praised by groups of sages, who has got more religious merit due to that particular act, who is being saluted by the attendants of the lord of the world, went to that highest place that cannot be obtained by meditating saints.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

How to Meditate on Kṛṣṇa in Vaiśākha

Yama said:

1-8. O best brāhmaṇa, I have narrated in brief some importance of the month of Vaiśākha, especially of the full-moon day.

He who recites this account dear to Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, getting purified quickly goes to Viṣṇu's abode and gets delighted (there) for many kalpas. This (description of the) greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, the life of the king and our dialogue are blessed, give fame, long life, are a great means of securing prosperity, lead to heaven, give prosperity, delight, are praiseworthy and destroy sins. Having heard and recited it duly, and delighting the one dear to the mind, there would be (i.e. take place) devotion, due to which there would be the destruction of sins. O brāhmaṇa go, as you desire, from the world of gods. Your kinsmen, having dropped (i.e. put) your body on the ground, are still weeping. Go, as it were, you have just got up from the sleep, before your body is quickly thrown (i.e. put) into fire by your kinsmen that are weeping. By my favour you have heard this path of religious merit. Do it properly. By doing it, you will be united with gods at the (proper) time.

Sūta said:

9-12. The brāhmaṇa, having heard these words of the god, and having saluted the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama), and with his mind pleased, again fell down on the ground due to the favour of Yama from there; and being attended by his kinsmen, he got up as if he had been asleep. The brāhmaṇa himself performed this rite on the earth year after year, and made men bath in the month of Vaiśākha. On the occasion of the meritorious bath in the month of Vaiśākha, I have told you this dialogue between Yama and the brāhmaṇa.

13-14. To him, the wise one, who would bathe in the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, and gives gifts, (performs) sacrifices and good deeds with great devotion, the place of Viṣṇu is not difficult to get. He who with a concentrated mind listens to this greatness, due to the Sun's being in Aries, goes, being freed from all sins, to the highest place of Viṣṇu.

The sages said:

15-18. O Sūta, O very wise Sūta, you, of a very kind heart, have told (us) the greatness of the month of Vaiśākha which

destroys sins. You have (also) told us the restraints which are to be observed, and also the worship, bath (to be done and) gifts (to be given) according to the statements in the sacred texts and the codes of law, so also (you have told us) how Viṣṇu, who destroys sins, is pleased. Now we desire to hear about the meditation that liberates one from the worldly existence, of the magnanimous Kṛṣṇa dear to his hosts of devotees.

Sūta said:

19-20. O sages, all of you (now) listen to (the account) of Kṛṣṇa, the soul of the world, the life of the cows, the cowherds and the cowherdesses, and moving in Vṛndāvana. O brāhmaṇas, once Gautama asked Nārada (about this). I shall tell you about that meditation which he had told him.

Nārada said:

21-25. A man of sharp intellect should always remember the excellent Vṛndāvana which appears forth with the fragrant honey dropping from the host of flowers; which is endowed with beauty, being bent due to the mass of new sprouts of good trees; which is surrounded by creepers charming with blossoming fresh sprouts; which is auspicious. He should think of the desire-yielding tree in it, which (tree) was resounding with the hummings of the wandering bees, which were coming out from their mouths and which were sweet due to their enjoying the honey of the blooming flowers; and also resounding with the birds like pigeons, parrots, sārīkās and cuckoos; which was full of (the peacocks) the enemies of serpents, dancing here and there; which was constantly served by breezes carrying the drops from the tossing waves of (Yamunā) the daughter of Kalinda, which (breezes) were dusty due to the mass of pollen from the interiors of full-blown lotuses, which were intent upon tossing about the garments of the women from Vraja with their feeling of sex inflamed; which had shoots and new sprouts, the leaves of which were like emeralds, the buds of which were like the mass of the lustre of pearls, which had many fruits of the colour of lotuses; which was the greatest; which was always served by all the seasons; which gave the desired objects. A cautious, wise man should remember a golden ground which

is bright like the sun risen on the mountain with bright golden peaks; which has lustrous jewelled floor; which is shining with the pollen of flowers: which has six parts under it (i.e. the tree) having a shower of the drops of nectar.

26-51. Thinking of the eight-petalled tawny lotus on the greatest seat for abstract meditation, arranged on that jewelled floor, and bright like the sun, one should think of Mukunda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) seated comfortably in it; (of Mukunda) (who was) like the mass of clouds of split up collyrium; and who was bright like a fresh blue lotus; whose mass of hair was very glossy, dark, dense and curved; whose crest of the peacocks' tails was bright and charming; who was endowed with the flowers of the divine tree fondled by bees; whose ear ornament was a blooming fresh lotus; who had a bright mark of yellow pigment on the base of the forehead bright with unsteady bees; who had the bright cilli-bow; whose face was charming like the autumnal complete orb of the moon without spot; whose eyes were large like petals of lotuses; whose mirror-like cheeks were brightened with jewelled and bright ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles; whose nose was raised and charming; whose lips were more beautiful than red lead; who had brightened the quarters with his gentle smile resembling the moon, the kunda and the mandāra (flowers); whose charming conch-like neck was bright due to the neck-ornament accomplished with the mass of excellent sprouts and flowers; whose shoulders were adorned with spreading garland of santānaka flowers from which were hanging the intoxicated noisy bees; who was shining with the sun in the form of the Kaustubha gem glittering in the sky in the form of his large bosom shining with a series of garlands; whose raised shoulders were well-marked with the auspicious curl of hair on his bosom; whose hands reaching his knees were large and round; who had a little wavy belly; whose hair (on his belly) resembled a swarm of female bees; who had put on armlets, a line of bracelets, a neck-ornament, a girdle, and anklets fashioned with various jewels; whose slim body was tinged with yellow divine fragrant unguents; who had put on a yellowish garment round his round hips; whose thighs and knees were lovely; whose shanks were round and beautiful; who had censured the lustre of the tortoise by means of the lovely and raised foreparts of his feet; whose

lotus-like feet were beautiful, shining like mirrors of emeralds, bright with excellent nails and having the sheaths of red toes; who was charming as his reddish palms and soles were marked with (signs like those of) fish, goads, cupid's flags, barley-corns, lotuses and diamond-pins; whose body was fashioned with the mass of the essence of beauty; who had censured the beauty of Cupid's body with his loveliness; who made the continuous line of the subdued beings salute him due to the constantly produced divine musical orders discharged by the fingers of his hands moving to and fro over the holes of the flute filled with (the breath from) his lotus-like mouth; who was surrounded by cows whose eyes merged in his lotus-like face, that were stumbling, dull and walking slowly due to the burden of their udders, that had in their mouths sprouts of grass left after they were bitten with the tips of their teeth, and whose creeper-like tails were hanging; who was surrounded by calves maddened with the foamy milk dropping from their steady mouths full of their mothers' udders—the ornaments—from which milk was oozing, and with their pairs of ears raised due to the charming, gentle song, sent out by the flute; who was also surrounded by male and female calves with unsteady plantings of the foreparts of their hoofs—unsteady due to the feeling of confusion as a result of gentle strokes of the new horns on their heads; who was surrounded by large oxen who had disturbed the quarters with their bellowing, weary due to the burden of their humps, and having drunk the nectar of the sound of the flute by the steady cavities of their ears, and with their spreading and large noses raised; who was also surrounded by cowherds who were of similar qualities, character, age, sports and dresses, who were made violent by the sweet-sounding flutes and lutes, who were engaged in singing slowly, and with a high and loud tone, who were delighted in lovely dancing accompanied by singing and instrumental music, due to their unsteady creeper-like arms, whose groups of moving bells tied to the cavities of their fat loins and inside their shanks, were sounding, who were roaming, who were maddened, who had made charming ornaments out of the nails of hyenas; who was surrounded by children who were speaking indistinctly but sweetly; and who was all round served by the rows of the very charming, beautiful cowherdesses whose

braids were big and who walked slowly due to (large) hips, who had a line of hair manifested on the three folds, fragile due to the burden of the heavy breasts, whose body-creepers of that tree of Cupid blossomed by the nectar of the musical instruments like the extremely sweet and lovely flute were adorned with horripilation charming like buds that had shot forth, who continuously had the drops of fatigue resembling the spray on unsteady ripples of that ocean of sexual feeling increased by the laughter, who had unbearable affliction along with tremor spreading over their distressed bodies, all the vital parts of which were crushed by shower of Cupid in the form of his sharp glances from the extremely lovely and gentle bows of cilli (i.e. his eyes), who longed for drinking the nectar of the beauty of his very lovely dress and form, who were the rivers flooded with the water of love, whose lotus-like eyes were gentle and unsteady, who were repeatedly served by a swarm of bees greedy of the honey dripping from the full-blown flowers dropping from their beautiful braids, whose words were faltering and soft due to intoxication caused by intense passion of love, whose buttocks appeared beautiful due to the lustre of the ends of the silken garments which were getting loose due to their knots being untied by the unsteady girdles, who had filled the quarters with anklets inlaid with jewels, due to gentle plantings of their stumbling and charming lotus-like pairs of eyes which were broad and had beautiful eye-lashes, whose ear-rings were bright, whose sprout-like reddish lips were fading due to the torment caused by wind of the longest breath (i.e. sigh), whose lotus-like hands were shining with many presents.

52-56. A man should remember him (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) whose entire body was worshipped by the wreaths of the lotuses hidden in the sheaths of their long, unsteady, blue eyes; who has a body which is the abode of sports, which tastes the honey from the lotus-like faces of those innocent ones, which through love has the row of bees in the form of the damsels of bewitching eyes, which is beautiful; a man should remember outside (the group) of the cowherdresses, the cowherds and the beasts, the host of divinities, desiring riches, and led by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, and intent on praising him. (A man should remember) on his right side, a host of sages, bent upon (following) the

tradition due to their strong desire for religious merit; behind him, (a man should remember) the chief meditating saints like Sanaka, desiring salvation through abstract meditation; (he should remember) on his left, yakṣas, siddhas, gandharvas, vidyādhara and cāraṇas with their beloveds and with kinnaras, so also the chiefs of celestial nymphs desiring (the fulfilment of) their desires through dancing, singing and sounds of musical instruments, who are white like a conch, the moon and the kunda (flower), who know all the Vedas, whose matted hair is tawny, like streaks of lightning, and remembering me (i.e. Nārada), Brahmā's son who desires spotless devotion to his feet, who has given up the company of any one else, who pleases (the lord) with charming modulations in the seven musical orders and the three gamuts endowed with qualities of various notes, should devoutly think of him.

57. The man, of a sharp and clear intellect, having thus meditated upon the son of Nanda, should again deliberately and devoutly worship him in his own body and outside with splendour. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you all that was desired by you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Dialogue between Śambhu and Rāma

Om, salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

The sages said:

1. O illustrious one, tell us again the wonderful account of Rāma, which is the all-in-all of Rāma's greatness and which gives delight to the devotees.

Sūta said:

2-6a. The wise son of Daśaratha, after having performed the excellent horse-sacrifice, engaged himself in the worldly deeds and in acts laid down in the sacred texts. Śaṅkara, the

magnanimous one, desiring to go to Ayodhyā, lived with Pārvatī on the bank of Sarayū. Great-souled sages like Kaśyapa approached that Śaṅkara, of a universal form, and asked him of unlimited lustre. (They said:) “O best sage, wherefrom have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come here? Which country are you bent on going to?”

Śaṅkara said:

6b-12a. I am a brāhmaṇa named Śambhu and living on Himālaya. I am going to see Rāma; I have a great deed to do. That king interested in listening to the Purāṇas, invites (i.e. has invited) me. You too may come. Rāma will be glad.

Then all the sages and Śambhu went with a desire to see Rāma. Knowing them to have arrived, Vasiṣṭha informed Rāma. Then he with his family-priest (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) quickly came out (to meet them). Offering them materials of worship and water for washing their feet, he honoured all the sages. He who curbed his enemies, took them into the best mansion. Having given a seat to each one of them, the best among the Raghus, honoured the sages, seated them on the seats one by one with words of welcome. Pleasing them with sweet words, he said these words to them who were seated on the seats.

Śrī Rāma said:

12b-15a. Today my existence has become fruitful; today I have obtained the fruit of my penance. Today the time of obtaining the fruit of my practice of the lores has come. Today my dead ancestors are pleased; my kingdom has become fruitful today. My (good) conduct has become fruitful today; today my learning has become fruitful.

To king Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, who was speaking like this, the brāhmaṇas, Kaśyapa and others said:

The sages said:

15b-21. This brāhmaṇa is Śambhu who is conversant with all sacred texts, who knows the essential truth of the Vedas and

the Vedāṅgas, who is engaged in the good of all beings, who lives at Kailāsa, and who is always determined in (practising) penance, who is comparable to Brahmā in divine glory, who is the best of those who know the Vedas, who is comparable to Viṣṇu in his affection for brāhmaṇas, and to Śaṅkara in (showing) grace. Such is (this) very lustrous best brāhmaṇa Śambhu who knows the eighteen Purāṇas and who is well-versed in Mīmāṃsā¹ and Nyāya². Due to your great luck this best sage has come (here). This best sage invited by you, has come from Kailāsa, O lord. Therefore, O you descendant of Raghu, O illustrious one, ask him (about) the excellent account of the Purāṇas. We, desiring to hear (it), have today come (to you). The knowledge of a man who has mastered the Vedas and knows all sacred texts, but has not heard the Purāṇas, is not accurate.

Sūta said:

22. Thus addressed by the sages who had realized the truth, the best of the Raghus, eager to listen to the Purāṇas, got incomparable delight.

Śrī Rāma said:

23-26. O excellent, best sage, I desire to hear from you all that, viz. the varieties of the worship of the Phallus, the greatness of the Phallus, the greatness of the name of the great lord (Śiva), the importance of worship, the significance of salutation, the greatness of wisdom, the importance of offering water, so also of offering incense, O best one, so also of offering lamps, aloewood etc. and the importances of flowers, the account destroying sins

1. Mīmāṃsā—One of the six systems of Indian Philosophy. It was originally divided into two systems: the Pūrvamīmāṃsā and the Uttaramīmāṃsā. The former is said to be founded by Jaimini. The latter is ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa. The two systems have very little in common between them. The Pūrvamīmāṃsā, concerns itself chiefly with the correct interpretation of the ritualistic part of the Veda and the settlement of doubts in regard to Vedic texts. The Uttaramīmāṃsā, also called Brahmamīmāṃsā, deals mainly with the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit.

2. Nyāya—A system of Indian Philosophy founded by Gautama, also known as Gotama and Akṣapāda. The system is primarily concerned with the conditions of correct thinking and with the means of gaining a true knowledge of reality.

from many tales and traditions, so also the four goals of human life, viz. *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* and the means of (attaining) them.

Śambhu said:

27-33. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of great (i.e. mighty) arms, O Rāghava, you are meritorious, (since) though attached to (i.e. engaged in the administration of) the kingdom you have a liking for hearing the Purāṇas. O Rāma, it would be due to the service of the great and resorting to holy places. That is the tongue that would sing (the praise of) Śiva; that is the heart which is dedicated to him; those two hands alone that worship him, are fit to be praised. That body alone is best born among all existences which brightens with horripilation at the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu. O great king, you are blessed since your mind has moved in (asking) questions about him.

Immediately thereafter couriers, hurrying and tired, came (there). The best among the Raghus took a letter from the hands of (one of) them, and read it. Rāma thought to his mind: 'How has it taken place?' Śambhu who was in the guise of a brāhmaṇa and accompanied by his wife, then asked Rāma: "O you descendant of Kakutstha, what are you thinking about when the sages are sitting in front of you?" Hearing his words, Rāma said to the best sages:

Śrī Rāma said:

34-41. Oh, how is it that Bibhīṣaṇa seeing the Phallus of Śiva, (called) Rāmeśvara and installed by me, is bound with chains by the crooked, wicked-minded Drāviḍas? Think about it with your (i.e. by applying your) mind.

Thinking (about it) the best sages were unable to know (it even) a little. They said to Rāma: "We do not know." Then Rāma said: "O best ones, having duly seen (i.e. looked into) a Purāṇa tell (me) all that. After that the cause of your ignorance may be considered. Which Purāṇa should be looked into; similarly which should be avoided; which verse is excellent; which is other than that; what kind of worshipper should be there and

for what kind of act; and on seeing (its) verdict (*obscure!*) as to how the worship should be done by devotees.” Hearing these words of Rāma, those best brāhmaṇas spoke to Rāma whose mind was full of anxiety: “O Rāma, we shall not tell it. One who knows the Purāṇa, should look into it.” Hearing that, Rāma, full of modesty, asked Śambhu; he too, who was very intelligent, hearing those words, said:

Śambhu said:

42-50a. A very intelligent man who lives by (expounding) the Purāṇas, who deserves honour, who has studied (the scriptures of) the branch of Veda to which he belongs, who is pure, who knows the essence of Mīmāṃsā, who is learned, who censures falsehood, who looks equally upon all gods, who loves Śiva, who mutters the Śatarudriya hymn, who maintains sacred fire, who is a great speaker, who is especially a follower of the Yajurveda, should worship the book (i.e. the text of the Purāṇa). The book is written on palm leaves, is auspicious and is written in the divine script (i.e. in Sanskrit). It is extensive as it is bound (together) and has at the same time the syllable ‘Om’ (at its beginning). At the end of the two vertical lines here would be the line being the first line of Om. Near it should be the letter ‘a’. Beginning with the topmost part and hanging down it should have an angle. That which has a (vertical) line to the right (of the letter ‘a’), should be known to be the letter ‘ā’. The letter ‘i’ is known to have two dots and bent like (the figure) six. (Long) ‘ī’ is said to be (formed) by a line on the left top of it. Except Om, every letter has a line on its top. But on it there is a vertical line and at its end there is (the figure) like that of a sickle. That should be known as ‘u’. (Long) ‘ū’ is formed by means of two (figures of) sickles. Bhāratī (i.e. Sarasvatī) has said that other letters are (to be formed) like these.

50b-54a. That Purāṇa which is written in this script alone, is praiseworthy. (The Purāṇas are:) Brahma, Padma, Vaiṣṇava, Mārtaṇḍa, (the one) narrated by Nārada, Mārkaṇḍeya, and Āgneya, Kaurma and Vāmana, Gāruḍa; Laiṅga (is also) said (to be one of them); Skānda, Mātsya, Nṛsimha; O Rāma, Kapila is also said to be (a Purāṇa); so also Varāha; Brahmavaivarta is recommended for omens; (and there are) Śiva, Bhāgavata,

Daurga (i.e. of Durgā), Bhaviṣyottara also known by the subtitle Bhaviṣya. One should avoid others.

54b-61a. Untying the (string of) the book (the reader) should put the hallowed book on a jewelled stool. He should put on washed garments; he should bathe and be pure; he should be without wrath and without distress; he should, having first worshipped his soul and having made a mental resolve, meditate upon the white (-complexioned) Sarasvatī, of a pleased face and holding a goad, a rosary, a noose and a book. The worshipper should begin the worship after first having duly meditated upon Śiva whose figure is(white) like the cow's milk, who has three eyes, whose vehicle is the bull (Nandī), whose face is smiling, who is tranquil, who has put on a white garment, who is fearless, whose both arms have been (tossed) up, who has a crown (on his head), whose right hand is put on the left, who gives boons, who is richly adorned with many jewels, whose half seat is occupied by (Pārvatī) the daughter of (the Himālaya) Mountain, whose lotus-like feet are being meditated upon by many chief sages, who is being praised by Vedas embodied, so also by Purāṇas, so also whose lotus-like feet are waited upon by all other people.

61b-64a. The consecration of the pitcher (should be done with the utterance of the hymn) *Āpo vā idam* ('This is water'). Having taken that water, he consecrates (the water) in the vessel. He, having (consecrated) himself, and having praised (Brahman) with the hymn *Tat sad Brahma*, should then invoke all the vessels. He should worship Sarasvatī with the Ṣoḍaśārcana (worshipping sixteen times) with the ṛc *Yad vāg*, or he should do it with the recital of the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn), or with the Gāyatrī hymn.

64b-69. He should worship the Purāṇa by (first saying) 'Om, salutation to the lord, such and such Purāṇa (is being expounded).' With the recital of the hymn *Kāṇḍāt* he should bring dūrvā (grass) and worship it (saying:) 'Om, salutation to the respectable Dūrvā'. The worship should be done along with (that of) the guardians of the quarters. Then a (young) girl should be honoured. (She should be) auspicious and should be above five years but below ten years. She should not have attained puberty. He should carefully worship her with fragrant substance, flow-

ers, sacred rice grains, incense, lamp, tām̐būla and ornaments. The worshipper should make the young girl recite this hymn: 'Speak the truth, speak what is agreeable; O venerable Sarasvatī, salutation to you, salutation to you.'

70-75a. According to the meaning of the order of the (words of the) Gāyatrī (hymn) he should make her keep near the book two dūrvās, then under it with the ṛc *Sahasra paramā*. The wise one (i.e. the worshipper) should give three pairs of dūrvās into her hand; after that she should throw (i.e. put) three small sticks into the joints of the book. Throwing them (away), he should again give her (small sticks), saying *Śivābhyām namaḥ* ('salutation to Śivas'). The verse in between two leaves suggests the success in the work (to be undertaken). O Rāghava, if the verse would come to an end on the previous leaf, then he should read the verse on the next leaf, and having discerned it, should read it aloud. The wise one should read it slowly, and should explain it slowly. Here no hurry should be done, (as) Sarasvatī gets angry due to haste. The time should be the quarter of a ghaṭikā (i.e. twentyfour minutes); hurry would be said to be done (if less time than that is taken).

75b-79. One should not hasten the speaker known as the brāhmaṇa after Vyāsa. The speaker should discern the meaning in his mind; having discerned it, he should not say what is opposed to it, O Rāma. Leaving the verse, whether proper or improper (found) in the book, if the worshipper reads another verse, it should be known to be like that only; a discord is not recommended. That verse has appeared there due to luck (i.e. chance), and luck is more powerful (than anything else). Since in the hearing (i.e. the text) there is no fault of the brāhmaṇa (who reads it), so one should not wonder; the course of destiny is crooked.

80-84a. If there is a change in a letter due to water (etc.) on the leaf, he should discard that command, and should read another (verse). Then the third (verse) should be read, and then decision (about the meaning) should be taken. The five other than the class of letters beginning with 'pa' (i.e. labials) end without a visarga. A verse not containing a mark of praise is commended for omens. The wise should always avoid these in (i.e. while finding out) an omen: the beginning of a

chapter; its end; a useless leaf or script; repetition of what is (already) stated; double (i.e. repeated) mention; a burnt leaf; script that has disappeared; doubtful letters.

84b-86a. A question should be known to be of two types depending upon its two varieties: radiant and calm. The calm (-type) also should be known to be of two types: depending upon the development of creation or maintenance. There (i.e. out of these) the calm marked with the characteristics (noted) before is recommended. Certain varieties of acts useful for mortals are (now being) described.

86b-89a. Someone taking up the mission of someone (else) becomes the questioner (i.e. asks questions). When he asks a question, what does he remember? He again holds a leaf. A leaf there is recommended. Or if a reader somehow getting delighted, and being capable of (reading) it (sees a text) intent upon detachment or glorificatory, then that should be avoided and another auspicious for that matter (should be looked for).

89b-92. Such a question as 'A dead man grasps the meaning of words' conduces to inauspiciousness. The indication of success is desired in case of a question about discussion and victory. Creation is also here. There would be one who would praise. In case of its being cruel, the victory is due to trouble. When it is calm and mixed, one would be a best merchant through means. The description of a city etc. which is mediocre, may be excellent; so also in the description of the thoughts about Kali and in that of the element of love. In the consideration of the administration of kingdom the mark of it is auspicious.

93-101a. The wise ones (should tell) what is proper for whom after (due) consideration. In case of (something) to be done about praise and detachment destruction is enjoined. By means of an error the undertaking is a little (i.e. partially) accomplished, and the undertaker of it cannot go through it. O Rāma, in the consideration of peace the meaning of one thing would have another significance. There will be the end of a visarga and the inversion of the former part. If there is another significance at the end of a chapter or at the end of a section, then (it indicates) the destruction of the undertaking. Therefore, if somebody sneezes, or if the book drops down, or if someone is struck on the head etc. it is a dishonour to the speaker, and as a result the

omen perishes. Therefore, when such a fault (is noticed), the man should avoid that omen. If there is a simile, there would (just) be the semblance of the undertaking, but not in reality; in other cases progeny (is indicated); (reference to) creation is said to give a mediocre fruit. In the decision of a meritorious undertaking eulogy is excellent anywhere. Eulogy in case of a marriage, medicines, gifts, dealings, agriculture, if it is proper, incurs no fault in being narrated. In the case of that eulogy which is improper, the undertaking does not succeed.

101b-103a. When the meaning of a verse is not understood, or when it is disregarded in a Purāṇa etc., or when there is fleeing, or the advice about a country or about the possibility of a disease, or when there is (a mention about) an attack by a thief etc. then the undertaking would terribly perish, if the question is (of a) tranquil (nature). So say those who know the ancient (accounts).

Rāma said:

103b-105a. How will he who knows the meaning of the Purāṇas, when he is not told, or when he has not heard, explain the meaning to the listeners? The decision of this (should be made). (Please) illustrate it to me, and let the meaning also be thought over. O intelligent one, you please tell it even if it explains a part.

Śambhu said:

105b-111. The meaning of the verse: *Madhūni ca madhūnyatra madhurmadhubhujam madhuḥ; madhunā madhunādyartham viṣāṇi ca viṣāṇi ca* is unintelligible; it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. So also the verse: *Ruti rute rute roraurīri rāraṁ rari-raram; evaṁ karoti śuddhātmā brāhmaṇo brahmaṇotiṭhiḥ*. This verse is intelligible in part (the latter half is intelligible: a pure-souled brāhmaṇa, the guest of Brahman, acts like this). (Therefore) it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. O best of the Raghus, such and other verses occur in the Purāṇas. They have no explanation. Their text would be pre-eminent. How can the faultlessness of the speaker and the listener in the vows and restraints (be had)? How is it that the Purāṇas are not to be regarded like (i.e. on par with) the Vedas? The idea about the

meaning may be had on reciting it thrice and on thinking. The meaning of the verse, and the manner of acting (according to it) should be actually thought out. In this case the verse is (more) powerful; the manner of acting is inferior to it.

112-115a. If the leaf is useless, if the labour is fruitless, and if the leaf is burnt, then the undertaking would be lost. When the manner is hidden on the leaf, then there is lack of coordination in the undertaking. In case the leaf is withered, or if the writing on it has disappeared, then the destruction (of the undertaking) is said (to take place). In case the letters are wrong, the trouble taken is fruitless; (so also) in case of repetition or lack of agreement. If there is a comparison, the undertaking may or may not succeed. Or success may be delayed; so also when the letters are clear, there is a doubt about (the success of) the undertaking within days that are indicated.

115b-123. O king, an omen from a Purāṇa should not be seen every day. Similarly a man should not see a Purāṇa (for an omen) after he gets up after having eaten (food). Having performed worship on the night of the previous days or in the morning of the next day a man should see (the Purāṇa) for an omen, or should do so immediately (after the worship). He should tell about a special omen, particularly with reference to the manner (in which the act is to be conducted), in all auspicious deeds; the śrāddha offered to a dead person should be excluded. Inflicting a punishment, a curse, a change in the country, killing beings like demons and wicked beings is pure. Immediately after the burning of the dead body, there are spitting, vomiting, weeping, laughter, loathsomeness, pain, bad dreams, confusion etc. causing sins. So also covering with a garment, troubling, quarrel and death. Coming out of cruel (animals) and fear from the great (are there). All these and other manners should be avoided. When getting wealth is to be considered the royal creation is conducive to happiness. The rise of the Planets, the healing of diseases is also told here. What is the use of talking much here? That particular relation should be considered.

124-127. Of all the Purāṇas Skanda is recommended for this. Some choose Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa; others choose Rāmāyaṇa. There is no fault in the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa like oaths etc. There are faults in Skanda and Rāmāyaṇa; but they are (on

a) small scale. But only a devotee of Viṣṇu and none else is able to worship it. If the worship takes place without (the worshipper being of) a good conduct, then inauspiciousness creeps in, and the omen is not successful, as a bull bound to a branch full of (i.e. allowing) all movements.

Sūta said:

128-129. Rāma who was thus advised by that brāhmaṇa Śambhu, proceeded to (find out) an omen in ascertaining (the condition of) Bibhiṣaṇa. Rāma said to Vasiṣṭha who knew the entire truth, who was proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas: “(Please) look into the Purāṇa”.

130-132. Vasiṣṭha also said to that Rāma: “O Rāma, I am not able to speak or look into (the Purāṇa) in the vicinity of this sage.” Then Rāma told Śambhu whose face was being observed by the sages: “You know the truth; you are proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas. So you may please tell me about the omen for my undertaking.” Saying, “All right”, Śambhu purified himself and became the worshipper.

133-136. Having worshipped the Skanda (Purāṇa) duly, he put the question: “Is my devotee Bibhiṣaṇa bound by a chain?” Then in three ways these three verses indicating that were seen. “Having bound the ocean, the best of Rāghavas checked the demons in the city (of Laṅkā). They, the best among those having gigantic bodies, went out of the city of Laṅkā to fight (with Rāma). The communities will have banners on their mansions. Brāhmaṇas will have Śiva as their emblem, and women will have their hair as the banners in Kaliyuga.”

137-138. Thus praised, the great lord Śiva said to your deities: “I shall free your wives restrained by the demon Malla.” Having observed three verses, he told about the certainty of (Bibhiṣaṇa’s) being bound. (He said to Rāma:) “O Rāma, he will be soon freed. There is no doubt about it.”

139-142. Having heard these words of that sage (Śambhu), Rāma, along with sages and monkeys, quickly went out to look for Bibhiṣaṇa. He quickly entered the city named Śrīraṅga. The kings that lived there worshipped Rāma. Rāma who was worshipped by them, asked them: “Where is Bibhiṣaṇa?” (They

replied:) “O god Śrī Rāma, we do not know this account”. The descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma) sent the monkeys in all directions. Then the best monkeys after having gone (and looked for him) did not at all see (i.e. find) him.

143-144. Then Rāma said to that sage Śambhu: “Tell me later.” Then that sage Śambhu accompanied by Rāma and followed by the sages, saying “show me” and (being told) “All right”, went to a hamlet of brāhmaṇas. The brāhmaṇas there when honoured and asked showed the demon bound with many chains in an underground chamber.

145-151. Then Rāma said: “O brāhmaṇas, what has he done?” They said: “(He has committed) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. An old brāhmaṇa, an excellent, religious, aged, slim brāhmaṇa stayed in a secluded place in a grove for meditation. Having gone there, Bibhiṣaṇa hurt him with his foot (i.e. kicked him). The brāhmaṇa too, who was very much bruised, could not move even a step. Though struck by us with fatal (weapons), the wicked Bibhiṣaṇa did not die. Therefore, O Rāma, slay this sinful one and be righteous”. Rāma who had suspicion, said to the brāhmaṇas: “Death is better for me (than killing my devotee). How can my devotee be killed by me? I have given him kingdom and long life. He will continue to be like that (i.e. continue to be a king and live long). Everywhere punishment is prescribed for the masters for the offence of (i.e. committed by) their servants.” Having heard (these) words of Rāma, the brāhmaṇas, through amazement, said these words:

The brāhmaṇas said:

152-154a. O Rāma, death of one bound with strips is not acceptable to the sages. Think along with the best sages like Vasiṣṭha as to what is beneficial.

The sages, asked by Rāma, told the expiation: “The (sin due to the) murder of a brāhmaṇa (committed) through ignorance, is removed by means of expiations. Thus murder (committed) through ignorance requires expiation.

154b-159. That Bibhiṣaṇa should give (to brāhmaṇas) three hundred and sixty cows.” Those brāhmaṇas who had bound (Bibhiṣaṇa) saying, “All right”, said to one another: “We shall

free that demon. Let him go through an expiation.” Having liberated the demon, the brāhmaṇas reported it to Rāma. Rāma also would not talk to him (but) said what was relevant: “Having bathed and having asked the angry sages, (and having) then (gone through) the expiation, the sinful demon may approach me.” Having heard these words of Rāma, the demon, united with the sin, went through the expiation as told by the sages, and went to Rāma. He, with his soul purified by means of expiation, bowed down to Rāma. In the assembly, Rāma, laughing (i.e. smiling) said these words to him.

Śrī Rāma said:

160-162a. O son of Pulastya, from today do whatever is beneficial after thinking (properly), since, O demon, this exertion on our part was due to you. Be kind everywhere, since you are my servant.

When Rāma had (thus) settled the matter, all the sages said: “How is it that ignorance quickly overtook us?”

Śambhu said:

162b. O brāhmaṇas, due to the contempt of brāhmaṇas (that took place). The ignorance will perish.

The sages said:

163. He was charming in Tretāyuga. The Purāṇas also were entire. How will this Bhārata be employed at the end of Dvāpara?

Sūta said:

164-170. The Purāṇas are just like that; they have the same names. Today even they are told by Vyāsa; it is not otherwise. Even today the same is the rule; (and the same is) the fruit of hearing the Purāṇa. Even Mahābhārata excels in (explaining) the omens. Having worshipped just one Ādiparvan, a man should take note of the decision. Or for the decision regarding a matter all the Parvans are recommended. In this case also all the characteristics of a verse etc. mentioned before are (applicable). A particular meaning from the connection of words in a sentence

may be had, or another purport (may be had) from verses. The import is to be grasped. The explanation of a matter etc. is to be done only from the meaning. Where a meaning is seen, (it should be understood that) the primary substance is narrated. Here the determination (of the significance) should be done from the meaning of words. Therefore, everywhere the wise should not take another meaning.¹

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

The Importance of Sacred Ash

The sages said:

1. What did the illustrious Rāma do thereafter? What did the magnanimous sages do after that?

Sūta said:

2-9. When Rāmacandra was seated comfortably, (so also) Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of monkeys, the best sages said to Śambhu: "Tell us a meritorious tale." Having heard their words, Śamkara said to Pārvatī: "This is the extremely beautiful house of a certain brāhmaṇa. It is adorned with a lovely garden, wells and creepers. It has (as it were) invited Cupid by means of the rows of humming bees. The sun is, as it were, proceeding to ascend to the mid-day position. We (shall) have bathed in the water of a beautiful well, and (shall have) put on fine garments. We (shall have) besmeared (our bodies with) thick, excellent sandal paste ground (i.e. mixed) with musk. We (shall) have firmly braided hair ornamented with the wreaths of the sallakī (flowers). Having tasted the tām̐būla that is large and dense and excellent and being glad and delighted, we shall remain comforting each other on a bed that is strewn in an auspicious house furnished with artificial jets, full of notes of peacocks along with sweet songs (sung) outside. If the face having a broad smile and red

1. Verses like 45ff. 74ff, 85ff, 91, 92, 108, 109ff. etc. are obscure.

lips will be kissed, then we shall have enjoyed the fruit of the mundane existence."

10-14a. Having heard these words spoken, the sages got angry and said: "Why have you told us these very auspicious words now? Due to your attachment to your beloved you made an unmeaning talk. You did not do our words (i.e. what we had asked you)." Then from the face of Śambhu who was full of anger, a very wonderful flame went out; and she too had a terrible face. She seized the wife of a certain sage and was intent upon fleeing quickly, but was frightened on seeing Rāma. Rāma too said, "I shall free the brāhmaṇa-woman." Again and again talking of liberating (the brāhmaṇa-woman), he went by Puṣpaka only.

14b-17a. Rāma did not remember (i.e. he forgot) to fix the arrow onto the bow. Śambhu also, seeing very auspicious forests and abodes, and strange cities, did not remember Rāma. Then in a moment Rāma reached the great mountain Lokāloka. Then Rāma, seeing the mountain full of houses and paths (said to the brāhmaṇas): "O illustrious brāhmaṇas, tell me which way the brāhmaṇa-woman has gone."

17b-20a. They said: "This way she has gone to the dark side of the mountain." Rāma with a pale face thought: 'Oh, it is bad'. Then Śambhu, of great lustre, gave matchless light. Due to the prowess of that light, Rāma went after that female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes. The great region was full of darkness and without beings. From the primordial egg to the fragment of a broken jar, it spread over a hundred crores of yojanas.

20b-23a. In the darkness was settled a great silver (piece of) land. There was the city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), having lustre like that of a crore of suns. Seeing it, the best sages along with Rāma, were amazed. Thinking (i.e. they thought): 'What is this? How can we enter it? Could it be the fire at the time of the end of the world due to the magic power of the highest lord? Shall we die today or shall we have bliss?'

23b-30. When the sages, along with Rāma, were thus full of anxiety, Śambhu said: "O Rāma, listen to what I tell you today. For you I have brought about this illusion. This is no wonder. This is the great city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is bright with

lustre. It cannot be destroyed by heat or cold. It is accessible through knowledge (only). It is not visible to the (physical) eyes. Look above at Brahmā and others who are worshipping it. Look in all directions at the pure sages who are worshipping it. Look at the four Vedas, praising the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god). O Rāghava, see this Highest Lustre which the meditating sages like Sanaka, resorting to abstract meditation, are meditating upon. See also this Romaśa going round and saluting. Look at these crores and crores of best sages like Vālakhilya. Look at the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god) being worshipped by all women like Lakṣmī. It is described as the Brahman having a form and without a form. The ignorant do not (i.e. cannot) see it. (Only) those having the eyes of knowledge (can) see it.”

31-34. On (hearing) the words of Śambhu all worshipped Acyuta, so also Girikarṇī, Tulasī, Mallikā and Māruta. (They saw) the high-souled ones worshipping the illustrious Janārdana. They saw Nārada having matted hair and a lute, uttering loudly the word (i.e. name) *Nārāyaṇa*, having a large beard and a sacred thread. He too thought to his mind: ‘Who is this?’ He (i.e. Nārada), full of joy, fell at the feet of Śambhu.

35-36a. The sage mentally muttered the five-lettered incantation dedicated to Śiva. “I am blessed; I am favoured; today my life is fruitful, (since) I have known your place which is saluted by Brahmā and others, which is inaccessible”.

36b-42. Then Śambhu said to Nārada: “Do not say so. Behave with me in such a way that they do not recognise me. Go quickly and tell Viṣṇu about my arrival in a short time.” Then, he hurriedly went and informed Viṣṇu of everything. Then he, the yogin, taking the auspicious water with materials for worship, along with Lakṣmī, and surrounded by crores and crores (of followers), seizing Nārada with his hand went (forth to greet him). The word *Viṣṇu* does not fit in the verse! He, having Garuḍa as his banner said: “Salutation, salutation to Śaṅkara.” Viṣṇu honoured all with materials of worship and water for washing the feet. He, of an immeasurable intellect, made them enter (i.e. took them into) the auspicious Nārāyaṇa-pura (i.e. city of Viṣṇu). Then remaining in the best house, Nārāyaṇa said: “How have these come (here)? Who is this king

of great glory? Human beings cannot enter this (place). This is inaccessible even to Brahmā and others.”

Śambhu said:

43-46a. We, dressed as sages, have come (here); and this valourous king is Rāmacandra who is a portion of you. O Keśava, he desires to see your wife.

Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) saying, “All right”, said to Rāma “Enter (here)”. Then having entered the residence, having seen Lakṣmī, and bowing through modesty he saluted her, and said (these) meritorious words (to her): “I am blessed; there is no doubt about it. Tell me what you feel.”

Śrī Devī said:

46b-48. O Rāghava, you are young; you are attracted by love for sensual enjoyments; you are handsome. That Sītā, beautiful in all limbs, is your wife. Formerly you were separated from her, and being afflicted due to separation from her were, as it were, sinking. Tell me all that or you will not speak. Words accompanied by smile attract the hearts of young persons.

49-53. Having heard all those words, Rāmabhadra who was restrained and composed, having bowed down his lotus-like face, desired to go out from there. Having tormented the best among the Raghus, with a lotus—an arrow of Cupid—goddess Padmā, to whom Padmavana was dear, went out after him. Knowing Rāma to be one devoted to his only wife, they came to the king (i.e. Rāma) whose entire body was trembling and whose steps were faltering. Seeing that Śiva and Viṣṇu were very much amazed. “Oh, the firmness of his mind! His heart is not subjugated by Cupid. See his controlled steadiness. Rāma is well-known due to that. In every respect he has auspiciousness. Nothing inauspicious is (to be found) anywhere (about him).” Then Rāma said (these) words: “O lord, I would go.”

54-60. Then, Rāma, permitted by Viṣṇu, went, along with the sages, along with Śambhu and Nārāyaṇa, by the Puṣpaka (plane). He quickly went to the Lokāloka (mountain), and thence to the sweet ocean. From there he went to the islands

and seas and then to Jambūdvīpa. He stayed in the hermitage of Bhāradvāja on the bank of Gautamī. Bhāradvāja, the best among the sages and the glorious one, having bathed in the great river and surrounded by his disciples, saw the Puṣpaka (aeroplane). The great sage then duly worshipped Rāma of mighty arms, so also Śiva, Nārāyaṇa, and the sages, and said to them: “O you best ones, please enjoy (yourselves) in my hermitage.” On (these) words of the sage, Rāma somehow said, “All right!” Then Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words to Rāma who had bathed in the great river, who had made offerings to deities etc. and who desired (i.e. was about) to take food: “O Rāma, religious merit would be lost if the obligatory śrāddha is not performed”.

Śrī Rāma said:

61-64a. O revered one, if a śrāddha is missed on a new-moon day, on an eclipse-day, at the time of great portentous calamity, at a sacred place, at the time of the passage of a planetary body through a zodiacal sign, it is done again. An obligatory śrāddha should not at all be done again. These are your words. As when the death of my mothers took place, and when it was the mourning period, the obligatory śrāddha was not at all performed. But it was performed, as told by you, at the time of a great portentous calamity etc.

Vasiṣṭha said:

64b-66a. All these sages and this brāhmaṇa Śambhu are here. The decision will be fully made from their mouth (i.e. by them).

All the sages, deciding together, said to Śambhu: “O best brāhmaṇa, tell us everything (since) you are great.”

Śambhu said:

66b-68. The (obligatory) śrāddha may be avoided (on such occasions). (But) it should be done again. I am telling about (the circumstance when) the period of impurity has approached, and when there are (other) obstacles. They prescribe all śrāddhas like the monthly, or offering jars of water, and all

other śrāddhas, so also the annual śrāddha (to be performed) after the impurity period (is over).

69-70a. There is no doubt that all (the śrāddhas) that were avoided due to the difficulty caused by the period of impurity, should be performed immediately after it. In the same way all monthly śrāddhas, the annual śrāddha, or (any other śrāddha not performed) due to any other difficulty, should be performed immediately after the period of impurity.

70b-74a. One desiring merit should perform a śrāddha on the eleventh day of the dark fortnight. If it is not performed at that time, then it is done on the new-moon day, (or) it should be performed without difficulty on (any of the) subsequent days. O Rāma, the śrāddha which should have been performed on the new-moon day in the dark fortnight, was not performed. If the month of the day of death is not somehow known (i.e. if the day is known but not the month), then the day in Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha is recommended for the śrāddha. But when the day is not known, but the month is known, the annual śrāddha should take place on the new-moon day of that month.

74b-76. If the day or the month of the death or going away of a person is not known, then that day (on which the news is got) should be taken as a day for the performance of the śrāddha. If that also is not known, i.e. due to not knowing the day or the month, one of the three, viz. new-moon day of Āśvina or of Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha may be taken (as the day on which the śrāddha should be performed). The waxing of the moon should be taken for the śrāddha month after month.

77-82. The *Nitya* (i.e. obligatory) śrāddha, the *Kumbha śrāddha* should be performed even in the intercalary month, so also on an eclipse day, day of the birth of a son etc. or of an expiatory rite. When everything is planned, there is no fault in performing it even in the intercalary month. When the rite of śrāddha is at hand, if the man who has to perform the śrāddha, is unwell, he should appoint his wife, brother or his disciple to perform it. In his absence the rite called śrāddha does not suffer. He should appoint (i.e. invite) one who would eat (the food at the śrāddha and feed him) according to his capacity at an obligatory śrāddha; so also at the monthly śrāddha performed on a new-moon day, other than the day on which the person is

dead. If he is unable, he should appoint his son or a brāhmaṇa. The śrāddha to be offered by a man who is appointed to do a royal job or employed as a servant, should be got done by a brāhmaṇa; so also in case of all difficulties. The best brāhmaṇas do not perform a śrāddha in the morning.

83-88. No such restriction about time is ordained in the case of occasional śrāddhas. The course for one who is separated from his wife is said to be his sister's or daughter's son (obscure!). The latter should be near him. The date for a śrāddha to be performed every month should be touching the afternoon. When the new-moon day spreads over two days, it should be touching the afternoon. When the day ends between the two sunrises or when there is sameness the next day is recommended (for śrāddha). That new-moon day which lasts for two afternoons is *sama* (i.e. same). When the day ends between two sunrises, then the former is recommended; when it comprises two sunrises, the latter is recommended; and when it has sameness, the latter is (ordained). When the moon has waned, the śrāddha should be done on the parvan day. She (i.e. *tithi*) is feasible on the eighth part of the new-moon day.

89-90a. If she has not passed the eight parts, that should be taken as covering the midday, and that should be the day when a śrāddha is offered to one individual only. That day should be taken (for śrāddha), which covers the evening of a parvan day. That new-moon day which lasts for a part of the afternoon should be accepted for a śrāddha etc.

90b-92a. On the day of the death (anniversary) the day for the śrāddha would be three watches in the evening. When it has ended then, as told before, it should be performed during the three watches on the next day. Among the śrāddhas, the śrāddha performed on the next day brings about the destruction of the eldest son. When the day of the deceased has arrived, the śrāddha of the full-moon day should be performed. For a brāhmaṇa it is laid down to be covering the midday.

Rāma said:

92b-93a. Please tell us about the rule to be fully followed in the case of a śrāddha-rite or rites to be performed by a mortal, so also the occasional rites.

Śambhu said:

93b-96. When the day for the śrāddha has stood by, a man, being restrained, should, on the previous day, invite best brāhmaṇas endowed with the characteristics of a (good) brāhmaṇa. (On this day) he should eat once only. He should observe celibacy, and should not talk to the low-born ones. The performer of the śrāddha should perform brushing his teeth, anointing his body or clipping his nails on the previous day and should avoid these on the next day. He should follow the rules that are laid down; and should avoid all this. If the worship is to be done thrice, he should worship his deity in the morning.

97-101. If he who knows how to perform the rites, worships (his deity) at sunrise, then he should sleep on the (bare) ground and should do so on getting up in the morning. Having performed the rites to be performed in the morning after taking a bath, he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and manes) and goes to that highest Brahman. He who worships Śiva at the time of sunrise, becomes lustrous like the sun and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. He who worships after a ghaṭikā (i.e. 24 minutes) after sunrise, becomes bright like Rudra and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. If he worships the lord in the second ghaṭikā (of the day), he becomes radiant like Vāyu and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva.

102-105. He who would perform Śiva's worship in the third ghaṭikā, becomes bright like Kubera and is honoured in Śiva's heaven. He who devoutly worships Śiva in the fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh ghaṭikā becomes like a god in Śiva's heaven. The worship should be done at that time at which it is ordained. Or he should take a vow, observe restrictions and should worship. He should observe the rule according to his capacity in the formalities. O lord, would a rite be (a proper rite), if the rule is violated?

Śrī Rāma said:

106-109. Where should the worship of Śaṅkara be done—of Śaṅkara who is the god of gods, who is of unlimited prowess, who destroys sins when remembered, and who also gives salvation when remembered, who is auspicious, who is of an auspicious form,

who knows the auspicious essential truth, who is Soma (i.e. Śiva), who is best adorned, whose eyes are best, who shines, who is of the form of Vedas, who is formless, who knows the essence of the Vedas, who knows the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who is to be known and cannot be known, who is a meditating saint, whose body is like cow's milk, who takes delight in bathing with cow's milk, who looks after the cows, who has three eyes, who has the three eyes in the form of the triad (of the Vedas) and who is powerful.

110-114. In between the questions he showed Rāma auspicious knowledge. He, seated as it were he had become a post, with his eyes fixed on the tip of his nose, with the stream of tears of joy trickling from his eyes and touching his cheeks, held in the lotus of his heart god Śiva whose body was very glossy like milk and was very charming. In the body of Rāma the reflection was seen. Seeing Śambhu having four hands and three eyes reflected thus, all the sages, Viṣṇu and the lord (Śiva) were very much amazed. Seeing Rāma, auspicious and of a bright form, remaining in Śambhu's chest, they kept mum for half a watch. He, referring to his question, said: "Please tell the whole thing."

Śambhu said:

115-117. According to one's desire worship is done of a stable image or of an unstable one. If an image etc. is not acquired, (then) the principal (thing) is Phallus worship. In that case also a man should carry on worship according to his authority. The Phallus worship, faulty or without a fault, is fruitful. The worship of an image, if faulty, does not become fruitful. The worship of a Phallus, fixed one or unstable, is recommended.

118-125. I shall (now) tell about the worship of an unstable (image etc.); so also about its installation and dismissal. No sage anywhere knows both these. The meditating saints always install the lord of gods, Śaṅkara, in their lotus-like hearts, take care of him, worship him and then take him out. The sacrificial priests have a great rite in worshipping the three-eyed god in fire. All the worshippers install the great lord on the Phallus of Śiva. The installation of the Phallus (should be done); its worship

should be performed; it should then be dismissed; the great Phallus of Śiva should be put on (the body); it should be decorated, be highly excellent, should be fashioned with gold, or silver, or with portions of silver; the top of it should be arranged with portions of bamboo, or tendrils of creepers, or with wood, or it would be arranged with a piece of cloth or with clay. It should be surrounded with a piece of cloth made fragrant; it should have a pair of washed garments, and endowed with a seat of clay. It should be without cold or heat, and should be endowed with four feet. It should have a portion of a hedge, and without worms and insects.

126-129a. Having covered on all sides that (Phallus of) Śiva with a soft, washed garment, and having put him (i.e. it) on an altar, one should again cover the lord; this, O Rāma, is said to be the decoration in front of the god. It should be installed, and the recitation (of the hymn) of the great lord should be done in a secluded place. Or it should be placed at the root of a wall or on an altar; so also in a protected region; and he should appoint a protector (to look after it). He should, along with restrictions, bring about the union with Prāṇa (i.e. the vital breath) etc.

129b-130a. This installation of the highest lord is said to be Rājasa (i.e. endowed with the quality of passion). The Sāttvika (i.e. of the nature of goodness) is that which is (kept) near oneself. The Tāmasa (i.e. of the nature of darkness) is again (like this):

130b-136. It should be worn so as to touch the body or would cover the entire body. The chief one is wearing it on the head. Brahmā had done like that. Wearing it by keeping it under the crown is said to be auspicious. Wearing it on the forehead is (also) recommended, as Lakṣmī had worn one auspicious one. Bāṇa had worn it on the head and also on the right (part of the) chest. The great meditating sage Harakarna had worn it on his ear. Some excellent demons fashioning one of iron, cut a part of their body and wear it there. Weak men having no abodes should wear it on their heads. Wearing it near the knot of the lower garment etc. is said to be most mean. When they get what is left over, it should be worn on the head. Those whose conduct is the meanest, and those who are sinners, should always wear a Liṅga. The wonder is: It is not in Yama's world.

Śrī Rāma said:

137. How does the worship of Śambhu change the (visit) to hell due to the writing firmly done by Citragupta on the forehead (of a person)? How does it destroy a sin?

Śambhu said:

138-143a. It destroys all the sin committed during hundreds of existences. Due to the destruction of all the sins and the recollection of the great god, the word *bhasma* (sacred ash) is mentioned. The wearing of (i.e. besmearing with) *bhasma*—the ash is excellent. As fire would destroy a writing on a tablet, in the same way besmearing the forehead with ash would destroy the writing of Yama. On its application to the face the sin done by the part above the ears would perish. On applying it to the neck sins due to enjoyments had by the throat would perish. (Its application) to the arms (destroys) the sin committed by the arms. (Its application) to the chest (destroys) sins committed by the mind. (Its application) to the navel (destroys) sins committed by the male generative organ. (Its application) to the back (destroys sins) committed by the anus. O Rāma, by applying it to the two sides (of the body) the sin due to embracing the wife of another man etc. perishes.

143b-149. In every case the application of *bhasma* (i.e. the sacred ash) is recommended to be in three lines. (Due to it) the holding of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, and of the three fires (is secured). For the protection of the three worlds the application was done by him. *Bhasma* that is consecrated and put on (i.e. applied to) the fifteen places (of the body) is auspicious—the two viscera (like the lungs etc.), the pair of the arms, above the viscera. It is accepted by all to be applied by all bodies for the purpose of worship. There is no doubt that those who eat the sacred ash, who sleep on the sacred ash, and who have their bodies smeared with the sacred ash, and bathe with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, are always freed from sins. It is said to be giving a triple power at the initiation of a brāhmaṇa. It is a protector at the time of the birth of men, and at the time of being possessed by a ghost. It is a remedy for all for the destruction of the poison of a serpent etc. A devotee of Viṣṇu or any other man who

bathes with sacred ash or has applied sacred ash, excels in his acts.

Śrī Rāma said:

150. Tell me all that: First (tell me) the importance of the sacred ash; (tell me) how it prolongs life and how it is preserved.

Śambhu said:

151-152a. It is the cause of increasing (the span of) life in the three kinds of men. (Merely) by touch it destroys sins, so also cold and hot, and it gives Śiva's position. In this matter I shall tell you an ancient account.

152b-156. There was a brāhmaṇa named Dhanañjaya belonging to Vasiṣṭha's family. He had a hundred wives endowed with form and beauty. One of them, Śāmākā, gave birth to (a son named) Karuṇa, O Sage. O Rāma, he had (a large number of) ascetic sons according to the number of wives. The father made an unequal distribution (of wealth) among them. Then there was a great enmity among the brothers. It is universal that men of the same stock have enmity (among themselves). Then (once) this Karuṇa along with hosts of sages went to the bank of Bhavanāśinī to see Narasimha.

157-162a. A certain brāhmaṇa had brought an excellent lovely fragrant fruit for (offering it after) seeing Nṛsimha. Karuṇa took that excellent fruit and smelt it. The hosts of brāhmaṇas (that were present) there joined him with a curse (i.e. cursed him): "O you of a sinful mind, from now onwards be a bee for a hundred years. The end of your curse will be (done) by the magnanimous Dadhīci." Then, he who had become a bee, said to his wife: "O auspicious one, I am turned into a bee. (Please) look after me." Saying so, and being like that (i.e. a bee) he wandered here and there. Then his kinsmen of a sinful resolve, having come to know him to be like this (i.e. to be turned into a bee), having attempted to kill him, threw him into oil.

162b-167. Taking (i.e. finding) her husband to be dead, the woman of a slim waist was afflicted. To appease her grief goddess Arundhatī said: "O you of a bright smile, I shall bring him

back to life with sacred ash only.” Then she gave Arundhati the sacred ash from the sacred fire. She threw it on the dead being (the dead man) with the Mṛtyuñjaya hymn. Then the woman of a bright smile fanned (her dead husband) gently with a fan. Then due to the power of the sacred ash, the being (i.e. the man) got up. Then when a hundred years were over, a kinsman killed (him). When the husband died, that chaste woman of a bright smile was afflicted. The chaste woman sought the refuge of Dadhica, the best brāhmaṇa and a sage, a great devotee of the great lord (Śiva). The brāhmaṇa, a treasure of penance, said (to her):

168-171. Bhasma (i.e. the sacred ash) alone brought back to life Jamadagni, a treasure of penance, who was bereft of life (i.e. who was dead); so also Kaśyapa who was like that (i.e. who was dead); so also (it brought back to life) gods, (other) beings, and even me in olden times. Therefore, O sinless one, with the sacred ash only I shall bring back to life your being (i.e. your husband).” Saying so the venerable Dadhica sought the succour of the great lord (i.e. Śiva). Taking the sacred ash in his hand and consecrating it with a hymn, he brought back to life the husband of that very chaste woman. At the touch of the hand of the great lord, Karuṇa became free from the curse. Going to (i.e. regaining) his original form, he went to his own hermitage.

172-174a. The chaste woman invited Dadhica to her house for food; she solicited the brāhmaṇa sage (to take food); and then the brāhmaṇa ate (food). When the best brāhmaṇa had eaten food, a crore of (his) disciples came (there); so also gods with their bodies smeared with the sacred ash came (there). Having saluted Dadhica, they approached him with a desire (to know) Śiva.

The gods said:

174b-178a. O you highly intelligent one, formerly our knowledge had disappeared. Seeing Gautama’s wife we were affected by love. We outraged her who had gone through the auspicious rite of marriage. The knowledge of us who longed for her, perished. Then, all of us (turned into) ghosts went to the sage Durvāsas. He said: “Now (only) I shall remove the entire sin of you by

means of the Śatarudriya hymn, consecrated by Śambhu (i.e. Śiva) himself. He also gave it to me for appeasing (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc.”

178b-180. Saying so, Durvāsa gave the excellent bhasma (the sacred ash) to us. Then, all of us, whose minds were perverted, became at that moment only free from sins after our bodies were smeared with the sacred ash to the accompaniment of the Śatarudriya hymn. This is a wonder. We know the power of bhasma to be like this.

Dadhīca said:

181-185a. I shall tell you in brief the power of the bhasma of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. Even in hundreds of years it is not possible to tell it in detail. Now I shall tell you the old account of the two gods, Viṣṇu and Śaṁkara, (so also about) the destruction of (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Formerly at the time of the deluge (of the creation) of Brahmā in an awful ocean, the great illustrious Viṣṇu lay in the water of (i.e. caused by) the deluge. Two hundred ‘eggs of Brahmā’ (i.e. worlds) reached his two sides. Twenty were by the side of his two feet, and twenty near his head. The lord held the ‘egg of Brahmā’ as a pearl (worn) on the nose.

185b-191. Certain excellent sages like Lomaśa, were practising great (i.e. severe) penance in the circle of (i.e. his round) navel. They were propitiating the great god. Then Viṣṇu of great lustre, with a desire to create (the world) thought; being intent upon profound meditation, he did not see anything. Due to great grief he repeatedly cried aloud. In the meanwhile, seeing an extraordinary lustre, Viṣṇu, through fear, closed his eyes. He (who possessed that extraordinary lustre), having a body, and lustrous like cow’s milk, came there and collected the pair of the row of a crore of ‘Brahmā’s eggs’ in his couple of hands; he held to his bosom the lustre produced by the crore of ‘Brahmā’s eggs’. One ‘egg of Brahmā’ (i.e. a world) jumped up and fell into his two hands. Not being able to see him, Viṣṇu (desiring) to see him, praised him, the immutable one, who was like that and who was (adorned) with all ornaments.

Viṣṇu said:

192-200a. Salutation to you, the god of gods; salutation to you the eternal and immutable one. I do not know you; (but) you know (me). My repeated salutations to you. I do not know your (true) state. Your lustre is difficult to look at. I seek the refuge of you who have put on emerald ear-rings, who are adorned with a row of golden necklaces, who have put on a jewelled ring, who are illustrious, who have put on ornaments on your arms and viscera, whose eyes are slightly red, bright and long (i.e. broad), who view (sharply) like an arrow, who have an (additional) eye on your forehead, who are immutable, whose eyebrows create the illusions of Cupid's bow, who are the lord, whose lovely nose is high, whose cheeks are spotless, whose smile is gentle, whose face is pleased, who are mighty, who appear (charming) like the young moon, who have put on the red garment of wisdom, who have devised the anklets of the Vedas. O mighty one, give me sight. Be the refuge of one that is doomed by ignorance and that is helpless, blind and pitiable.

Then he (i.e. Śambhu) gave him divine sight capable of seeing himself. Then Viṣṇu, seeing the three-eyed Śambhu standing before him, said (to him): "Who are you? I do not recognise you of a great glory. I am able only to salute you but not to recognise you."

Sadāśiva said:

200b-201a. I shall give you knowledge. Bathe in the ocean. After that have bath with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, and after that I shall give you knowledge.

The lord said:

201b-203a. Nowhere is there water fit for my bath.

Thus addressed, he with 'Brahmā's egg' touching his body, sat there. It was not proper for Viṣṇu to bathe in thigh-deep water. Śambhu laughed (and said): "Oh, there is too much water for (your) bath."

Dadhīca said:

203b-210a. Then god Śiva looked at Viṣṇu with the eye on his forehead; and looked at him whose subtle limbs had disappeared with his left eye. Then Viṣṇu, having a subtle and cold body was (thus) told by Śambhu: “O Viṣṇu, take a bath; this deep lake is fashioned”. Then Viṣṇu was not able to enter that deep lake prepared on Śiva’s lap for bathing. Viṣṇu said: “There is no way to get into the lake. O god, give me a way (to enter it).” Then Śambhu said to him: “O mighty one, formerly this large (quantity of) water was a crore yojanas deep. When you entered it, it has become thigh-deep. When you are (already) standing there, how do you say you have no entrance? In this deep lake of mine I see that this thigh (of you) is of the measure of eight fingers. Get in; I shall give a touch to (i.e. support) your feet. One sentence uttered by me is a staircase; it is Veda that has come out of my words.”

Viṣṇu said:

210b-211a. Nobody here has the ability to climb up (the staircase of) words. It is possible to grasp a tangible object. How can the scriptures be grasped?

Śambhu said:

211b-214a. A man has no capacity to grasp or climb up objects. Accept this great Veda.

Then Hari too accepted it. He, with his hands bent due to lack of strength, was as it were falling. (Then) Viṣṇu said to Śiva: “It is not possible for me to hold it.” Śiva laughed, as it were dropping into the great deep lake. (He said): “O Keśava, having gone up the staircase, please take a bath.”

Dadhīca said:

214b-217. He (i.e. Viṣṇu), having duly bathed there (i.e. in the great deep lake) where the Veda had become the staircase and the water was thigh-deep, came out, and said: “I have bathed. What next is to be done?” Then Śambhu said to Viṣṇu: “Tell me whether you are thinking or not thinking of something in your mind.” Hari said: “(I am) not (thinking of) anything.”

Then Śambhu said to him: "Having purified yourself with the bath with (i.e. the application of) sacred ash, you will know the highest auspicious object; for that is recommended for one who is initiated. I would protect that."

Dadhīca said:

218-222. Then Śiva took (i.e. scratched) the sacred ash on his chest with his nail, consecrated it with Om and the Gāyatrī (hymn) of the form of Brahman, took it with (i.e. between) his fingers, and with (the accompaniment of the hymn of) five syllables he threw it on the head and all limbs of Viṣṇu. Gazing on him with tranquil eyes, Śiva said to Viṣṇu: "Live (long). Meditate on what there is in your heart." Then he was intent upon meditation. In his heart he saw a lamp of a long (i.e. big) shape and very bright. Viṣṇu said to Śiva: "I have actually seen a lamp." Śiva said: "O Viṣṇu, your knowledge is not mature. Eat the sacred ash. (Then) your knowledge will be complete."

Viṣṇu said:

223-233. I shall eat the sacred ash. Formerly I have bathed with (i.e. applied to my body) the sacred ash.

Seeing the lord, accessible through devotion (only), Viṣṇu ate the sacred ash. (Then) there was a great wonder: In a moment Viṣṇu became one having the lustre of a ripe bimba fruit and having the complexion of a pure pearl. Since then this Viṣṇu is pleased and is (of a) white (complexion). Then again he became engrossed in meditation, and in the lamp saw a man who was like a pure crystal, who was Śiva with three eyes and two hands, who gave a boon with the right hand and fearlessness with the left, whose body was like that (of a child) of five years, whose brilliance was like that of a myriad moons, whose ear-rings were made of emeralds, who was adorned with a row of necklaces, who was handsome due to a jewelled ring, who had put on ornaments on his arms and chest etc., whose lips were small and red, whose eyes were long and reached his ears, whose eyes were sharp like arrows, who had an eye on his forehead, who was immutable, whose eyebrows created the illusion

of Cupid's bow, who was the lord, whose lovely nose was high, whose cheeks were spotless, whose smile was gentle, whose face was pleased, who looked like the young moon, who was mighty, who had put on the red garment of wisdom, who had devised the anklets of the Vedas, who had put a jewelled Om in the left finger (i.e. finger of the left hand), and who was immutable. Then Viṣṇu became (i.e. looked upon himself as) blessed. Then Śambhu said: "O Viṣṇu, what did you see in your heart?" Viṣṇu said: "First I saw a man of gentle body." Saying so, Viṣṇu fell at the feet of Śiva.

Viṣṇu said:

234. I do not know the power of the sacred ash, or whence can I know your prowess? Salutation to you, salutation to you. I seek your refuge.

Śiva said:

235. O illustrious one, ask for a boon which you desire with (i.e. have in) your mind.

Having then heard the words of Śiva, Viṣṇu chose an excellent boon.

Viṣṇu said:

236-239. O Śambhu, let me always have devotion for the couple of your feet.

Then having granted the boon Śambhu said these (words) to Viṣṇu: "Being happy with the application of the sacred ash, you will be my devotee."

Dadhīca said:

Thus I have told you from the beginning the great knowledge due to (the application of) the sacred ash. Therefore, O you all gods, apply sacred ash carefully.

The gods had their eyes dilated due to wonder (and said:) "Let it be so." He who every day listens to this meritorious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes to the position of Śaṁkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

*A Sinful Brāhmaṇa Becomes an Attendant of Virabhadra**Śucismitā said:*

1. O great sage, the eating of the sacred ash is seen to prolong life. It is capable of giving a course of the other world.

Dadhīca said:

2-8. In this matter I shall tell you an old and well-known account of what happened between Yama and Citragupta. Formerly a dog wandered through hunger in Mithilā. In a hundredth previous existence he was a brāhmaṇa of sinful resolves. In his youth he was a very intelligent (man) who was endowed with the (knowledge) of Vedas and sacred texts. Having gone to Gaṅgā for bathing, he bathed (in Gaṅgā) and having worshipped his dead ancestors, gods and sages also, went to the city (called) Prāttalikā. He took shelter in a brāhmaṇa's house. There was staying a daughter of a kṣatriya. She was young. Her lover was killed. She had lost her kingdom. She possessed wealth of six crores of niṣkas. At night, after moonlight, she came near the brāhmaṇa who was asleep and was handsome in all limbs, and seeing him said these words: "O brāhmaṇa, wherefrom have you come? To which country will you go?"

The brāhmaṇa said:

9. Stirring (out) at a wrong time would certainly create suspicion (in the minds) of all; so also the talk between us who are young in this private, mirthful chamber.

The kṣatriya woman said:

10-11. A talk in private (between a young man and a young woman) is not censurable when a tale is told, on a pilgrimage, at a sacred place, at the time of the devastation of the country etc., at the time of a famine, or when the village is on fire. You yourself first took shelter in my house. I am (just) staying in this house. (Therefore) nobody will have a suspicion in this matter.

The brāhmaṇa said:

12-17. I have to keep mum. Quickly go from my presence.

Thus addressed by the brāhmaṇa she thus thought to herself: 'Somehow or other I should have union with him. I shall (now) weep so that he will come to console me. When he will come to console me, he will raise me up. Then I shall get up and have contact of his neck with my creeper-like arms (i.e. I shall throw my creeper-like arms round his neck); and as it were fainting, I shall touch his body with the pair of my breasts. Seeing me having lost consciousness, he, the best brāhmaṇa who would be seated, will put my body on his lap. I, as it were being unconscious, will throw off my garment, and as it were weeping (i.e. pretending to weep), shall show him that (private) part (of me) which is very lovely, which is free from hair, which has the shape of a ripe aśvattha-leaf, which is the very fragrant abode of Cupid.

18-22. Having, while rolling on his body, removed his garment, I shall make his mind perplexed and bring the brāhmaṇa under my control. His mind would not be (as perturbed) when (my private part) is not seen as it would be (perturbed) when it is seen. The mind is not so (much perturbed) in (i.e. due to) talk as it is by means of actual seeing (the private part). The mind is not (perturbed) like that in a mirthful talk as it is in (i.e. by means of) a dialogue. The mind is not so (much perturbed) by means of a touch as it is in (i.e. due to) a mirthful talk. (The mind is) not so (much perturbed) by touching the vulva as by seeing it. Whose mind does not become excited and whose semen does not trickle down on seeing a woman's armpits, her pair of breasts and her vulva being touched (by herself)?'

Dadhīca said:

23-28. Thinking like this with (i.e. in) her mind, that kṣatriya woman went to her house; and having approached the door of her house, she wept gently. She wept for a long time. 'Removing the grief of a woman, a child, an old man, a feeble person, a king, a meditating saint due to poison, fire, water or the fall of a stone etc. is recommended; they say it is like giving a well.' Thinking like this that brāhmaṇa, the treasure of kindness, being

pure and with his mind pleased, went near her, and then the brāhmaṇa said to her: "Enough of (i.e. desist from) this great grief going against (happiness in) this and the next world. This leads to the drying up of the body and harms the mind also. O you young woman, give up this grief. It is no use grieving. What is the cause of your wailing; what is it for which you are weeping?"

Dadhīca said:

29-35a. Thus addressed by that brāhmaṇa, she did not say anything. She fell on the ground as if she had fainted; and looked at him (and showed) as it were she did not see him. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, made her get up. When he made her get up, she got up but again and again fell down. The brāhmaṇa sat down and again and again got her up who had repeatedly fallen down, put her on his lap, and wiped her eyes. Then as it were she had fainted, she removed her garment, and showed him her breasts, her private part, her arm-pits and eyes. Having hung to his neck with her arms, she touched the brāhmaṇa with her breasts. The moonlight was clear, and there were gentle breezes. Then the brāhmaṇa became engrossed in thinking: 'This is not my work. It is proper for the father, the mother, the husband or the teacher. To me who am not enlightened, everything appears inauspicious.'

35b-40a. Then Cupid came there when the two were in private. Cupid, of a bad heart, struck the brāhmaṇa with sharp arrows. The brāhmaṇa, being afflicted due to the arrows of Cupid, became lustful, and thought: 'This one, very beautiful in all limbs, appears to be lustful. Otherwise how can there be horripilation on her vulva? All that will be clear from the touch of her breasts.' Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa touched her breasts and vulva. She too, who feigned a swoon, had a smile on her face. She closely embraced the brāhmaṇa, and kissed his face. Then they were united even for a hundred years.

40b-42. When a hundred years had passed, the brāhmaṇa one day in the morning went to a river to bathe. She too went with the brāhmaṇa. He bathed there and listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa which destroys all sins and gives (i.e. produces) devotion

to Śiva; and heard this verse uttered by the one who knew the Purāṇa.

43-45a. “He who kills a brāhmaṇa, he who drinks liquor, a thief, he who violates his teacher’s wife, becomes free from the sin by just listening to the Kaurma Purāṇa.” Hearing this statement, the brāhmaṇa said to that brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas: “The sins committed by me have no number (i.e. cannot be counted). Tell me that which would destroy the heap of all (my) sins.”

The brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas said:

45b-47. Propitiate Śaṅkara, the god of gods, the lord of gods. O brāhmaṇa, by means of his worship all your (sin) will perish. Sin is said to be darkness. It perishes by means of the lamp of knowledge, or O brāhmaṇa, all sins perish due to the worship of him. Those who are bereft of knowledge and worship certainly fall into a hell.

Dadhīca said:

48-51a. Then the brāhmaṇa went to an excellent temple of Śiva. (There) he worshipped Śaṅkara with a thousand droṇa flowers. Then he went home and took food. Leaving the kṣatriya woman the brāhmaṇa went to the desired region. Having procured food to be eaten on days of fast, and having eaten it according to his capacity, he went to the temple of Śiva. Going there, he ate his meal with the ghee in the lamp outside the temple. Then he was under the sway of death, and went to Yama’s world.

Yama said:

51b-57. Certain sins formerly committed by you have perished. O brāhmaṇa, since you offered worship to Śaṅkara on one day, a thousand of your sins have perished. Of the sins that have remained, the fruit is a fall into hell, (and staying there) for two crores of years, and having the existence of a dog a hundred times. Due to stealing the ghee from the lamp of Śiva a man has to resort to (i.e. to live in) hell for a hundred very awful years. He turns into wood in the Kumbhīpāka hell, and repeatedly becoming ash for ten years,

he then becomes an insect for another ten (years). Then for ten years he becomes the wick of a lamp. Sinking in and coming up from phlegm, impure feces, and pools of urine and semen, he eats phlegm, feces and dirt. Then when the residence in hell is over, he gets a hundred existences as a dog.

58-62. Hearing these words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa fell down. Then his dear wife became full of anxiety. In the meanwhile, Nārada came near her. She who was extremely afflicted, fell at the feet of Nārada. Having raised her, Nārada said to the pure one about her dead (husband): “O innocent one of large eyes, please go to your husband. O you of large eyes, your husband, abandoned by his kinsmen, is dead. O auspicious one, you should not weep. Enter fire (i.e. funeral pyre of your husband).”

The brāhmaṇa woman said:

O sage, tell me whether I should or should not go, so that the time for entering the fire should not elapse.

Nārada said:

63. That city is at a distance of a hundred yojanas from here. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. the body of your husband) will be burnt tomorrow.

Avyayā said:

64-69a. O sage, I deserve to go to the lord of my body, who is away.

Hearing her words, Nārada said to her: “You sit upon the handle of my lute. I shall go (there) in a moment.” Saying so, he made haste and went there—to the country and abode of the dead brāhmaṇa. The sage said to that Avyayā: “If you will go to (i.e. desire to enter) fire there, then do not weep. O daughter, if you have committed a sin like enjoying another man (than your husband) then make an expiation to purify that. On entering into the fire your minor sins will perish. Leaving (i.e. except) entering the fire I do not see any other (expiation) for women for the appeasement of all sins.”

Dadhīca said:

69b-70a. Impelled by Nārada's words, she said: "O great sage, what have women to do at the time of entering fire?"

Nārada said:

70b-75a. They have to bathe, sanctify themselves, have to put on ornaments and apply unguents, have to apply sandal (-paste), have to put on flowers, have to have incense, turmeric and sacred rice grains. They have to wear an auspicious thread and apply red lac to their feet. They should give gifts according to their capacity, they should speak agreeable words, and should have a pleasing face. They should listen to (the sound of) many auspicious musical instruments and songs. When a sin of (the nature of) infidelity is committed, then, with reference to that old sin (i.e. sin committed previously), that is said to be an expiation for the appeasement of that sin. Then she should put on the ornaments and offer them to a brāhmaṇa. In the absence of (such) ornaments, she should not make (the brāhmaṇa) perform the (rite of) expiation. In no other way, and nowhere, can that sin perish.

Avyayā said:

75b-76a. I shall do all this; (but) I do not have turmeric. What are the ornaments? O brāhmaṇa, give all that to me.

Nārada said:

76b. There is no such article of the auspicious state of wife-hood as is required.

Dadhīca said:

77-78a. Then in a moment he (i.e. Nārada) went to Śiva's abode, Kailāsa. Seeing Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) he saluted her and said to her: "O mother, give me turmeric, ornaments and an auspicious thread."

Pārvatī said:

78b-79a. How should I give any ornament to a widow? If I give (her an ornament), widowhood is not possible.

Nārada said:

79b-80a. O mother, a woman is not a widow as long as her husband's body remains (unburnt). Till the husband's body is burnt, there is no impurity and the auspicious state of wifedom remains.

Pārvatī said:

80b-83. No other body (than mine) deserves to put on my ornaments and turmeric. When ornaments etc. are given by me, long life is prescribed. Whatever you have said would be given by (my maid) Jayantī.

Then he went to Jayantī and carried whatever was given by her. Then the sage gave turmeric to Avyayā who was being given a bath. Then the sage gave her fine garments and ornaments. He said to her: "Who will perform your funeral rites? Appoint him."

Avyayā said:

84. O sage, you alone are the cause of (i.e. will perform) all rites in my case. You are my father. Perform every (rite); salutation to you, O best sage.

Dadhīca said:

85-90. Then having burnt (i.e. consigned to fire the body of) the brāhmaṇa, Nārada said to her: "O Avyayā, go, and enter the fire if you so desire." Then the chaste lady decorated (herself), and having saluted Nārada after going round him three times keeping him to her right, dedicated her mind to Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Desiring to please Pārvatī, she separately (i.e. one by one) touched her very fine auspicious thread, turmeric, so also sacred grains and flowers, garments, musk, sandal, golden comb, various fruits, from presents to her garments—gave all (these) to elderly married women. The chaste woman went three times round the fire which was, as it were, burning the sky with rows of flames, by keeping it to her right, and stood in front of it. Then with the palms of her hands folded and with a smiling face she said these words:

Avyayā said:

91-98. O regents of the quarters like Indra, O mother Earth, O Sun, O all gods like Dharma (i.e. Yama), hear my words : “If, from (the day of) marriage till today I have, day and night, devoutly served my husband by words, thought, and by acts, and if in the three states (of youth, adulthood and old age) I have not transgressed (in my duties to him), then truly grant me going with my husband.”

Saying so, she quickly dropped the flower from the tip of her hand (and) entered the blazing fire. Then she saw an aeroplane, which was excellent like the Sun and graced with the music of celestial nymphs. She got into the aeroplane and went to heaven with her husband. Then Yama, having honoured that chaste wife, said to her : “You will have (i.e. live in) heaven eternally; (now) no sin of you remains. In hell your sin was washed off (by staying there) for two crore years. There is no doubt about it. But (still) there is a sin. One is committed by eating the ghee of the lamp (kept in honour) of Śiva. There may not be a fall into hell, but will be hundred existences as a dog.”

Avyayā said:

99. How can there be (a fall into) hell for those who are purified by entering fire? The destruction of all sins would take place by entering into fire.

Yama said:

100-106. Formerly Śambhu had said that the sin of him who steals (the articles) of Śiva, never perishes. Other sins may perish. Then he obtains the existence of a dog, which would be (continuing) for a hundred years after that.

Reaching the abode of Dadhica he has entered the mouth of death. Near his wall there was the sacred ash that was consecrated. The dog fell into the sacred ash, died, and went to Yama. Yama honoured him, bowed down to him (and said): “You are the most meritorious sage. There is no proper place for you in my house. (Please) go out.” Then that dog, impelled by Yama, went out and

remained there. Nārada saw him who remained there with tormentation; and he asked him: “Why do you, the bright one, remain here? O you of high intelligence, I know you to be a devotee of Śiva, who died remaining in the ash of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. There is no residence in Yama’s world for them who are devotees of Śiva (but) who being sinful, cast their bodies. This is Śiva’s order given by Śiva.”

Dadhīca said:

107-112. Speaking thus to the dog, the sage went to Kailāsa. Having saluted Śiva (by prostrating himself) like a staff, he respectfully said to him: “O god, a certain dog (having come) from Yama’s city remains outside. He is dead in the sacred ash. Therefore, he deserves (residence in) your heaven.” Then Virabhadra, the chief among the attendants, being impelled by Śiva, brought that dog having a divine form and having saluted the feet of Śiva. Then he respectfully said to the god. The attendant of Śiva (i.e. Virabhadra) said to the god: “Make him an attendant (i.e. one of the attendants) of me.” Śiva said: “All right.” The attendant became one with a dog’s face (i.e. the dog became one of the attendants).

Dadhīca said:

O you Śucismitā, the importance of the sacred ash is matchless. O you of a good vow, what more than this do you wish to hear?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Virabhadra’s Heroic Deed

Śucismitā said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, tell me how formerly the sacred ash protected Kaśyapa, Jamadagni of the gods?

Dadhīca said:

2-6. Formerly gods accompanied by Kaśyapa and others went to a well-known mountain named Śokara. In the middle of the mountain was a very beautiful (forest) which was full of many birds, which was resorted to by various hosts of sages, which was the resort of Vāsudeva, which was charming, which was resorted to by bevvies of celestial nymphs, which was crowded with strange trees, which was bright with flowers of all seasons. We and others entered the best mountain (forest) like that and praising Viṣṇu went there to lord Śiva. We saw a great flame there and we entered it. Excepting me that deity (i.e. that flame) burnt (other) sages. After that it (also) burnt me. O auspicious one, we were reduced to ash.

7-14. Seeing us like this, that brave Vīrabhadra went to that mountain for some reason. With his entire body smeared with sacred ash, he remaining at the top, auspicious and pure, all alone, desireless and tranquil, heard the sound of wailing. Then he was full of thought: 'The sound of the bodies of dead men and the smell as it were of dead bodies, are being perceived.' Deciding like this in his mind, he went to the fire of great brilliance. Then that fire also started to burn Vīrabhadra. But it went out as the fire of (i.e. burning) grass (i.e. hay) would go out on receiving (i.e. being sprinkled over with) water. Then Vīrabhadra saw a great, mighty flame, which went (up) to the sky even (like) flame falling (i.e. dropped by) Śiva (obscure!). The brave Vīrabhadra thought in his mind: '(This) flame is the destroyer of hundreds of crores of beings. So for the protection of all I desire to drink it. As a thirsty man drinks water, I shall consume this great flame.' In the meanwhile a divine voice said to (Vīrabhadra) the hero.

The voice said:

15-17. O hero, do not do a rash act. Where is your thirst, and where is the fire? (i.e. What a great disparity is there between the two!). Those that are thirsty are interested in water. Opposite is (their attitude towards) a wild fire. The lord of demons, viz. Praṇaṣṭa had a large head extending over a yojana. There was another (demon) whose face extended over a hundred yojanas

and who had a hundred arms. The illustrious Agastya had completely drunk (the water of) the ocean. This flame destroyed these and other well-known (beings).

Virabhadra said:

18-19a. This flame will not cause fear as told by you. O Sarasvatī, I shall be angry with you. Know me to be Virabhadra whose position is honoured by all gods.

Bhāratī said:

19b-22a. O sage, what I said was with an affectionate feeling, and not through hatred or any other feeling. O hero, give up your anger and do what is beneficial for yourself.

Saying so the goddess vanished through the fear of the hero. Then that hero easily drank (i.e. consumed) the great flame.

22b-26a. In a moment Virabhadra all alone drank that great flame which extended over a hundred yojanas and was extremely difficult to bear. Just on seeing the heaps of ashes (of the bodies) of (gods) led by Indra and of sages, the magnanimous Virabhadra called them (out). Those dead sages and residents of heaven (i.e. gods) did not respond. Knowing the destruction of the sages and gods, Virabhadra thought: 'How can I, (though) an experienced one, bring all of them back to life?' Through meditation he knew (how to bring them back to) life. Sipping (water) he consecrated with the hallowed Mrtyuñjaya hymn and with sacred ash the ashes (of the bodies) of the dead.

26b-28a. Then the best sages, having resorted to their respective bodies, got up. Then they went to the very bright side of the mountain. There also they were swallowed by a serpent of a mighty body. Then the mighty hero (Virabhadra) went to the great serpent.

28b-33a. Seeing Virabhadra to have come (there), the serpent started fighting. The serpent, taking up various forms, fought for a year. Then the hero holding with both his hands, the two lips (of the serpent), tore his entire body into two (parts). Seeing the gods dead, Śaṅkara brought them back to life with the sacred ash only. Then the gods, along with the sages, saluted Virabhadra and went their way. (Then) they saw the

demon Pañcameḍhra who had come there, had a large body, was endowed with ten arms, possessed five feet, had eight heads, and desired a large (quantity of) food.

33b-38. That demon, when he had fought with the monkey Vālin, who had certainly double the strength of Viṣṇu, having the body of a large boar, had suddenly struck Vālin with his five feet in boxing, and had proceeded to kill Sugrīva with his hands. He put Sugrīva into his mouth and swallowed him like a morsel. Seeing Vālin and Sugrīva swallowed, he thought: 'How shall I kill him and how shall I save the monkey?' When he was thinking like this the lord of demons ate up the monkey with one effort. Seeing the demon like that, all the gods and sages became intent on running (away).

39-44. Seeing them running, that demon Pañcameḍhra took all of them with all his hands and ate them up. Then Virabhadra, seeing the monkeys, sages and gods being eaten up (by the demon) angrily took in his hand a rock extending over fifty yojanas and struck it on the heads (of the demon). The middle head (of the demon) fell down. Then taking the peak of the mountain which was a hundred yojanas long and holding it more firmly, he struck the lord of mountains. Then the demon said to that three-eyed Virabhadra: "(Now) see the strength of my arms. I have seen your might. There is a couple of swords. They are glistening with oil, and they are fifty yojanas high (i.e. long). They extend over a yojana, are very strong, and have (good) characteristics. You take one liked by you. The one that remains is dear to me."

45-49. Saying, "All right", the very strong Virabhadra took one sword; and he moved the sharp sword with his hand; and then roared angrily. The best demon also took a sword and roared in the same way. Having approached Virabhadra, he put it on his neck (i.e. struck on his neck with it). The limb (i.e. the neck) was pierced, and profuse blood flowed out. With one hand the demon then drank the blood. Virabhadra angrily struck the demon on the region of his neck. He took the two heads that were cut off and that were falling down. The magnanimous one swallowed them, and roared like a lion. Due to that great roar the three worlds were agitated.

50-55. With their bodies pierced by strokes of swords made by each other, they who were roaring and who were wet with blood, appeared like the blossomed *kiṁśuka* (trees). The god (Virabhadra) and the demon (Pañcameḍhra) with swords (in their hands) fought for a year. After that they fought a mace-fight for a year. Then a battle with knives took place (between the two) for a year. Then again taking two swords, they fought with each other. Then the lord of (Śiva's) attendants, of the nature of a tusk, saying, 'Prosperity (to you)', and with his eyes red with anger, moved a great sword before him, and cut off his entire forest-like neck, as (one would cut off) a plantain tree. Taking all the heads, he ate them up. Having torn his body with his nails, he took out and saw the deities, the lordly monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) and the great goddess.

56-63. Seeing this very fierce battle, Nārada went and told Brahmā, Vāsudeva and Śaṅkara (about it): "The sages, the deities, the two monkeys Vālin and Sugrīva have been protected by him: and he, of the nature of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva has brought the two (monkeys) back to life." An awful boon was given by Śiva to a demon. There was a mighty demon in the kingdom of Hiraṇyakaśipu. He wonderfully fought for a hundred years with the gods. Many fled in various ways, and hundreds of demons died. He, thinking like this, was protected by his preceptor, Śukra: "O Śukra, I died a hundred times, and was brought back to life by you only. Make me immortal, and make him who is in my belly mortal (i.e. let me be immortal, and let those eaten by me die). Otherwise, I shall die; there is no doubt about it. O preceptor, I had a very terrible fight with Yama. In the battle, that valorous king Yama was swallowed up by me. He entered my belly, pierced it and roared. I then died, but was again brought back to life by you. Therefore, I shall practise penance for the death of those who are in my belly."

Śukra said:

64-65a. This is so. There is no doubt about it. You practise it duly. There is a holy place (called) Syamantapañcaka. Please go there.

The demon said:

65b-74. I shall practise a very terrible (i.e. severe) penance, (like) which was not practised by gods and demons. I shall bind with iron fetters my feet at the end, i.e. at the ankles. I shall fashion a couple of iron-pillars having iron-straps. I shall bind (i.e. keep tied) my feet in the strap and put my head below (and feet above); similarly I shall keep my mouth open, and make my face (let) down. I shall remain with a flame fluttering in a circular way and will keep my eyes open. I shall practise penance like this, whosoever may be the giver of the boon. Let Brahmā or Śaṅkara or Viṣṇu be the giver of the boon, whosoever may grant it.

Having thus spoken to his preceptor Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), he practised the penance for five or six months and again practised another penance. Having cut off his head with his nails, he offered it, with (the accompaniment of) a hymn, into the fire. He offered his four heads, with (the utterance of) the hymn, 'Salutation to Bhadra'. When the demon was trying to abandon (i.e. to offer) his fifth head, the revered lord of Ambikā (i.e. Śiva) stood up from the fire. He resembled a pure crystal and was adorned with the young moon. The great god said to the demon who had bent down his head: "O demon, do not do a rash act. I am the giver of a boon. Ask for a boon."

The demon said:

75-81a. You, the great god, are the giver of many boons. Let my heads that are struck off grow again and let the beings swallowed by me die. Let me have four times the power of Viṣṇu, having the body of the Boar. You may never be angry with me and be always near me. A man would come up when your matted hair is pulled out. Let me die at his hands; and not (be killed) by others. This is what I ask for.

"It shall be just so". Saying like this Śiva disappeared. (Bhārati said:) "You have killed the sinful demon who had received such a boon." Then having embraced the hero (Virabhadra), Viṣṇu, Śiva and the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) went as they had come. The wives of deities etc. fell (i.e. prostrated before him)

on the ground like a staff and said to Virabhadra: "Salutation to you, O lord of the god of gods; salutation to you, O eternal and endless one; salutation to you; be the giver of boons."

Virabhadra said:

81b-86. By means of the sacred ash I shall bring back to life the gods along with the sages and the monkeys. You should be pleased; now you should not grieve.

Saying so, Virabhadra brought them back to life with the sacred ash. The sages and the gods, so also the two monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) got up. With the palms of their hands put to their heads, they who were pleased, saluted him, and said: "O dear one, you have brought (us) back to life; you are our spiritual father. O you born of Śaṁkara, always be our refuge. Punish the children on seeing their bad behaviour; so also protect them as your own sons from the torment inflicted by the enemies and from diseases. O you sinless one, you punished those who had committed sins at the sacrifice of Dakṣa. O father, we are now (to be protected by you) like children."

Virabhadra said:

87-92. This is true. There is no doubt about it. Remember me when you are troubled. The trouble will quickly perish. The troubles from demons to those who recite the name of Virabhadra a hundred and eight times, beginning with 'Om' and ending with (the word) 'salutation', with (i.e. using) the dative (as Virabhadr-āya), will come to an end. At the time of trouble from brāhmaṇa-ghosts and fear from goblins etc. all the troubles vanish (merely) by remembering the name (of Virabhadra). (One should remember him) whose eyes are like the brilliance of lightning, who is the lord, whose lips are tawny and shining with fangs resembling the young moon, whose body is very dark, who has the garland of matted hair, and who has on his body three lines of sacred ash. This recollection (of Virabhadra) is told for (getting) freedom from brāhmaṇa-ghosts. All this is explained in the hymn of Virabhadra.

Dadhīca said:

93-95. The hero accomplished (like this). So also the sages and gods that had come. By these three the great importance of the sacred ash is proclaimed. Of him who recites or listens to it, it destroys the sins, gives devotion to Śiva, and prolongs life and good health.

Śucismitā said:

I am happy; I am blessed; I am best among women. My sins are destroyed. My salutation to you, O best sage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

How to Prepare Sacred Ash

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O illustrious one, tell about the origin of the sacred ash, the greatness of the sacred ash, and the religious merit (earned) through the application of the sacred ash.

Śambhu said:

2-8a. O Rāma, I shall tell you about the origin of the sacred ash. (I shall tell you about its effect) by (just) remembering or telling about it. O king, listen to it. He who is that eternal god Sadāśiva, who is saluted by Brahmā, who has three eyes, who is the prop of virtues, who is beyond qualities, who is unchangeable and immutable, had once a desire to create on seeing the three qualities in himself—this triad of qualities should be known as the three Vedas. O dear one, having divided himself and the region there, he created on his right side the son, viz. Brahmā and Hari from his left side. At the back side he created Maheśāna (i.e. Śiva); thus the mighty one created three sons. As soon as they were born they became the three gods—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. They distinctly spoke these words: “Who are you? Who are we?” To those sons Śiva

said: "You are the sons, (and) I am your father. O sons, resort to these three qualities which are the cause of (all) acts."

The sons said:

8b-16. O lord, who should resort to which quality and how long? How can there be the cessation from the qualities? Tell this to us.

Śiva said:

As long as you have (i.e. retain your) knowledge or as long as you live, each one of these qualities should be retained by you. Brahmā should retain the quality of Sattva (i.e. goodness), Viṣṇu should retain Rajas (i.e. activity) and Maheśvara (should keep) Tamas (i.e. ignorance or darkness).

As soon as the lord of gods had said this, Brahmā took up Sattva. He could not move it; then how could he be capable of holding it? Abandoning that quality, he took up the quality of Rajas. He was not able to move it; (so) he took up the Tamas quality. He was not able to move it. He fell down and wept; and Viṣṇu held the Rajas quality with his left hand. (Then) Maheśa held the Tamas quality with his two fingers; one, i.e. Viṣṇu, with his two fingers, took up the Sattva (quality). He sustained Brahmā at the footstool, and danced. The giver of the boons, having seen Śiva who was dancing, who had a graceful form, whose form was (fair) like the cow's milk, who was young and had three eyes, who held everything, who caused joy, said to his sons:

Śivā said:

17-18. O son, I am pleased (with you). Ask for a boon as desired (by you).

Then the son said to the father: "Give this boon to me: O auspicious one, let the worship intended for me be yours. You should always remain in me; you, the immutable one, are me only."

Śiva said:

19-20. O magnanimous one, this will happen; there is no doubt. These two reddish and fair, Brahmā and Viṣṇu are my

two sons. They are the fine soft hair of the armpits, they have my form and are innocent.

Then he said to Brahmā: “You resort to (i.e. take) this one quality.”

Brahmā said:

21-22a. O lord, I am not able to hold the quality indicated by you. O god, I shall sustain the Rajas (quality); let Hari resort to the Sattva (quality). This god will hold the remaining quality.

Śambhu said:

22b-24. After having taken the qualities, those gods were not able always to hold them. For being able to sustain (them) they again said to Śiva (i.e. the lord): “We are not able to hold these qualities for all the time. O lord if you are the giver of boons, (then) give us the capacity (to hold them).” Then hearing their words, Śiva said (these) words.

Śiva said:

25-28. Of all (powers), the power of knowledge (alone) is called power. Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) resorts to the three qualities. Ignorance also resorts to them. Please hold the essence of the three qualities after burning them. You should hold that what would be (remaining) there.

Then his son said (these) words: “There cannot be burning without fire.” Śiva said: “Fire certainly exists in the eye of Śaṅkara. These three qualities are the cow; and knowledge would be (i.e. is) the auspicious cowdung. Upaniṣad is said to be the urine (of the cow). Then one should prepare the sacred ash from them.

29-30a. One should consecrate the cow; the dung of her whose calves are dead, with the hymn *Āgāvaḥ*. (Uttering the hymn) one should make the cow eat the grass and drink the water with the hymn *Gāvo gāvo gāvaḥ*.

30b-34a. Or the one who observes the vow, should observe a fast on the fourteenth day of the bright and the dark fortnights. Then the next day one should get up in the morning and being

pure and composed and having bathed, having put on garments that are washed, should go to the cow for the dung. Having carefully got her up, one should get the urine from the cow. One should hold it in a pitcher made of gold, silver, copper or clay; or (one should hold it) in a blue lotus, or a vessel made of palāśa(-leaves) or in a horn. One should have the cow-urine and a little cowdung also. One should take in an excellent pot as told before, without letting it fall on the ground.

34b-35a. The wise one should purify the cowdung with the hymn *Śriḥ me bhajatu* ('May prosperity resort to me'). With the hymn *Alakṣmīrmayi* ('Prosperity should not come to me'), one should purify the cowdung.

35b. With the hymn *Sam tvā siñcāmi* ('I sprinkle you'), he should put the cow-urine into the cowdung.

36-38a. With the hymn *Pañcānām tvā* one should prepare fourteen piṇḍas. Having dried them with the rays of the sun, one should put the balls of the cowdung in the vessel already referred to. According to the rule in his own Gṛhya (Sūtra), he should install them and kindle fire. Then one should put balls (saying) 'to Arṇadeva'.

38b-39a. The wise one should perform the two rites called *Āghāra* (i.e. sprinkling clarified butter upon fire) and *Ājyabhāga* (offering two portions of clarified butter to Agni and Soma). Then he should make offerings to the lord of destruction. Then thirteen offerings like Jaya etc. should be made.

39b-42. Then five hymns like *Namo Hiranyabāhave* (should be recited). Thus having made all offerings ending with the fourth with the accompaniment of hymns, he should offer (an oblation) to Rudra, Śarva with the hymn *Yasya vai kaṅkati*. A wise man should offer with these the three that are known. Having made the Vyāhṛtis (i.e. uttering the words like Bhūr, Bhuvas etc.), he should offer the right sacrifice (to Agni). Then having withheld the remaining fuel, he should add other water to the water in the full vessel with the Yajus formula *Pūrṇam-āsānta*.

43-47a. He should sprinkle that water on his head with the hymn *Brāhmaṇeṣu amṛtam*. Then with the hymn *Prācyām* he should sprinkle the water in the directions. He should give a present to a brāhmaṇa. He should bring a ball of boiled rice.

With the hymn 'For the protection of the rite of all gods, I shall bring this to you, O fire; cover this one of mine today', he should cover the fire with that ball. The covering by it is said to be remaining in fire for three days. He should feed the brāhmaṇas, and being restrained in speech, should himself eat. If he desires more sacred ash, he should bring more cowdung.

47b-50a. After three days or one day, on the third or fourth day, he, having bathed in the morning, having put on white garments, having worn a white sacred thread, having put on white flowers and unguents, with his teeth (brushed) white, (his body) besmeared with the sacred ash, with the utterance of the hymn *Tad vā* should, indeed, not give up the sacred ash. Having offered presents, he should observe the sixteen formalities like invocation.

50b-55. Then he should collect the fire. With (the utterance of) the hymn *Agne, bhasma*, he should take the sacred ash produced (from the cowdung). Then, he should clean it with (the utterance of) the hymn *Agnirasmi* ('I am fire'), then mix it with the water of Gaṅgā or the milk of a cow. Then having powdered camphor, Kāśmīra-saffron, uśīra, sandal with agaru (a kind of sandal) well, he should drop that powder into the sacred ash with sacred hymn (i.e. syllable) *Om*. Then the hymn (that is said i.e. prescribed) at the time of sprinkling the milk is: 'O goddess, your sacred milk, giving intelligence, is nectar here (i.e. on the earth); due to your favour men are freed from all sins'. Then the learned one should invoke the small lumps of the sacred ash with the utterance of *Om*. With (the utterance of) the hymn, *Aṇoraṇīyān* the wise one (should do so).

Śambhu said:

56-61. Having thus procured the sacred ash and having taken it (in his hands), the knower of the hymns should clean it with *Om* and should get it hallowed with seven hymns. (He should apply it) to his head with (a hymn addressed) to *Īśāna*. (He should apply it) to his face with (the hymn) *Tat Puruṣa*. He should hallow the chest with the *Aghora* (hymn) and, the private parts with the *Vāma* (hymn), the feet with the *Sadyo-jāta* hymn, and the entire body with *Om*. Then he should dust

the entire body from the soles of his feet to his head (with sacred ash). Then he should sip water, and should put on a white, washed garment. Having sipped water again, he should do his rites fully. Then having taken the sacred ash and cleaned it with (the utterance of) *Om*, he should, recollecting (Śiva) the three-eyed one, the support of the three qualities, the creator of the three (Vedas) and the mighty one, with the hymn *Namaḥ Śivāya*, put the mark consisting of three lines on his forehead.

62-64a. Saying (the hymn) *Namaḥ Śivābhyām*, he should also put the mark consisting of three lines on both his arms. Saying (the hymn) *Aghorāya namaḥ* he should put (a similar mark) on both his forearms. Then (uttering the hymn) *Bhīmāya* he (should put the mark consisting of three lines) on his back, and the backside of his head. (Saying) 'salutation to Nīlakaṇṭha, the soul of all' he should put it on his head. Then having washed both his hands, he should perform (the proper) rites.

Śiva said:

64b-65a. Having, in this way, prepared and applied the sacred ash, you will be able to sustain the (three) qualities, and then create the beings.

Śambhu said:

65b-70. The gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, thus addressed by (Śiva) did like that according to the (proper) rule, and vied with each other, being unable to recognise one another, they saluted and said to Śiva: "Who should sustain which quality?" Then Śiva said to his sons: "Due to the (particles of) dust the power of doing rites and knowledge also perish. Brahmā is seen to have a short life. He lives (longer) due to hymns. I was formerly decorated with the rows of 'Brahmā's eggs'. Having rested upon the Rajas quality, you are not recognising me.

71-78a. Viṣṇu has more power than Brahmā, and has also longer life than Brahmā in sustaining the row of 'Brahmā's eggs'. The life of Viṣṇu is said to be of the measure of four inhalings of Maheśa and me. May that Viṣṇu support you due to his having more of the Sattva (quality) than Brahmā (has). He knows me the entire time, and would not forget me. His only

worship is Sāttvikā, and neither Rājasī nor Tāmasī. Salutation to the Tranquil, Auspicious, of the Sattva quality; his possession of the Rajas quality is to be inferred. Salutation to Nīla, so the (Tamas) quality. Śambhu resorted to (it) like that. Formerly, he indeed possessed Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Therefore, worship of three kinds is laid down (in the case) of Śiva. Rajas, conjoined with Tamas is said to be awful. Śiva's worship, even more awful than that is regarded as giving a good course (i.e. salvation); and Rajas conjoined with Tamas is capable of propagating the sacred precepts. The worship even more interrupted than that is said to give fruit. Tamas mixed with Sattva promotes a mixture. A mixed worship of Śiva, causing the good of the world, is fruitless. This way or that way (but) worship of the lord should be regularly done. (The worship) of Śaṅkara in whatever way is said to give a quick fruit to a man."

Śambhu said:

78b-79. In brief this rule about the application of the sacred ash is told, O sinless one. It destroys all the sins of the speaker and the listeners.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Jābāli Recommends Phallus Worship to the Brāhmaṇa Ikṣvāku

Śambhu said:

1-5a. In this regard I shall tell you a story which destroys sins and hearing which the pious one (i.e. Ikṣvāku) obtained excellent devotion. (There was) the best brāhmaṇa, Ikṣvāku by name. He was very learned, very intelligent, proficient in many sacred precepts and well-versed in the science of ethics. He did not perform a sacrifice; he did not give (in charity); he did not worship deities. He did not teach the Vedas, nor did he explain the sacred texts; so also (he did not teach) the Purāṇas, history, the sacred texts or the Vedas. With difficulty he could (get food to) eat and proceeded only with the

embellishment of his body. The life (of the span) of a lakh of years of that brāhmaṇa of that type passed.

5b-10. In the next (span of a) lakh, at night on the third day of the fifth month in (i.e. of) a year he heard this Purāṇa (text): “He, who has not given in charity the wealth earned by him, is certainly roasted for those many years in hell, (for the wealth) being enjoyed day-by-day would become (i.e. becomes) depleted. Then having gone through a thousand existences of insects etc., he then is (born) as a poor man suffering from diseases, having no relatives, having a wicked wife and many children. Every day he lives by begging and supplicating. He leads his life by asking for broken seeds (not capable of growing), or the life among servants (of a man) having no ears, no eyes and with dirt falling (from his body).”

11-13. Having heard the Purāṇa (text) like this, that Ikṣvāku became extremely afflicted. The mean brāhmaṇa repeatedly thought in his mind (like) this: ‘Even Durgā, having flowers and beauty is void of fruit due to her having a buffalo. In the same way, knowledge without the Purāṇas would not show the (right) path. A man, (even) after studying many sacred texts, and Vedas with (all) their expanse, does not get proper knowledge unless he has studied the Puraṇas.’

Śambhu said:

14. When he was thinking like this he met with an untimely death. He then went to Yama’s world, and was (thus) addressed by Yama.

Yama said:

15-19. You are having many sins. You have not secured great religious merit by teaching the Vedas. Sin (alone) is known to you. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, you will remain in hell for a crore of years. You have a very short span of life. Go back to your former body (i.e. existence). O brāhmaṇa, do religious deeds that are beneficial like giving in charity, worshipping the deities, and repeating hymns; so also teach (Vedas) along with their limbs (i.e. the Vedāṅgas), and apply sacred ash. Worship God Viśveśvara, the god of gods and the lord of Umā. Merely by his perseverance you will not go to my world, O sinner, every day

listen to a little (i.e. small portion of) Purāṇa with respect. Then merely by listening to it, you will not see (i.e. experience) the pangs inflicted by Yama (i.e. me).

20-22. Hearing the words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa went back to (i.e. took up) his own (i.e. former) body. Then that brāhmaṇa made efforts to worship the lord. He went to the sage Jābāli, the worshipper of Śiva, who was endowed with penance and self-study, who discussed the sacred texts and the codes of law, who knew the truth about the Purāṇas, who was surrounded by a lakh of disciples, whose entire body had become loose due to old age, who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

23-36. Desiring to see him he (i.e. Ikṣvāku) went to the Mandara (mountain) which had beautiful caves, which was crowded with many blossoming creepers full of various kinds of birds, which possessed flowers of all seasons, which was adorned with various fragrances, whose big caves were full of the songs (sung) by kinnara couples, the trees in which were resorted to by many beautiful, charming women, the lovely ones, suspending themselves from them, which was resounding with the (humming of) bees made to rouse them who had slept due to the fatigue caused by love-sports, in which the cuckoos also cooed very much, indeed to unite the separated (lovers), which was crowded with hosts of various sages, where calm (i.e. undisturbed) deer were moving, which was crowded with the beavies of the celestial nymphs, which was resorted to by the groups of gandharvas, the interior of the forest of which was full of the songs produced from the mouths of many siddhas, which was full of lovely fruits, and which had many temples, which was thronged with hundreds of palaces, which had many houses, which was adorned with fierce and angry lords of attendants that had faces like those of lions, like those of elephants, like those of wolves, or having different or strange faces, (or) that had half faces, (or) had half-curved faces, (or) had faces like those of the female deer, (or that) had the faces like those of the creatures like the ruru deer, or like those of alligators, bears and monkeys, that had faces like those of tigers, scorpions, bears, camels, dogs and donkeys, that had faces like those of all the beings, that had faces like creepers, like trees, curved like

rocks and (made) of iron, that had superior bodies, faulty bodies, that had matted hair, that had tufts of hair on their heads, or that were clean-shaved, that had faces like those of birds, that had twelve faces, that had three-figured faces, that had faces like bells, that had faces, ears, or feet like winnowing baskets, that had face like bells or like flutes or like small bells, that had iron-faces like whatever (i.e. all) things in the world; (it was adorned with) certain (attendants) that had put down the charm and beauty of Cupid with their tender faces, that resembled a crore of suns, and that had lustre like those of a crore of moons, that had many colours, that had all (kinds of) faces, that had all forms and four faces, that had two faces, five faces, three faces or even six faces, that had one or many faces, that were tranquil and were always happy.

37-44a. The mountain Mandara was resorted to by (beings) that were affluent with many enjoyments, and that resembled Rati and Cupid, that had faces like those of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu, and had bodies like those of Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) and Śiva. It was also resorted to by others having various forms. There the cows were the Vedas, having the calves in the form of Mīmāṃsā; Dharma and others were bodily (present); Purāṇas (presented themselves) with (i.e. in) deeds; there were all the Codes of Law and (all) Histories; there were Vedas embodied; they stayed on the Mandara (mountain); the mountain destroyed sins. In its midst (i.e. on it, there was) a very auspicious and extremely beautiful city. It was decorated with wells, lakes, groves and hundreds of palaces. It had seven ramparts, trenches, and jewelled upper stories. It had nine town-gates, and beautiful houses. Its lustre is matchless, and it is without heat and cold. In it is an auspicious seat, beautified with the feet of Vedas.

44b-48a. The very beautiful foot-stool is prepared with all the Upaniṣads. To the two auspicious feet are (attached) Purāṇas and Vedas for auspiciousness. A great meditating saint is seated there. His figure is (fair) like cow's milk. His charming face has a gentle smile on it. The lord's age is sixteen years. On his chest he has a rosary made of gems and rudrākṣa. He having the lustre of a karṇikāra (flower) wears a sacred thread. The god has (put on) good, jewelled ear-rings. He has put on a crown and

golden garments. He has (put on) many ornaments, and has applied sandal of various kinds.

48b-54. On his left lap Pārvati is seated, and he is looking at her face. The god embraces with his left arm the innocent, young goddess of a beautiful face adorned with fresh youth, decorated, beautiful in all limbs, and having a golden lotus, and raises her face with his right hand. With his left hand the god touches her head, and puts a mark (on it) with his right hand. With the fan of Omkāra Bhakti (i.e. Devotion) fans the gods. The charming Pūjā (i.e. worship) gives a garland with (i.e. of) flowers to the god. Jñapti (i.e. Cognition) and Virakti (i.e. Detachment)—the two ladies—hold the chowries in the form of abstract meditation. Samādhi (i.e. profound Meditation) works for him and Dhāraṇā (i.e. steady Abstraction of mind) is his wife. Checks and Restraints are said to be his servants. Prāṇāyāma (i.e. Suspending the breath) is his family-priest, and Pratyāhāra (i.e. Withdrawing the senses) is the holder of (the staff of) gold. Dhyāna (i.e. Meditation) is the superintendent of his wealth, so also Satya (i.e. Truth) is the general of his army. From Brahmā to an insect all are the animals and Śiva is their lord.

55-62a. Dharma is the guardian of the animals, and Adharma (i.e. Unrighteousness) is a thief. They (i.e. the animals) are bound by the noose of illusion. Death at Kāśī is the liberator; and women of various sorts (serve) the god of gods, the lord of Umā (i.e. Pārvati). A crore of beings would remember (i.e. remember) the lord of Umā who is like this. Having obtained desired pleasures they are honoured in Śiva's heaven. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, great Indra are the door-keepers of his city. The two goddesses Lakṣmī and Sarasvati are appointed to worship the threshold etc. on the ground. Gods and celestial women are the servants of the god of gods. All gods are the servants of the noble one. Ikṣvāku saw such a great mountain. Having saluted the sage Jābāli, he said these words: "O sage, I desire to go to the mountain. Are you capable of doing this (i.e. taking me there) or not? Formerly the wise Yama told me about the short (span of) my life. He told me (that I would stay in) many hells. How can there be absolution (for me)?"

Jābāli said:

62b-66a. By means of my divine eye I too knew all this about you. O brāhmaṇa, your life is (i.e. you will live) for ten (more) days. Though a learned man, you did not practise acts of piety. Due to lack of repeated practice, you have not practised penance. Due to the time being short you (have) not (practised) abstract meditation. You have not given gifts due to absence of wealth. You did not go through worship due to lack of capacity. You did not perform sacrifices. You did not do acts of pious liberality. (Therefore) you, having no life (i.e. having a short life), have no religious merit (to your credit). Due to (your) going against the time you did not resort to teaching or to holy places. So, to destroy that sin, no expiation is laid down; so also no religious practice leading to salvatation is laid down. (Hence,) O sage, stay (here) or go (back).

Ikṣvāku said:

66b-69a. O brāhmaṇa, by means of the religious practice which is performed after taking a pledge throughout life, the destruction of sins definitely takes place. Tell me about those religious practices by means of which my sin will perish; so also (tell me) due to which religious merit I shall go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa sage, be the refuge of me who am extremely afraid of hell. They say that looking after him who has sought one's refuge, is the fruit of all religious practices.

Jābāli said:

69b-70. It is true that within a short time religious merit like that cannot be obtained. As long as falsehood has not ceased, it is possible to speak like that in dreams. There is a secret. It is not spoken (out) to anyone.

Ikṣvāku said:

71a. O sage, protect me who have sought your refuge. My time will pass out.

Jābāli said:

71b-75a. O brāhmaṇa, the secret enjoined by the sacred texts is greater (i.e. more valuable) than my life. (It is) the

worship of Śiva's Phallus. It was practised by Brahmā and others. It destroys all sins. It destroys all calamities. It gives enjoyments and salvation. Therefore, perform the worship of Śiva. O sage, one should not violate the auspicious worship of the Phallus of Śiva. He who would disturb Śiva's worship has cut off my head. It is preferable to be thrown on a spike, to be dragged to hell, to give up one's life, but never violation of (Śiva's) worship.

75b-83a. It is better to fall into fire, to bow down the head, to eat one's own feces, but not the violation of Śiva's worship. The food of him, the mean man, who eats without worshipping the lord, or if he enjoys or eats without uttering Śiva's name, is said to be of sins of the form of food. The crores of the great sins of him who has in his words (i.e. on his tongue) the auspicious name *Śiva* are quickly reduced to ash. The man who goes round (the Phallus of) Śiva (keeping it to) the right and salutes him, would get the same religious merit which one would get by going round the earth. Having gone round (the Phallus) three times and saluted five times, and having again gone round (it) and saluted (it), one would be free from sins. He who would make or cause to make (the sound of) musical instruments in Śiva's temple, is endowed with great power and is born as one who resorts to the Vedas. He who would make the three-eyed god, the god of gods, hear the Purāṇas (i.e. would recite Purāṇas before him), would, being free from all sins and being blessed, live in Śiva's city. The god always speaks to him sweet words with regard.

Jābāli said:

83b-90. This excellent worship of Śiva has been told (to you) in brief. O brāhmaṇa, you are short-lived (i.e. the span of your life is short). Perform the worship of Śiva. Thrice, twice or even once (a day), for a watch, perform Śiva's worship. Resorting to the stage of a recluse, resorting to a recluse, worship Śiva with the flowers of a recluse in the morning. A man should worship Śiva with coconut, lotuses, saugandhikas, nipa-flowers, japā-flowers, punnāgas, karavīras pāṭalas, tulasī, arkas, aparājītā, apamārgas, rudrajātadamana, with all these and with fruits and bilva leaves and dhūrtakas, droṇa-flowers, abundant śirīṣa flowers, dūrvā, korakas, nandyāvartas, sacred rice grains or

mixed with sesamum only, or with other (materials of worship) according to his capacity. The worship of Śiva is also (done) with karṇikāra flowers and a golden dūrvā.

91-98a. He should not worship Śiva with buds or campaka flowers, except the lotus. All lotuses, leaves and sacred grains, darbhas and flowers should be kept separately from the silver and golden (flowers etc.). O king, cake cooked in oil would not be said to be stale. That which is with fruits and with acid and sour substances or with cumin-seeds should be sprinkled with water. (All) that, viz. roots, fruits, vegetables etc. sprinkled with water is not said to be stale. All that water, viz. water of a great river, water (flowing) from a mountain, or water in the form of a pool (i.e. in a pool), or well-water, or the water that would be (available) from a tank, a lake, well is holy water. It would not be stale. Water should not be procured at night. He should procure it by day. Water with sand (i.e. from a sandy place) should also be taken; for it is not stale. Knowing like this, you offer a worship to Śiva's Phallus.

Śambhu said:

98b-100. That Ikṣvāku dear to brāhmaṇas (or to whom brāhmaṇas were dear), thus addressed by the sage, became engrossed in Śiva's worship (and) remained (in doing the worship) for eight days. When the ninth day arrived, he performed (Śiva's) worship in the morning. When the time of his death came, he, having performed Śiva's worship, offered his life as a present to the great lord (Śiva).

101-109a. Knowing him to be dead, Yama's messengers who took (the dead) to Yama's world came (there) and made efforts (to take him). Śiva's messengers, like Vahnimukha, also came there. Among them there was a dispute: 'This is mine, this is mine.' Then, a messenger of Yama, with a noose in his hand hurt a messenger of Śiva. Then Vahnimukha got angry, and becoming of (i.e. turning himself into) a great body, seized a hundred messengers of Yama with one hand and squeezing their heads with another, cut them off like young grass. Then killing the messengers and taking Ikṣvāku (with him) he went (to Vīrabhadra). He presented him to the intelligent Virabhadra. He too (presented) him to Śiva. Then the great god said to him: "Every

day for eight days, you offered a worship. Formerly you had censured me saying 'Śiva's Phallus is (just) the tip of a penis.' Therefore, you will be one with a penis-like mouth. On its tip there will be a round hole. You will be without a tongue, a nose etc. (But) because of your having uttered my name formerly, you will be a speaker (also).'' Due to the words of the lord he became like that in a moment.

Śambhu said:

109b-112. He who will every day listen to this excellent old account, will, being free from the bond of sins, become Śiva's devotee. He would go to Śiva's place and would also be a speaker. He who tells this story, would be like Śiva. Formerly a king named Adhīra, having told this story, went, though he had committed a sin, to heaven with his wife.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

How a King Became Śiva's Attendant Agniśikha

Śrī Rāma said:

1. Tell me, how this fire named Agniśikha became an attendant of Śiva like that. Salutation to you.

Śambhu said:

2-9a. Formerly he was a kṣatriya who was always angry. He had lost his wife, his army and his country. (Therefore) he was extremely afflicted. Having got a couple of buffaloes, he practised agriculture with his sons. He was full of (i.e. had incurred) a great debt, and so was very much unhappy. The king was also unhappy on account of his son being killed by (the bite of) a serpent. The king, though like that, also gave up agriculture. He also abandoned his two sons, and having given up food, wept. Then the two sons came to the father, and said these (words) to him: "O father, why do you weep? What has

gone does not come (back) by weeping excessively. Your lamentation today will (only) lead to the parching up of your body. Due to the grief your eyes have been impaired; so also your throat has been impaired. Similarly your practice of religious rites has been harmed. (Then) why do you torment (yourself)? One that has gone does not come (back). Protect the five breaths that have remained (with you). It is meritorious to protect many, especially those that have resorted to (a person). How do you grieve over this enemy who has resorted to someone else?"

The father said:

9b-10a. O sons, how (do you say that) a son is an enemy? Then you are also my enemies. How do you call an extremely happy son as an enemy?

The two sons said:

10b-21a. The son, as soon as he is born, would snatch away (the father's) wife. When he is growing he would take away (the father's) wealth. When he dies, he (would take away the father's) life. In what way is enmity different from this? I tell you, O king, that which you described as happiness is all resulting in unhappiness. At the time of the birth of a son, there is a thought about the death of the wife. And if the wife survives, then he (i.e. the husband) loses his happiness. When the vulva has become impure, no union is possible. If he becomes intent on embracing her, his body gets covered with milk (coming out of her breasts). Even then if the union takes place, the heart of the woman necessarily goes to the child due to the child's weeping (i.e. when the child weeps). Then he (i.e. the man) loses interest. Then, if the child falls into (i.e. comes between) the couple that is united, then there is loss of joy. When the union is disrupted, the displeasure is great. When everything is limited by time, there is a possibility of union (only) on some occasion. At that time there is no food, no water, (no union) with his wife. Due to the trouble caused by Planets such as diseases and thirst etc., there is great pain in protecting children. That beautiful pleasure of getting on the father's

lap, embracing and kissing him, speaking very sweet words—(all) this which is regarded as a pleasure does not deserve (i.e. is not equal to) the sixteenth part of discontinuance of coitus. In (i.e. due to) a son, there are other thousands of sorrows. What will you do with him who will oppose you in this world and in the next? Therefore, give up this grief. We two, your sons, are here.

The king said:

21b-25a. I shall give up the grief which is difficult to check and which goes against (i.e. impedes) all acts. O my sons, in this world and the next one should accomplish one's well-being. I shall go to Vasiṣṭha, my priest and the foremost and great preceptor and the best sage. He will give (i.e. show) me the (proper) way.

Speaking thus, he went to his preceptor, the brāhmaṇa living in Vārāṇasī. He saluted him (prostrating before him) like a staff. He was honoured by the sage, was embraced by him, was smelt on his head, and was offered a seat; and was thus addressed: "What for have you come? What should I do for you?"

The king said:

25b-26a. O brāhmaṇa, give (i.e. show) me the way to cross this worldly existence. I am always unhappy with my fate. (Therefore) I have sought your refuge.

Vasiṣṭha said:

26b-32a. It comes to this: take recourse to the lord of the universe (in the form of) the great Phallus. O lord of kings, worship the god of gods, the trident-holder, propitiating whom, formerly, the sage Śakti, the son of Arundhatī, though devoured by a demon, did not go to Yama's world. For a short time he went to heaven, and then went to Brahmā's heaven. My son (i.e. Śakti), (having gone to Viṣṇu's heaven) from Brahmā's world, is sporting in Viṣṇu's heaven. O great king, (also) see this hunter, moving in the forest, and worshipping the lord of the universe, merely with leaves of the śamī-tree collected by himself, with

the flowers of pūga tree, also with the kadamba-flowers and with flowers of the jasmine (creeper). See him worshipping the great lord with these and other (materials). It is a wonder that he will die merely after half a watch from now.

32b-41. When his time of death came, the hunter saw, for offering a present to Śiva, by his side a jar full of mangoes, but censurable due to the fruits being left over (after some of them were eaten) by a dog. Due to the absence of an offering as planned by him, the hunter uttered these auspicious words suggesting the devotion of people: “The sage Jamadagni offered his eye in the absence of flowers, his finger in the absence of fruits, and his soul when the Phallus was falling, and cut asunder his body and offered it when the seat of the Phallus was broken. Other devotees of Śiva have also performed great rash acts. I too have to do like that. Otherwise I shall incur a sin.” In the meanwhile a mad man came to Śiva. Having snatched the (materials of) worship performed by the hunter, he, in a moment, ate it up. He also vomitted on the seat of Śiva. Then the hunter thought: ‘Should I or should I not kill this one harming Śiva?’ Then that devotee of Śiva strove to kill himself. (He said to himself:) ‘As this mad man has eaten up the (materials of) worship that I had offered to Śiva, when the Phallus was covered, I must also quickly remove the covering of my body—my skin. This is for making (the materials of) the worship free. One should abandon one’s throat due to the loss of the fruit (of the worship)’.

42-52a. Deciding like this, he, with a sharp axe, did a wonder: He cut off the skin (on) his right leg, and below the waist. He also quickly cut off the skin on the left leg up to the waist. Being delighted and trembling, he also cut off the skin about it (i.e. the waist). The hunter who was delighted, also cut off the skin on the hands, shoulders, chest, and throat and also the skin on the head. Then between the two he cut off the body in a circular way, and having cut off his finger and taking it, he offered his skin to the god. Then the devotee of Śaṅkara, of a divine form, of good eyes, having four hands, having many ornaments (on his person), quickly stood in the sky. Then hundreds of thousands messengers of Śiva, having beautiful

crowns, and decorated with all ornaments, having tridents in their hands, all resembling pure crystal, having four arms, of lovely forms, seated in excellent aeroplanes, all resembling the sun, tranquil, accompanied by their beloveds resembling Rāmbhā, and followed by sons, wives and army, and hundreds of energetic and amorous women resembling the sun in lustre, showered flowers. And the hunter was called by them; but he did not go (to them), and said to them: "Would I or would I not go with my wife and kinsmen?" The followers of Śiva having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, said these (words) to him: "The fruit is to be had by him (only) who has done a virtuous or a sinful act."

The hunter said:

52b-55. Of practices that are impure, the author is (but) one; but of the practices done in honour of Śiva, the fruit (would go to) two or many.

In the meanwhile, Virabhadra arrived (there) with a hundred children and many crores of attendants. (He said to the hunter:) "O hunter, come along with your kinsmen. As you said, (you may come) along with your wife, relatives and kinsmen; and having got into this aeroplane, go to Śiva. Well-being to you." Then due to those words, he, having got into the aeroplane, reached Śiva's heaven.

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-60a. You have observed all (this). Perform the worship of the lord. Being free from the bond of sin, you will go to Śiva's heaven. O king, if you long for kingdom, worship the lord of attendants; and besmear (the ground) with water and cowdung every day. By (doing) this much, you will certainly get the kingdom of the earth. As long as you live you will have (i.e. enjoy) the kingdom, and in the end you will go to Śiva's position. You will not get the kingdom during this (existence); but (will get it) after death (i.e. in the next existence). Therefore, after having got another body (i.e. existence), you will have due to the prowess of your service to Śiva, the kingdom, and your devotion to Śiva will be stable.

Śambhu said:

60b-70a. Then, having performed the worship like that, he died and went to heaven. Then he again got the birth of (i.e. was born as) a king, and, being devoted to Śiva, he ruled his kingdom. Once the king went to Śiva's temple, which was having many lamps, like the lord of serpents having gems. There was also the crowd of warriors. One lamp fell on the king. Then the king got angry, and quickly taking the lamp, angrily dropped it in the charming temple. The abode of the god (i.e. the temple) was burnt, and sin came (to him). Then the king again fashioned the temple etc. that was burnt and got Śiva worshipped. Then when the day of his death came, the king who had propitiated Śaṅkara, who had applied sacred ash and who lay in sacred ash, died while muttering (the hymn sacred to) Rudra. He went to Śiva's heaven. Virabhadra (thus) spoke to him: "You become best of the attendants, (and) my servant. On my order bring the devotees of Śiva in my proximity (i.e. to me). You will be without a head, and flames will be coming out of your mouth." He then said to Virabhadra, the noble chief of the attendants (of Śiva): "How would action be possible for me without eyes, ears, and the group of tongue, nose, mouth and head?"

Virabhadra said:

70b-75. The beautiful woman who was formerly accepted by you yourself, every day serves the auspicious bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) by arranging an auspicious river, an auspicious eddy etc.; by arranging white and blue lotuses, and also a fan and a chowrie. (She also arranges) a trident, a conch, a disc, a mace and a bow. Also a trident, a drum, a sword, a bull and the auspicious (attendant) Bhṛṅgiriṭi. So also other (objects) like an eight-petalled lotus, a mystical diagram etc. Once that prostitute was present in the temple of the deity. A certain jail official of the king entered the temple of the deity. He saw her there, and said these words:

The official said:

76-78. 'The prostitute is in a secluded part (i.e. alone). I am young, and not old. A woman would abandon a man who is

old, diseased, impotent, weak and poor, whose penis is short and who is helpless. A woman should avoid from a distance a man who has no moustache, who is covered with dirt, who is dull, and is defiled with a bad odour, who is small and has no addiction. Therefore, O prostitute, let me cohabit with you. Quickly restore me to life.

The prostitute said:

79-80. We hear that for women of all castes loyalty to their husbands is a great duty that gives them happiness in this world and the next. A prostitute, when in the charge of a man, does not unite with any other man. She (then) is known as a chaste woman. Therefore she should keep him (only).

The official said:

81-94. If this is so, there is no doubt that (your) death will soon take place.

Then going to the king, he said these (words:): "A prostitute is (just) a prostitute. She is not a wife. It is not proper (i.e. necessary) to say this." Speaking thus to the king, he took some froth from a hollow lotus stalk from a well, and went to her house. Seeing it was time for (her to) sleep, he extended his hand, and in the hole of her garment, the wicked-minded one put the froth there. Having done like this, and going to the king he said these (words) to the king: "O king, having gone out (of your palace) go to the prostitute, the woman (you love). Having got that prostitute up, please observe her entire body, and loosening the knot of the garment, observe it carefully." The king went to the house, and said these words to the official: "She is asleep. See her. I (now) go. You see (this)." But he then said to the king: "O king, this is not proper for you. Arrange to see her mother or father. When they are seen, all this will quickly be clear." Then the king brought her mother, and made her see (the garment). At the words of the king, she made a search of the garment. Seeing the froth there, the mother rubbed it. The garment became wet due to the rubbing. The king said: "What is it?" The mother of the prostitute said: "There is nothing, O lord, there is nothing." (Thus she told it)

with many words. The king observed the garment with a doubt. He said: "The garment is wet with semen. See it." Then the men who were near there, said to the king: "It is like that." Then the king went home, and said to the chief magistrate: "Now only, without thinking, cut off the head of the prostitute. Within a ghaṭikā (i.e. a period of twentyfour minutes) her head should be shown to me." The chief magistrate also did like that at the words of the king, and showed (it to him).

Virabhadra said:

95-96a. Thus you did formerly; (and) today you have got the fruit. With flame only (in your mouth) you will speak, hear, see and smell. You will know the taste; you will be intelligent and very wrathful.

Śambhu said:

96b-98. Thus the intolerant king has become Śiva's follower (named) Jvālāmukhī. Therefore, one who desires happiness in this world and the next, should be tolerant. He who would every day listen to this excellent account, will, being free from the bond of sin, be (i.e. live) in Śiva's heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

The Sinner Vidhṛta Goes to Śiva's Abode

Śrī Rāma said:

1-2. O preceptor, tell me the importance of the name of the great lord, the importance of worship, of salutation, so also the greatness of sight, the importance of giving water, so also the importance of offering incense, so also of lamp and sandal, O best one.

Śambhu said:

3-8. It is not possible (to describe) in detail the importance of each of the names. I shall tell (it) to you in brief. O Rāma,

listen carefully. Formerly in the Tretā age, there was a powerful king by name Vidhṛta. When his father died, he, even though a child, was consecrated (as the king) on the kingdom. He kept near him all those of his age. He did not like those who were old and learned. He liked the young men who were wicked, who did acts which ought not to be done, who were adept in bringing beautiful women (to the king) and were skilled in acts of stealing. He liked those who were engaged in buffoonery, and who were skilled in dancing. Those who knew the charms of subjugation, also those who knew (the use of) herbs, who were given to singing and dancing, who were rogues, and who knew gambling, were dear to him. That king deserted those who did what his father liked.

9-14. Having had consultations with those wicked ones, he did his acts. He joined these and other wicked (men). Depending upon the words of these (wicked men), he abandoned the advice of the wise. Those who put their fists on the chests and who howled, who knew the essential things about the characteristics of the pudendum muliebre (i.e. the private parts of women), and who were proficient in the technique of sexual enjoyment, were dear to him. That kingdom then became bereft of political wisdom. As elephants, horses, chariots, camels, goats, cows, buffaloes etc. were taken away from here and there, all of them perished. At that time no gems other than the land were seen in that city. He (i.e. Vidhṛta) being vanquished by another king, fled. Having gone to a great forest, he made a mountain the inaccessible place (for his enemies). There, with a few followers, he resorted to the way of life of a thief.

15-21. Having, at various places, shown to thieves and cheats by disposition gold, garments, corn etc. and gems, sandal etc., he made them bind (the possessors) in order to take away their wealth. When he did not get food, he prepared food with the flesh of cows and buffaloes. If he did not get food, he got prepared the meal with the flesh of horses and human beings. Such was his conduct, bereft of offering the prayers (thrice a day) etc. He had only one minister, a demon by name Surāpa. He always ordered him, 'bring, strike,' He, the abode of cruelty and surrounded by a thousand men, thus followed the opinion of the demon and seized men coming from many countries. Having come to know

about the women liked by him, he abducted them. Having enjoyed them for some time, he ate their flesh. Thus killing men and women he ruled unbearably.

22-28. The mean man thus ruled for a thousand years. Then his body became loose due to old age, and he was deformed due to folds (on his body). The place was without any living being all around (as far as the area of) ten yojanas. Then the day of the death of the noble king(?) came. When the time of his death came, all his followers remained by him, surrounding him who had bathed and lay on the ground. The minister Surāpa said "Order me as to what is to be done." Then the king, weak like that, (almost) dead, was afflicted. His life had become weak below the navel. (So) he uttered (these) words with difficulty: "O lord of demons, for all the time you strike, take away forcibly, snatch away." Saying so, he died. The messengers of Yama came (there). Intent on beating (him) they tried to tie him in a wonderful way. Their bonds and nooses were reduced to powder. Also their weapons and staffs were pounded just by the touch of his body. Such wonder took place.

29-34. Then Death himself came there and bound him with his noose. Seeing even the noose of Death cut off, Mṛtyu thought: 'I have seen the death of all mortals but nowhere like this'. When Death was thinking like this, the brave Jvālāvaktra holding a dart and being ordered by Virabhadra, suddenly came there. Then seeing Jvālāvaktra, Death quickly ran (away). Seeing that Death running away, Jvālāmukha, (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), the brave one, (said to him): "O thief, stop, stop. Where are you going? A thief gets freed from his sin only on his being put to the gallows." Speaking thus to Death, he pierced by his dart (the body of) Death. Making the dart pass through his shoulder, and having tied his messengers with a rope, and with their feet tied in chains, he took them and went to the king. Putting him into an excellent aeroplane, well-decorated with songs and musical instruments, he approached Vīra(bhadra). He reported everything to him.

35-41a. Virabhadra too, reported all that to Śiva whose form was unlimited, who was being served by many hosts of sages and gods led by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and who was accompanied by Pārvatī. After saluting Śiva he also reported to him

about Mṛtyu on the spike. The powerful Virabhadra, the universal soul, remained silent. Seeing Agnyānana (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), Śiva reproached him (and said to him): "O attendant, how did you do this rash act? How are you not afraid of Death, the superior Yama? Tell me all that truly." Having saluted him, that Vahnimukha (i.e. Jvālāvaktra) who was very angry, seeing Death, danced with joy and said: "(This) Death has just committed a theft. Therefore, I put him on the spike." Śiva too got Death freed and made all his messengers sound.

41b-45. Seeing Death Śiva said: "My name remains with them at the time of their death. I give my heaven only to those who have (i.e. utter) my name with some letters fewer or more. It is true, he uttered the word *Prahara* (i.e. 'strike'). They say that the word *Hara* (i.e. Śiva) having just the word *Pra* added to it, gives (i.e. leads to) the (highest) position. Salute these in the vicinity who are muttering (my name) and tell my words to Yama. Those who offer salutation, have restrain, narrate (the glory of Śiva), wait upon (Śiva), resort to his service, become his servants, recite the sacred texts, recite the hymn (in honour of Śiva) of five letters, or recite the *Śatarudriya* hymn, are not to be considered (by you). He, who (utters) my name, he who wears rudrākṣa (rosary), he who applies sacred ash, he who explains the Purāṇas before me, even if he has (committed) all sins, I rule over him. It is not at all the authority of Yama (to punish them).

46-53. Also those men who, though they have (committed) sins, though they are cheats, though they have used others' garments and have enjoyed others' wives, are intent upon dying at Vārāṇasī, or who die on Śrīśaila, are not to be considered (by Yama). Even lice, gad-flies, bugs, beasts etc., insects and ants, serpents, scorpions, pigs, that die at Kāśī, reach Śaṅkara. O Death, having saluted him who uttering his name, would meditate in the temple of his heart upon Śiva who has three eyes, who is Virūpākṣa (i.e. has an uneven number of eyes), whose eyes are the triad (of the Vedas), who has the moon, the sun and fire as his eyes, get away by my order." Having heard what was said by Śiva, Death praised Śaṅkara: "Salutation to you, the lord of deities; salutation to you, the form of gods; salutation to you, the omniscient one; salutation to you, the lord of

animals.” Then god Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) said to Death: “Choose a boon. I am pleased with this eulogy.” Death (then) asked for a boon: “O lord, O Śaṅkara, protect me, a sinner belonging to you.” Saying “All right” the lord said to Death: “O child, you (can) go.” He too went to Yama’s world, and told the entire (account) to Yama.

Śambhu said:

54. He who would every day listen to this auspicious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes near Śaṅkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

The Story of Śoṇa and His Wife Kalā

Śambhu said:

1-5. (Now) I shall also tell you another account of a woman. (I shall tell you) what Devarāta’s daughter obtained by the utterance of (Śiva’s) name. The young, very beautiful daughter of Devarāta was the wife of the intelligent Śoṇa, the son of Dhanañjaya. The two were restrained, devoted to pious acts alone, and virtuous. When they had gone for a bath in Gaṅgā, they found a treasure. (When they had gone) to bring clay on the bank that had fallen due to the current, they took a clod of clay and saw a great silver pitcher having a stone on it (i.e. covered with a stone). Then Śoṇa said these words to his dear wife: “How should we act? What should we do that would be beneficial to us?”

The wife said:

6-13a. A man should not undertake any work depending upon the view of a woman. A man should not also share a secret dear to him or (of) any (other kind). If a treasure would be noticed in the presence of a woman, then by groups of such words the woman should be deceived. Whatever remains there is not to be seen by us. If it is wealth, it is not to be seen, (for) it

results in suffering. If it is not known by anyone else, wherefrom can definite knowledge be had? If someone is not seen now, he remains hidden. If there is no hiding (i.e. if someone has not hidden himself), then someone remains (here) deceitfully. If it is not a deception on the part of human beings, then Śiva remains here. If it is not Śiva, then a brāhmaṇa (turned into a) demon (after his death) remains here. If he is not that (demon), then it may be the great lore (Mahāvidyā?) of kings. If the king does not know it, then there is a possibility of an affair (done) in a secret manner. (Or) it may be a trouble from thieves. If you are not cautious, then a great peril will take place.

13b-20. Generally, desire for enjoyment is produced in wealthy kings. From one enjoyment desire for another enjoyment (follows), and it destroys the religious rites. If a woman knows about the wealth found through chance, then she becomes free, and through anger divulges (i.e. may divulge) what is found. Due to anger she becomes one having lack of trust (i.e. she is not trusted); then the fault told before (follows). Trust is put in a familiar person; (so also) journey (is undertaken with him), or the mind is fixed on someone else. Various kinds of acts are possible for women due to trust (put in them). (Their) love would go towards any young man on seeing him. Due to love contact takes place; and due to contact sexual union takes place. When sexual union takes place constantly, then another (place of trust) may occur. Formerly you have enjoyed a woman, and now also you are enjoying one. Whom do you long for now or whom do you love? Which clever or very affectionate woman would go to another man than her own? If today you speak the same words as he spoke to her, then I shall tell you all this. Otherwise no words will be uttered (by me).

21-23a. Having gained so much audacity, so also due to change in form, she would behave independently after taking whatever wealth (she can). He, getting her killed, and taking that wealth, will cause her to be thrown. On the death of the husband before (her death) she should not enter fire (with the thought:) 'In my widowhood, all this wealth will be useful for my religious merit.'

23b-33a. Resolving like this with (i.e. in) her mind, when widowhood has come, she, when she gets an itching of the vulva

(i.e. has a desire for sex) by day or at night, she said (i.e. would say), after having gone to a lonely place and after having uncovered (i.e. taken off) her garment, to her vulva these words, through grief, and with her hand on her generative organ: "O vulva, what have you done? What sin have you committed? Or is it the sin of the penis due to having got into you? Or is it the sin of the doer due to avoiding service like me?" Even then when the itch is produced, she would put her finger (into her vulva); and due to the feeling of the itch she would do strange movements after that. Having rubbed it with her hands, having struck it and having expanded it, she, being extremely pained, repeatedly shook her feet. She, after having embraced the (piece of) wood of the cot, and pressed her breasts (against it) as she liked, became sad due to a peculiar disposition of her mind. Or having in the day stayed in the house she would process the vegetable, and having hung it in the house, she, having changed her dress (would stir out) on the highways in the evening, and is enjoyed by any one. Then due to the prowess of her words, she, being unsuspected, would act indecently. Or going to an unknown house, she would certainly make (someone) sport with her. This is what is expected of the wealth that is obtained in the presence of a woman. Therefore, there is no need for you to consult me (in this matter).

Śoṇa said:

33b-39a. It is so. There is no doubt about it. Go and stay away for evacuation of the bowels and passing urine. Remaining (here for some time) I shall go hereafter. When she had gone, Śoṇa also cut his garment into pieces. Then in each piece he took ample wealth. On the sand-bank, he made a hole as deep as the knee, threw the wealth (into it), filled it (with sand) and evacuated his bowels over it; and he put the pitcher, supporting it with the garment somewhere. Doing all this, as if he knew nothing, the sage went for his bath. Then his wife having bathed and having worshipped Pārvatī, when told by her husband to go, the chaste woman went home. Knowing her to be alone, a demon by name Mārīca assumed the form of her husband and said to Kalā:

Mārīca said:

39b-41a. On the bank of Saptagodāvarī there is (a grove) called Drākṣārāma where Bhīma himself had stayed, which gives enjoyments and salvation and which destroys sins merely by being remembered. Let us go there. O beautiful woman, quickly come out.

Kalā said:

41b-42. You who had proceeded to bathe, have not bathed. How do you say this now, which you have not said before? The best ones know the change of nature as a calamity.

Mārīca said:

43-53. Not to go against the husband is said to be the duty of women. Quickly tell me whether you are friendly or hostile to me.

The chaste woman remained silent, and that he was her husband, the young woman went out with him; and the chaste woman went into a forest. (She said to him:) “It is the mid-day. Perform your daily rites.” Hearing her words, the demon said: “This is not the place for performing rites. We have to go to that (region) where it is. So we shall go from here.” Having gone to some region, and seeing (there) a cave and a lake (he said:) “This is the place for me to stay at; O dear one, I shall bathe (here).” Saying so, he bathed in the lake and ate fruits. When it was the time for (taking) the meal, Kalā meditated upon Umā (and) Śiva. She was engrossed in reflecting upon whether he was or was not her husband. Then ascertaining by means of reflection that he was a thief, she was frightened, was very submissive, and had her face full of (i.e. bedewed with) tears. Saying, “Oh, a hurtful misery has befallen (me)!” she fell down. Seeing her weeping, the demon started to offend her; and (i.e. but) he (was not able) to offend her. When the demon tried to rape her, she made a covering of stone from her knees up to her navel. The demon, having seen her with a stonelike garment (thought): “I shall kill her and eat her up.” Saying so and whirling the sword he proceeded to cut off her head. (She said to him:)

54-57. "I am Kalā. My husband, knowing (you) will curse you. Do not snatch me away." When she just uttered these words, the demon cut off her head. When she met with such a bad (i.e. miserable) death, the messengers of Śiva, who had put on lovely ornaments, who had held all (kinds of) weapons, and who were auspicious, came there. Putting her into an aeroplane, they went to Śiva's heaven. Seeing her who had come there, Umā, the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, honoured her with joy, and spoke (these) words to her who had bent (i.e. fallen) at her feet and who was pure: "I am pleased with your loyalty to your husband. I (shall) give you whatever is desired by you."

Kalā said:

58-61a. Give me the status of your servant. Your lotus-like feet are dear to me. What is the use of many other requests?

Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī) said: "All right." She was honoured by the wives of Indra and others. The sage Śoṇa, the treasure of arts reached his house. Not seeing his wife there, he became engrossed in reflection. Through his eye of wisdom he saw her to have been snatched away by the demon, to be dead, to have reached Śiva's heaven and Umā, and to have been granted a boon by Umā.

61b-66a. The best sage had some affliction for a long time, turned back and went to his father-in-law Devarāta. Having reported everything to him, he went to sage Viśvāmitra with him. He reported it to Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha also said to those sages: "Having gone to Kailāsa and having first seen god Maheśvara, and then having got permission from Śiva and gone to Pārvatī's abode, we shall request the goddess and tell her everything properly." The excellent sages, saying "All right", went to Śaṅkara's abode, and saluted the god of gods. Being honoured by Virabhadra, they informed him this: "The wife of Śoṇa has been kidnapped."

66b-71. Śiva said to the best sages: "I had already known this. Her death is untimely. (Still the span of) her life is a hundred years (more). For those who have met with an untimely death, there is life again. She will give birth to ten sons; she will have

beauty and good fortune also. Ascertaining this, you have come here, O brāhmaṇas. All this is certain about people that have gone to Yama's world. (But) there is no other course for those who have come to my heaven. Formerly, at the time when her vital breath went out of her body (i.e. at the time of her death) she had uttered my name (viz. Hara). By that the writing of Yama was wiped. Then how (can) a decision (be had) about her life? Or you (better) tell the entire (account) to (Pārvatī) the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain." Then the brāhmaṇas went to see the feet of Pārvatī.

72-75. All of them saluted the mother. Viśvāmitra said these (words): "O mother, having formerly protected the wives who were helpless and forlorn and children who had lost their parents, you have always been one who gave whatever was desired. This Kalā is my grand-daughter only. Having propitiated you, she had obtained this Śoṇa as her husband. This is the fruit of your worship. O Aparṇā (i.e. Pārvatī), I shall get (back) Kalā through penance, or through charity, or through vows and fasts. I desire to eat food served by her. How (can I have it)?"

Pārvatī said:

76. I give the wife as she is desired to be (by her husband). I am unable to part with her. What do you think, O sage?

Viśvāmitra said:

77. I spoke without any fear as you are (our) mother. O mother, this sage Śoṇa will (now) request you.

Śoṇa said:

78. I love that wife (i.e. Kalā) only, (since) the chaste one gave (me) more than said (i.e. asked for by me). Give me that wife only. Otherwise death would come (to me).

Pārvatī said:

79-80a. The wife and husband (should be) equal to (i.e. fit for) each other. Those that are not equal (i.e. fit) are condemned. This one is not proper for you. I shall give you a suitable one. I shall not desert her who came to my abode without a body.

Śoṇa said:

80b-83a. If you do not give (back) this wife, then give me another dear to me; and give me, as an excellent boon, kingdom, and devotion to Śiva.

“It will be just like this.” Speaking thus, she said to the sages: “Here, in my (house), you will enjoy for three days. To please god Śiva, eight brāhmaṇas are always to be fed on every Monday, O best sages”.

83b-87a. As one desires, one should commence this vow anywhere. When a year is over, one should get fashioned (the image of) the lord with gold weighing four niṣkas or half of it. One should assign all these (articles)—a pair of fine white garments, two chowries, also a couple of fans, wooden sandals, shoes, an umbrella—to a brāhmaṇa. Having given gifts to brāhmaṇas, one should dismiss the brāhmaṇas. A wise man should do so at the time of the conclusion, the beginning and in the middle (of the vow).

87b-93. Every day he (should offer) worship to Śiva, the highest soul. The hymn to be recited at the time of the worship is: ‘We know (the lustre) of the Puruṣa. We reflect upon that (lustre) of Mahādeva. May Rudra, therefore, urge us on’. He should worship the god on an altar or in an image. He himself endowed with (i.e. observing) celibacy, should eat once (a day). This is said to be the auspicious vow of (i.e. in honour of) Śiva. It gives pleasure to Śiva. One, a man or a woman, who devoutly practises this (vow), always follows Śaṅkara like his shadow. Today Monday has come (i.e. it is Monday). So meal (will be taken) after mid-day. O you best sages, all of you, after having performed the forenoon rites, please eat food (here).” Hearing the words of the mother (i.e. Pārvatī), and saying “All right”, they went to river Gaṅgā for the performance of religious rites.

94-100. Performing their mid-day rites in the confluence and having worshipped the lord of the universe with the sixteen articles of worship, they went to Pārvatī’s house and saluted her. By the order of the mother of the worlds, Śālaṅkāyana’s son arranged for the formalities like washing the feet. He took the pañcagandhaka (i.e. five fragrant substances) and applied them to (the bodies of) the sages. He who would give pañcagandhaka,

would obtain a great kingdom; and being like Cupid, he would be dear to women. He too, who would offer (presents) to Viṣṇu, would become like Cupid. He who would long for Śiva (and observe a vow) for five years on Kailāsa, would be born as a king having all fragrances, would enjoy pleasures, would move (as he likes), would behave according to his desire. Musk, sandal, camphor with double agaru are (together) called pañcagandhaka. It is auspicious in all rites.

101-107. When the illustrious brāhmaṇas, to whose bodies pañcagandha was applied, were seated, there came an old, weak, brāhmaṇa dressed like a mad man. He was stark naked, was disabled due to old age and was hurrying. He was bald-headed; he suffered from asthma; he very much hiccoughed; he was oppressed with hunger. He was oozing saliva, had bent with a brush-like moustache and phlegm and his steps were faltering. (He was accompanied by) a girl sixteen years old; she was decorated with all ornaments. She was endowed with form and beauty. She was excellently beautiful in the world. She was looking at men here and there; she was singing; she was dancing, looking at her husband; she was laughing at him. She troubled her old husband (saying): “O weak, mean man, come quickly. O old man, by supporting your hand constantly, I am afflicted. Ornaments, garments, fragrances, garlands, unguents, laughter, singing, also drinking, decoration, a good house, affluence in all seasons are for the augmentation of sex only.

108-112a. Sex alone is the purpose of all desires. If all the pleasures are placed together (on one side) and pleasure of sex remains (i.e. is placed on the other side), and if they are weighed with a balance (then) sexual pleasure is a hundred times more (weighty). Then having obtained (a husband like) you what will a woman like me do?” She, holding him by his hand, spoke these and other words. He gave this reply to her: “What shall we do? Our destiny is like this, knowing me to be like this, do not strike me with bad words.” Such a brāhmaṇa went to Pārvatī’s house at that time. Not recognising Pārvatī at all he spoke these words:

The brāhmaṇa said:

112b-114a. O sage, know me to be a brāhmaṇa who has

come here for food at the time of (serving the) meals. Do not feed the brāhmaṇas.

His wife said (these) words: “Where is the sage? This is just a woman. The words of a blind man are always certainly like this.”

Pārvatī said:

114b-119. Having washed his feet, make him sit on a seat.

She has not satisfied the brāhmaṇa having a vessel (decked) with good jewels by the food cooked in a golden vessel. Then Ambikā (i.e. Pārvatī) called Arundhatī who expounded the Vedas and made her dress the food. Kalā, Arundhatī and the chaste Anasūyā, who were decorated with garlands, sandal, and sacred rice-grains, dressed separately the articles of food of six flavours. When the brāhmaṇas were eating, that naked, brāhmaṇa (-like) figure in a moment ate everything. The ladies could not give (i.e. serve food) to others. Then that goddess Girijā herself started giving (i.e. serving) food, as the brāhmaṇa in a moment ate up whatever was served.

120-124. He desired to eat, along with his beloved, everything that had remained in the vessels. Then Ambikā took it and gave it saying, “Let this be inexhaustible.” Then he desired to eat with the left hand. Then also saying, “Let this food be inexhaustible for you”, gave it to him. Then the best brāhmaṇa produced a thousand hands like this, and desired to eat. The goddess gave him again and again, but did not get angry. Then the brāhmaṇa, realising that he could not divert her mind, washed his hands and feet, and with a fragrant substance applied to his hands, said these words to Pārvatī: “I am pleased. Ask for a boon.”

Pārvatī said:

125-127. O best brāhmaṇa, even if you are capable of granting me a boon, what is the use of the boon to me, since Śaṅkara is my husband.

Then the brāhmaṇa said to the goddess: “Of what kind is

Śaṅkara? Is he suitable or not for you? He would be suitable for you, and not otherwise. Handsomeness and cleverness are liked by women. How otherwise such an auspicious woman would have come under my influence?"

Pārvati said:

128. O brāhmaṇa, having heard your wife's words, and also your words, this is untrue. O brāhmaṇa, is it untruth or venom?

Brāhmaṇa said:

129. I shall tie your braid; sit upon my lap. If your mind will be diverted, wherefrom would be your chastity (i.e. how can you be called chaste).

Pārvati said:

130-136. O best brāhmaṇa, my vow is to sit on the lap of Śaṅkara only.

Then the highest god, knowing the mind of Pārvatī, became a youth of sixteen years. His tied hair was very glossy. His charming eyes were very affectionate. His body was (fair) like cow's milk. His handsomeness was like that of a crore of Cupids. He was adorned with all ornaments. He had spread both his hands on the shoulder of the woman seated by his side. He sang gently as (Śiva) with Umā. Then Śambhu dragged Pārvatī with his hand, and smiled. Putting both his hands on the two shoulders of the lady (i.e. Pārvatī), he, with all ornaments (on his body), and with pleasing eyes, with his body full of joy and sung (i.e. praised) by sages, sang and danced at that time. By meditating upon Śiva like this, he (i.e. a man) has no grief for hundreds of crores of existences. Joy always comes to him. Thus praised by the best sages, he changed the girl into Viṣṇu. Then that Pārvatī who was pleased, said to the trident-holder:

Pārvatī said:

137-141a. Why is it that taking recourse to this condition and turning Viṣṇu into a young girl. Why did you not come in your natural (i.e. original) forms (as Śiva and Viṣṇu)?

Śiva said: “In this vow the food (taken as) a guest is auspicious. I know that those who do not have dejection obtain perfection. It is definite that when there is dejection, the vow is improper. He would, O respectable lady, (stay) in my city, will be endowed with all enjoyments, and living along with his wife, sons and relatives, his (full) life as told in the Vedas, will later go to Vārāṇasī, and having died (there) will obtain salvation.”

Śambhu said:

141b-145. When the god remained there, the sages went round him, keeping him to the right, thrice, then saluting five times, again having gone round him, again being (i.e. prostrating themselves) like a staff, and being dismissed by him, went out from that place. Then Śoṇa obtained his wife whose body was auspicious and who was not censured (i.e. was praised). The brāhmaṇa religiously ruled in the country called Bhārata. The devotee of Śiva enjoyed all human pleasures. He was always engaged in charity. He always performed sacrifices and always listened to (the recital of) the Purāṇas. When he died, he went to the auspicious heaven of lord Śaṅkara.

Śambhu said:

146-147. As the occasion had come, I told (you) the importance of the utterance of his names. It destroys all the sins of the listeners—the devotees. It gives all auspicious things. It always gives a good wife and a (good) kingdom. It is auspicious. It gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva. It is to be observed. A man should not tell it to any one.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

The Requirements for Narrating a Purāṇa

Śrī Rāma said:

1-6. In the sky are seen seated in aeroplanes auspicious ones having many forms, good wives, and hundreds of women.

At every step they are honoured by thousands of men and women. Twenty damsels, delicate with (good) figures and beauty, are singing. One is carrying a small box; some have their arms attached with (i.e. are carrying) chowries. (Some) have taken a pair of tāla fans and are fanning. Another (man) has made the pillow of her lap. He has given his hand in the hands of one. He is surrounded by many flatterers. His lotus-like face is blooming due to jests of many kinds done (i.e. indulged in). In one aeroplane, he, having the moon's brightness is seen. In the aeroplanes having hundreds of women, the auspicious lord is seen. Have these done (acts of) religious merit? Or is it (simply) Viṣṇu's illusion, O sage?

Śambhu said:

7-11. These are meritorious brāhmaṇas, leading a householder's life. Your (father) Daśaratha had given that food to them. Once a thought arose in (the minds of) them who are my hearts, as, 'we who depend upon others are happy here. Here hundreds of men depend on us. Due to that religious merit all of us enjoy as we desire. We are waited upon by good women, and are endowed with the pleasure of kingdoms. We are free from old age and death, and we are always young.' Having thought like this, all the brāhmaṇas went to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. Having honoured them who had come (to him), Vasiṣṭha said (these) words: "O best brāhmaṇas, speak quickly why you have come (to me)."

The brāhmaṇas said:

12-17a. All of us desire to get into an aeroplane which is endowed with all riches and which goes according to the desire (of the occupant). O preceptor, procure it for us.

Hearing this thought (i.e. desire) of them, Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words: "O brāhmaṇas, Purāṇa which destroys sins, should always be listened to. In it only are seen righteousness (dharma), material welfare (artha) and sensual enjoyments (kāma)." Saying, 'All right', the sages went to sage Aṅgiras who was proficient in Purāṇas, was the greatest (sage), knew all sacred texts, all the scriptures and Purāṇas, and always did good

deeds. Having saluted him, they spoke these words to him: “O brāhmaṇa, our life is fruitful, we are contented, since, O sage, we have seen you.”

Āṅgiras said:

17b-22a. I shall do the work for which you have come (to me). With a desire to listen to Purāṇas you have come here. I shall narrate to you the sacred precept which destroys all sins, gives all (kinds of) knowledge, is divine, has sprung up from the knowledge of truth, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva, is charming, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Viṣṇu, is auspicious, which would give (one) a beautiful woman, which (contains) auspicious knowledge of various kinds, discloses the science of sexual love, has enjoyment and salvation as the chief (aim), which illuminates various systems of philosophy, tells about various (kinds of) devotion, which narrates daring courage in devotion, gives the rules about a vow, a site etc. and about (applying) the sacred ash and about worship.

22b-25. The Padma Purāṇa is said to have been accomplished from the lotus of Brahmā. It is narrated by Śiva, and (contains) the description of Pramatha's (an attendant of Śiva) form. This is told elsewhere in the Padma Purāṇa itself. Formerly, Vasiṣṭha, when asked by Dilipa, narrated it. O best sages, listen to it, (thereby) you will have all knowledge.

Then, by his words the brāhmaṇas got interested in listening to the Purāṇa. They said to the sage (Āṅgiras): “Now doing what, and how should we listen to it?” He too told everything.

26-33. “Listen to the ancient practices. A man (who wants to listen to a Purāṇa) should salute him who knows the Purāṇa and then should offer him a respectful seat. Then saying, ‘(Please) be seated’, he should worship him with sandal and flowers; or he should also offer him wealth and tām̐būla. He should say to him: ‘O brāhmaṇa, tell (us) the auspicious story from the Purāṇa.’ For the accomplishment of religious merit, material welfare and sensual enjoyments, he should listen to it not by sitting upon a cot or (any other high seat) but (should listen to it) by sitting upon a low seat. The knower of the Purāṇa, having said to the listener, ‘Listen’, should recite this

hymn: A man deserves to (i.e. should) explain the Purāṇa (after saying) 'Salutation to Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa and Sarasvatī' and having saluted the desired deity. Every day he should listen (to the Purāṇa) or as he would desire. In the same way he should listen to the narration up to the end, (and then) should do his duty. The listener should silently reflect on it; he should silently listen to it. Otherwise Sarasvatī would be angry, and due to her anger dumbness would come. Therefore, the listener should offer tāmbūla etc. (to the narrator); and according to his capacity, he should also undertake the subsistence of the speaker (i.e. the narrator).

34-38. At the commencement (of the narration) of the Purāṇa he should give (the narrator) a pair of washed garments, or should give him a subtle garment or a pair of garments, and (should give him) a great, lovely, beautiful, strong and soft seat. Similarly he should give (him) gold, and cows, a residence etc. O best of all brāhmaṇas, formerly Dakṣiṇāmūrti Śiva narrated this to sages residing in heaven." Then all the sages, having saluted him seated on the seat, and having separately given him a tāmbūla, remained there with a desire to listen (to the Purāṇa). He too, narrated the whole Purāṇa, which gives everything. The best sages listened to it till the last chapter.

Dilīpa said:

39. A holy place was reached by the aeroplane which moved according to the desire (of the occupant), was equipped with all luxuries, and was fully provided with all facilities.

Vasiṣṭha said:

40-46a. O king, you have not asked enough. That is said to be holy which enables one to be more sportive, O king. He should make Śiva's temple white with whitewash on all sides. He should have women who are endowed with beauty and graceful movements, adorned with all ornaments, skilled in (singing) many good songs, and proficient in various kinds of dancing. There should be four, eight, or six women sounding a drum. Two should be powerful, two should be professionals having the bow of a lute and drum-stick. Four should be dancers, and one should be a contented singer. One or two are

said to be knowing singing well and not garrulous. Two should be kept for (playing upon) the lute, and six or eight are silent. All should be beautiful and should have graceful movements. All should be of firm breasts. They should be skilled in the ways of sexual love and should be trustworthy. Their dresses should be of very fine garments, and their eyes unsteady like (flashes of) lightning.

46b-52. O king, he who has caused women like this to dance (even) on one day, gets into a (divine) aeroplane in a year. His face is looked at by hundreds of women. He is honoured by many young (women). He is complete with his joy being nourished. He is without anger and jealousy. His body is smeared with pañcagandha. His face is like a piece of (i.e. small) cloud with the moon. He is like the sun. All the ten women are having brilliance like that. They have garlands of the pārijāta-flowers which have blossomed the same day and which are fragrant. All have garlands of blossomed flowers of rohi and saffron joined together. They carry the braid on their breasts. Their lips have a good (i.e. sweet) smile on them. He moves being delighted by women like these with dancing and singing. Thus he gets into a (divine) aeroplane and having lived (in heaven) for an inexhaustible (i.e. very long) period, he then would be born as a king. Having ruled over the kingdom like this (i.e. as a king) and having enjoyed the fruit (of the stay in) heaven, he will become a devotee of Śiva.

Śambhu said:

53-56. Aṅgiras told the sages what Vasiṣṭha had told Dilipa. They executed, like that, the union of song and dance of (i.e. in honour of) the lord of Umā; and having listened to the entire Padma Purāṇa, they became happy. O Rāma, these are those brāhmaṇas who are seated in the excellent aeroplane, in the sky, and appear to be happy and of delighted minds. I have told you all this as ascertained in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. O Rāma, what other (i.e. more) than this do you wish to hear ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

*Dialogue between Śiva and Rāma**Rāma said:*

1-5. Who is this seen in the sky, who is adorned with all ornaments, seated in an aeroplane, who is, as it were, another sun very brightly shining at mid-day and difficult to be looked at by all mortals? On his lap is a sweet-smiling lady like another Lakṣmī. So also there are five good (i.e. beautiful) women. They are singing a sweet song, accompanied by their glances with knitted eye-brows, gentle smiles and sounds made by clappings. At times they are singing songs in their throats (i.e. singing in subdued tones), by striking on one another's hands, and by looking at one another's faces with cupidity preceded by songs. Tell me, due to what religious merit the great meditating sage resembling filaments of lotuses, is sporting like this.

Śambhu said:

6-16. O Rāma, this brāhmaṇa was formerly endowed with all (kinds of) riches. He had many pleasures. He was engaged in maintaining his wife. He was sonless. He was without (i.e. he did not give in) charity. He was without the worship of (i.e. did not worship) deities. He was bereft of the five (great) sacrifices and without self-study. He was bent upon eating (only) in the morning, mid-day and evening. He was impure. Once he went to the house of noble Gautama on the holy mountain of Tryambaka resorted to by many hosts of sages. There also was a beautiful house fashioned with pillars of crystal. Its walls were smeared with liquid agaru (sandal), musk and camphor. Its ground was beautiful with the fragrance of the santāna-flowers and was sprinkled with musk and juice of flowers. It was beautified with many fine, white canopies. The courtyard was adorned with large plantain and nut trees. In the lake nearby there was the sweet humming of the bees. The quarters were filled with the fragrance produced by the sandal-trees. The quarters were filled with instruction in songs and joyful songs. It was fashioned with a machine removing the heat produced in summer. In it a cover is made with the citraka tree

covering the shoots of the plantain trees. The very glossy and thick panels of the doors are made of the pāṭira tree. The inner walls are fashioned in such a way as to be fragrant and giving great joy. As a portion of the lord a beautiful, pleasant raised seat is prepared. The seat is fashioned with gold and is having a beautiful altar. It has very pleasing and thick shade.

17-20. It is fashioned at the root of a banyan tree. It is decorated at its skirts with lakes having flowers and groups of plantain trees. It has the clouds showing sprays as they are touching the great banyan tree. It is decorated with beautiful groves having breezes from heavenly gardens. It is decorated with wells, lakes etc. and with many groves. In that abode wind giving comfort, blew very gently. Excellent women beautiful in all limbs and the wealth of Cupid, played on different musical instruments such as a lute, a flute and a pipe.

21-25a. Women had triple symphony (of song, dance, instrumental music) in (all) the four directions and above also. In golden vessels etc. were put auspicious tablets of sacred ash. They were made fragrant with all fragrant substances and were fumigated with good incenses. Heaps of kuśa were arranged; there were crores of rosaries. In the outskirts there were hundreds of deer-hides. In such a house the best sage, fit to be saluted by gods, put camphor etc. in the four directions, and arranged a throne of camphor on the seat of sandal, which was fine, white, very glossy and was covered with camphor.

25b-32a. He bathed (the Phallus of) Saṅkara with water made fragrant and with milk. Having got Sadāśiva bathed with the accompaniment of other Vedic hymns, he put a piece of cloth as a seat on the wooden seat with camphor. He put a vessel with parts in front of it. He put these (articles) in the (various) parts (of the vessel). In one pot he put the sacred rice grains. In another he put sacred rice grains with sesamum. In one he put pañcagandha; in another he put aṣṭagandhaka. He also (put) the musk from Kāsmīra, camphor and sandal in other pots and arranged them at the place of worship. Then the worship was done in the way selected. God Sadāśiva with five faces remains in the Phallus. The Phallus is his cover. Śakti (power, his counterpart) is placed there. Viṣṇu is the cover of Śakti, and Brahmā is the cover of Viṣṇu. The Moon is the cover

of Brahmā; the Sun is the cover of the Moon. The sacred texts are his (i.e. the Sun's) cover. They are protected among the goddesses of the quarters; and they are covered by the quarters. Śambhu is the cover of the quarters, and the qualities are his cover.

32b-42a. The worship of the Phallus of Śiva with ten covers is auspicious. This would be (i.e. is) the opinion of some. The cover of knowledge is said (to come) after (these) covers. It is said to have the cover of Umā. Viṣṇu is its cover. Brahmā is Viṣṇu's cover. The Moon is the cover of Brahmā. The Sun is the cover of the Moon. The lord is the cover of the Sun. Thus the cover is said to be of sixteen kinds. The fivefold cover without Brahmā is said to be the best. These three are the covers of the Moon, Viṣṇu and Śakti. The unique cover—the cover of Ambikā—is said to be the best. Or in the worship of Śiva, the guardians of the quarters would be (i.e. are) the cover. In case of Śiva uncovering or worship is recommended. One should worship Śiva with the articles placed in the eight parts of the vessel. I shall describe the characteristics of the vessel useful for all rites. It shines with gold or is made of copper. A man should fashion the eight auspicious parts of the vessel resembling pearl-oysters. He should fashion it with eight angles resembling the petals of a lotus. It is recommended to have the parts of the measure of a pala. It should be uncovered and of large parts. In the centre it should not be large. At the top it should have eight parts of the size of a lotus. Or through the Śakti he should have it with five parts. Or should make it with three in the Śakti, and as he thinks.

42b-47. The wise one should keep the vessel in such a way as it looks beautiful. The rosary fashioned with eight hundred rudrākṣas hidden in the Śakti is auspicious. He should have the sacred thread with thirty or eight. One should be put on each of the cheeks and two should be tied on the forearms. He held one on the head and the great sage had one around his neck. The rosary was made with rudrākṣas and crystals and gems. The sage has fashioned a seat of tiger-skin and was seated in the Padmāsana posture.¹ Having finished invoking (the deity), having

1. Padmāsana—A posture in which the left foot is put at the root of the right thigh and the right foot is put on the left thigh.

offered him a seat, materials of worship, water for washing the feet and rinsing the mouth, he bathed Śaṅkara with the water of Gaṅgā and with flowers of bakula and pāṭala along with aṣṭagandha kept in golden vessels, and (wiped the Phallus) well with a washed piece of cloth.

48-53. At the door was kept a copper pan. It was auspicious with an oval wooden vessel; so also with a cow-horn and the horn of a gavaya, or with a conch curved to the right or with pots decked with jewels, or with golden or silver or copper or bell-metal pots; he bathed (the Phallus) according to his desire with (water from) the fine golden pitchers. A man may even bathe (the Phallus) with water from earthen vessels or with lotus petals, or with (water from) vessels made of (the leaves of) palāśa, mango, jambu and other trees. He should bathe the lord. He should, after having solicited the lord with the hymn 'salutation to you' etc. called *Śatarudriya* or with the repetition of *Śaṁ ca*, of the nature of tranquillity, then apply sandal etc. according to his capacity. Then he should worship him with nice flowers and bilva-leaves.

54-70. That Gautama worshipped the lord with (the leaves of) tulasī and maruvā, white and big blue lotuses, so also with blue lotus and water-lilies, so also with karavīra-flowers, with karṇikāra-flowers, white lotuses, (the leaves of) the aparājītā (creeper), with sesamum and sacred rice grains, with sarala-leaves mixed with sesamum. Thus (he worshipped) the great lord. He fumigated him with camphor, agaru (sandal), musk, sarja, and agaruka-sandal and with other (incenses). He lighted sixteen lamps having camphor-wicks and put on props. He made an excellent offering of eatables to Maheśa. It contained food of well-cooked rice and flour; (it contained varieties of food) like those that could be eaten, that could be licked, that could be sucked; it was accompanied with sweet articles, and with food of five types; it was rich with many cooked vegetables, and mixed with many cooked articles. The drink was accompanied by twenty (ingredients), and with grapes and plantains; it was accompanied by eight kinds of soup, and with roots and fruits. It was also arranged with other articles as were available. The sage offered the food with excellent flowers. Having offered a thousand lights (to be waved in front of the deity) kept in golden

vessels to the deity and having saluted him, he (offered) crushed pieces of nut, washed leaves, with the tops of their backside (not visible), and covered with a very white cover. He also offered auspicious camphor-powder put on three leaves. He also offered the tām̐būla kept in a golden vessel to the lord. Then after he had gone round the deity by keeping him to the right, and saluted him, eight women who had held lutes and flutes and who were playing on beautiful musical instruments reached the vicinity of the sage. He himself, taking a small instrument of bell-metal, started singing. When Gautama started singing, the women protracted the tone. Others gently played upon the musical instruments. When the sage was singing sweetly, those having the manifestation of notes, danced in front of Maheśa. It was (a) wonderful (sight). In the meanwhile the revered sage Nārada arrived (there). Gautama also honoured and saluted him who had come (there), and said to him: “I am fortunate. None else is like me. What is the object of your arrival and wherefrom have you come?”

Śrī Nārada said:

71-74a. Having eaten in Bāṇa's abode, I have come (here) from the nether world. The noble ones, Bāṇa, Śukra and others will come to (your) house.

Then in a moment the demon Bāṇa, conqueror of the enemies' cities, mounted upon an elephant and accompanied by (an army of) twenty akṣauhiṇī¹, came there. Śukra (had mounted) upon another elephant. Prahlāda (was seated) in an excellent chariot. Vṛṣaparvan (was seated) in an excellent chariot, and Bali on an excellent horse.

74b-83. Knowing them all to have arrived, Gautama along with his disciples went out and hurriedly offered them a respectful offering. They also, seeing Gautama, got down from the elephant etc. The demons also saluted him. The best sage saluted Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), embraced all the demons, duly honoured them and made arrangements for the camping of the army. The sage washed

1. Akṣauhiṇī—A large army consisting of 21870 chariots, as many elephants, 65610 horses and 109350 foot soldiers.

the feet of Śukra and put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head, and offered him a worship with beautiful fruits. All the demons, along with their priests having offered the rites, after bathing in the wells, lakes and ponds, entered that auspicious abode—the hermitage of Gautama, situated on the confluence, and worshipped the deities in the brāhmaṇa's house. Śukra worshipped Śiva on the altar which was immediately fashioned. On his left side only, Prahlāda worshipped Viṣṇu; and Bali worshipped Śiva. So also other excellent demons (worshipped other deities). Bāṇa worshipped god Śiva alone. Śukra too worshipped the revered lord of Umā. In the mid-day Gautama also worshipped Śaṁkara. All had put on white garments; the bodies of all were dusted with sacred ash. All had made marks of three lines on the proper places (of their bodies) with white sacred ash.

84-88. Having saluted Śukra, all of them commenced purification of the elements. In the lotus of the heart there is a cavity. In it are the five elements. Among them is ether; in ether there is pure air. In it is the great lord. A man should meditate upon him, the bright and auspicious one. The element is united with ignorance, is impure, and connected with everything. He should burn that body in the lamp of ether with the fire of knowledge. Having burnt egotism covering ether, he should then burn ether. Having burnt the ether, he should burn air and then the element of fire. Then having burnt the element of water and the element of earth, he should burn the qualities resorting to them and then should get burnt his body.

89-92. The man, having thus burnt the elements with the fire of knowledge, (should worship) Viṣṇu who remains in the lock of hair on the crown of the head, who is full of the flavour of joy, who is having rays like those coming from the moon, and who is auspicious, with the rays produced from Śiva's body and united with the nectar-liquid. Then the flame (becomes) very cold like the rays of the moon. The inundation has also become dense due to the spreading lustres of the nectar. Gradually the group of elements is inundated.

93-97a. Having thus purified the elements, the pure mortal, fit to perform the rites becomes pure only for offering the worship and doing the muttering (of hymns). Then on meditation upon the god, the destruction of the sin due to the murder of a brāh-

maṇa follows. Having in this way meditated upon him, lustrous like the moon's light, and quickly placed (the deity) in the Phallus of Śiva, having thought on Sadāśiva in the lamp, he should worship the immutable with (the hymn of) five letters. He should also go through the formalities like invocation, should bathe (the Phallus of) Śaṅkara as before. The seat should be made of udumbara, silver, gold, and should be covered with cloth etc. In the end he should shower bubbles on the seat. He should fashion one (representation of) snake in the seat above, a pair of them near the deity, on the right side and the left. In between the serpents he should put a japā-flower and a piece of cloth of (the measure of) twelve prāṭis¹.

97b-99. He should put the lord of the form of the Phallus and fit to be worshipped with very white (materials) and along with the seat on the piece of cloth. The demons led by Bāṇa and others, having done this, and having repeatedly offered pañca-gandha and aṣṭagandha, having worshipped (the deity) with flowers, leaves, sesamum-seeds, sacred rice grains mixed with sesamum-seeds or with only sacred grains, having duly offered incense, having presented a lamp, and an offering as told (before), having finished the remaining (part of the) worship, all of them sang and also danced there.

100-113a. In the meanwhile there came Gautama's disciple named Śaṅkarātman. His dress was like that of a mad person—he was naked, and had many coverings. At times he appeared like an excellent brāhmaṇa, at times like a cāṇḍāla. At times (he looked) like a śūdra. At times (he looked) like a meditating saint or an ascetic. He roared, jumped and danced, praised and sang. He wept, heard clearly; at times, he fell (and again) rose. He was endowed with Śiva's knowledge only; he was full of great joy. He arrived at the time of the meals, and went near Gautama. He ate with his preceptor eating at times what was left over by the preceptor. At times he licked up the plate of the preceptor; at times he went (away) silently. Holding the preceptor's hand, he, at times, himself ate (food). At times he urinated in the house (itself); at times he applied mud (to his body). He always held his preceptor with his hand and taking

1. Prāṭi—The span of the thumb and the forefinger.

him into his abode seated him on his own seat and fed him. The sage Gautama himself ate from his plate. To know his mind, a beautiful, auspicious lady Ahalyā called the disciple and said to him, “Eat”. She put food in a golden pot and a drink (like water) etc. in a goblet. She put fire in a plate, and a heap of charcoals and of thorns in another, and (said to him), “Eat, eat (these)”. The sage also ate (them). The brāhmaṇa ate up the fire, as (easily as) he would drink water. He also ate the thorns and remained as before. Formerly he was invited for food by the daughters of the sages. Every day they gave him clods, water and cowdung. Eating mud, wooden staff, he was pleased and delighted.

113b-120. Such was the sage having the figure like that of a cāṇḍāla. Taking his old shoes in his hands (one in the right and one in the left), and (using) words fit for a śūdra he came to Vṛṣaparvan. The naked (disciple) stood between Vṛṣaparvan and the lord. Vṛṣaparvan, not knowing him, harassed him and cut off his head. When the best brāhmaṇa was killed, this mobile and immobile world became extremely excited; so also the sages in it. The very noble Gautama was very much afflicted. Tears, indicating his grief, went (i.e. flowed) out of his eyes. In presence of all the demons, Gautama uttered (these) words: “What (great) sin he has committed since he has cut off this head of this constant devotee of Śiva and greater (i.e. dearer) than my life (to me). It is virtually my death as the preceptor is of the form of his disciple. Certainly we must die where (i.e. when) the death of Śiva’s devotees, full of piety and always living in Śiva, is seen”.

Śukra said:

121-125. I shall bring him back to life. Śiva is dear to my family. How can this brāhmaṇa die? See the power of my penance.

When the best brāhmaṇa was speaking like this, Gautama also died. When he died, Śukra also cast his life through deep meditation. Learning from Prahlāda that he was dead, all the lordly demons died just in a moment. That was a wonder. The

army of that intelligent Bāṇa also died. Ahalyā tormented with grief, repeatedly and loudly wept. The lord was worshipped with (the materials of) worship of Śiva by Gautama. The great meditating sage Vīrabhadra on seeing all (that) got angry.

126-135. He said: "Oh how painful! Many lords are dead. I shall inform Śiva of this; I shall do as he tells." Having determined like this he went to the immutable one to the Mandara mountain. Having saluted Śiva, he told him all this. Seeing Brahmā and Viṣṇu standing there, Śiva spoke (these) words: "O Viṣṇu, seeing the daring act done by my devotees, I the granter of boons, will go (there). You two also will come (with me)." Then the lord mounted upon the bull (i.e. Nandin). Chowries were moved by Vāyu. Extremely lovely umbrellas were held (over the lord's head) by Nandika who was very well dressed. The very white, golden staff of the lord was held by some ascetic. Obtaining the consent of the lord, Viṣṇu got on the enemy of the serpents (i.e. Garuḍa). He whose Kaustubha (gem) was noticeable, shone with two reddish and dark blue umbrellas. With Śiva's consent Brahmā also mounted upon his swan. Brahmā shone with two umbrellas having the brilliance and form of the indragopa insect. All gods led by Indra got into their own vehicles. Gladdened by (the sound of) various musical instruments all of them set out. Crowded with crores of (Śiva's) attendants, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva went to Gautama's hermitage. Seeing that great wonder (Śiva) brought his devotee back to life by looking at him from the corner of his left (eye). Śaṁkara said to Gautama: "I am pleased with you. Ask for a boon."

Gautama said:

136-140. If, O lord of gods, you are pleased with me, and if a boon is to be granted to me, then let me always have the power of worshipping your Phallus, O great lord. This is what I have chosen. O you three-eyed (god), listen to this: My noble disciple is without (i.e. does not care for) what should and what should not be given up. With his eyes he does not see what should be seen with a feeling of mineness. With his nose he does not smell what is fit for being smelt; nor (does

he give) what is fit to be given, or (does not do) any other similar act. Knowing this he did like that. The very illustrious meditating saint, of a figure resembling that of a mad man, and known as Śaṅkarātman did like that. Nobody would prohibit him; nobody would harm him. O god, grant me this, and also the deathlessness of these.

The lord said:

141-142a. May they live till the end of the kalpa; then let them enjoy salvation. For a moment we shall stay in this extensive, specially made and auspicious abode of you. Then we shall go home.

Gautama said:

142b-147a. O lord, I am asking for an improper thing. A suppliant does not notice a blemish. O lord of gods, if you like, give me what cannot be obtained by Brahmā and others.

Then the lord looked at Viṣṇu and seized Viṣṇu's hand. Sadāśiva, having laughed, said to him whose eyes were like lotuses: "O Govinda, you are thin-bellied. What food should be offered to you? Or get in and as in your own house eat (whatever food you choose). Or go to the house of Pārvatī who will fill your belly." Speaking thus, the lord held his hand and went to a secluded corner. And as told before, he said to Nandin, the door-keeper. He told Gautama the subsequent words of Viṣṇu.

Sadāśiva said:

147b-161. O sage, procure food for all of us. We desire to eat (food).

Saying so Śaṅkara went to a secluded place with Viṣṇu. Having got on a soft bed, the excellent deities lay there. Having talked to each other, both of them got up. The two excellent gods went to the bank of Gaṅgā, and bathed (in) deep (water). They drank water from each other's hands. Then Viṣṇu and Śiva quickly splashed water (on each other). Then Śaṅkara, scattered lotus-filaments held in the hollow of his hands over

Viṣṇu's face having eyes like fully blown lotuses. Keśava closed his eyes when the filaments fell (on his face). In the meanwhile, Śiva mounted upon the shoulder of Viṣṇu and holding with his hands Viṣṇu's hand, plunged him (into water). Viṣṇu who was (thus) repeatedly troubled by being plunged, delicately put down Śiva. He dragged him by seizing his feet and whirled him round. (Śiva) struck on the chest of Viṣṇu and dropped him down. Then Viṣṇu who had got up, took water in the hollow of his hands, and scattered it over Śambhu. Then Hara (i.e. Śiva) scattered it over Viṣṇu. Thus they sported in water. The group of sages also had their matted hair dishevelled in the flurry of water-sport. Then due to the confusion, they tied the matted hair with others' matted hair; and the excellent sages, strong or weak, drew (the matted hair). They caused others to fall, and cried and wept also. When such confusion started and took place in the water, Nārada danced and cried in the sky. Playing upon the musical instrument—his charming lute—he loudly sang a song. With a charming song, he sang in ten modes.

162-171a. Śaṁkara, Lokabhāvana (literally, the creator of the world), heard that sweet song; and he himself gradually began to sing sweetly. When the lord of gods himself sang the mingled auspicious Kaiśikī (variety of the dramatic style), Nārada danced and sang indistinctly. Taking up a firm note having all (good) characteristics and endowed with the nectar of the flow of the excellence (of his voice) he connected it with that song; and Viṣṇu beat the drum with his hands. The four-faced (Brahmā) had a depression, and Tumbura became garrulous. Gautama and others quietly sang in protracted tones. When the lord of monkeys—Hanūmat—sang a sweet song, the wearied became glad; the weak became strong. All of them, having just despised their own songs, got confused. All the gods, the hosts of sages and the demons became silent. Only that Hanūmat sang, and all others were listeners. In the mid-day when the time for meal came, Śiva, listening to the song, took a couple of silken garments. Viṣṇu, (took) a couple of yellow garments, and Brahmā a red one. Then performing rites befitting themselves, and (prescribed to be performed at) that time, all the deities, mounting on their own vehicles, went out.

171b-184a. But the great lord (i.e. Śiva) who loved music, said to the lord of monkeys: "O monkey, you are ordered by me. Be fearless and mount upon the bull (i.e. Nandin), and facing me, sing all songs." Then the best of the monkeys said to the revered great god: "The power to mount upon the bull is only yours. None else has it. O lord by mounting upon your vehicle, I shall be a sinner. O lord of gods, just mount upon me. I (shall be) a bird—Śiva's vehicle. I shall sing facing you. See". Then the lord got upon Hanūmat as on his own bull. When the god Śaṁkara got upon the head and neck of Hanūmat, he cut his skin, and having turned his face, sang as before. Śambhu, listening to the nectar-like (sweet) song, went to Gautama's house. All the hosts of gods and sages and the demons came there. At the time of the meal, Gautama honoured them. When Hanūmat sang, everything like the household utensils made from dry wood increased (i.e. put forth shoots). At the time of his singing the eyes of all stood (rivetted) as in a picture. With his two hands (Hanūmat) held the feet of the lord. He (i.e. the lord) was having (on his person) all ornaments. He had a pleased form. He was young. He was praised by the gods with their hands well-folded on the slender waist. Having held Hanūmat's head with his hands, Śiva turned it to the east. He put one of his feet on the hollow of the hands of Hanūmat, seated in the Padmāsana posture, and the other into his mouth, and the lord affectionately and gently seized Hanūmat's nose with two of his toes. Then he put one foot against his belly, then into his circular navel and the other one into the hollow of his hands. Then Śaṁkara, seized his head, bent it, touched his back with his chin, with (i.e. producing) a sound. Śaṁkara put round Hanūmat's neck a necklace made of pearls.

184b-191a. Then Viṣṇu spoke these words to Śiva: "There is none (else) in the entire universe, since your foot inaccessible to scriptures and gods, remained on the monkey's body. Your foot is not made manifest (even) by all Upaniṣads. The monkey is fully united with it. Your foot is (i.e. your feet are) not (reached) through the means like restraints etc. and deep meditation. The power is spotless in Hanūmat, the lotus of the heart of a great meditating sage. (Even) best sages, after having practised difficult penance for thousands of crores of years, do

not know your form, then how (can they reach) your foot (i.e. feet)? Oh! wonderful is the luck (of the monkey), that the unsteady beast, the monkey, holds the couple of your feet not capable (of being conceived) in their hearts by meditating sages. For a thousand years every day, I devoutly worshipped the foot (i.e. the feet) of the lord. But you did not manifest it (i.e. them) to me; (and) there is a talk among people that Viṣṇu is dear to Śambhu. The monkey (alone) is dear to Śambhu like that; I do not have luck like that.”

Sadāśiva said:

191b-197a. O revered Viṣṇu, none else is so dear to me as you, or Pārvatī is (dear to me) like you. None else is (dear) to me.

Then saluting the great god, Gautama respectfully said: “O you immeasurable one, O god, O you treasure of pity, come along. The mid-day has passed. It is time for meal for all.” Then the mighty great god (i.e. Śiva) sipped water, and along with Viṣṇu, entered Gautama’s house, and started eating food. Śiva who was adorned with jewelled rings, anklets, silken garment, a girdle (bright) like lightning, many necklaces, (many) golden ornaments put around the neck, a sacred thread, upper garments, with jewelled rings that were hanging and with excellent, ornamented hair, with the besmearing of pañcāṅga and sandal, with armlets, with bracelets and rings, sat on an excellent seat; and the god seated Viṣṇu, so as to face himself, on an excellent seat.

197b-199. The two excellent gods, Viṣṇu and Śiva were seated facing each other. Gautama too gave them golden vessels. The sage prepared food of thirty varieties, excellent sweetened milk of four kinds, two hundred (varieties of) well cooked food, three hundred (varieties) of the mixture of uncooked and cooked (food); so also the sage prepared food from good bulbs and vegetables. Vegetables etc. were accompanied by ghee. He offered them (food containing) sugar etc. of twenty-five kinds; so also pomegranates etc., plantains, bunches of grapes, dates, oranges, rose-apples, piyāla-fruits, nuts.

200-206a. Having duly offered these and other articles and

having given apośana¹ (i.e. making the seat for the food), the brāhmaṇa said to them: “(Please) eat.” When all of them were eating, Gautama himself took a fan made of very fine cloth and fanned Śiva and Viṣṇu. Then the great god desired to indulge into jest. (He said:) “O Viṣṇu, look at Hanūmat. (See) how the monkey is eating (food).” When Viṣṇu was looking at the monkey, the great god (i.e. Śiva), even when the hosts of sages were observing, threw a cake into Viṣṇu’s dish. He also gave Hanūmat sweetened milk etc. left over by him. (Hanūmat said to him:) “O lord, what is left over is not to be eaten according to your statement.” (Śiva said:) “Offering of cooked food to me is not proper. The cooked food, so also leaves, flowers, fruits offered to me should be thrown into a well only. Due to your words an article is not enjoyed; and an article is eaten only due to your favour.”

Sadāśiva said:

206b-208a. When the bāṇa-liṅga, self-born and bright like the moon remains, the eating of the cooked articles of food of (i.e. offered to) Śambhu should be known to be like the Cāndrāyaṇa (vow). This is now the time for eating. It would be tasteless due to (our resorting to) other tales. I shall tell you after we have eaten. Eat the food without any doubt.

208b-212. Then the sage performed the rite of (sprinkling) water (indicating commencement of the meal). He filled the pitchers reddish, very glossy and fine, with all their parts washed in many ways and dried, with water from lakes, rubbed with seeds and cleaned. He covered the new altar on the sandy bank of the river with spotless, whiter, fine pieces of cloth, and put on them pitchers full of water. In them he should put yellow orpiment, nut-meg, kaṅkola, musk-powder, sandal, and under the layer he should put a garland white like the moon-rays. After having cleaned the pitcher with water and cloth, he should have a knot like a peacock’s tail; then should put a garland of bakula and pāṭala flowers.

213-220a. He should keep the pitchers in a place where

1. Apośana—The act of making an upastaraṇa (seat) and apidhāna (covering) for the food eaten.

there is no sun and which has gentle breezes and should be fanned with subtle fans. O king, then he should also sprinkle the goad. Having consecrated well-controlled men or women or their daughters who have bathed and put on washed garments, he should put the sweet, tawny exuberance, thick, profuse sandal. Having applied it to the armpit, neck, he should apply jāpyaka to his head, and apply pañcagandha. Their good hair should have flowers tied to it. Their faces should be good and should be very clean. Such women only whose bodies have saffron applied to them, are proper. So also young women adorned with ornaments. He should offer food through these women or men. They also should, at the time of offering, keep the pitcher covered with fine and small (piece of) cloth in their left hand, and looking into it, unbinding it which is put on a thread, should cause water to be given.

220b-226. Thus the sage Gautama honoured them. When all the noble ones of them like Śiva and others had eaten, had washed their feet and hands, and had rubbed perfumes to their hands, the god of gods, Śiva, was seated on his seat. The gods along with the sages were seated on the lower seats. In the jewelled pots were kept pieces of nuts after covering them after having fumigated them. They were angle-less, round, big, small and even thin. Then Gautama, having cleaned white leaves and put powder of camphor-pieces on them, offered it to Śaṅkara (saying) “O god, accept the tām̐būla.” When the sage said these words, (he said to Hanūmat:) “O monkey, take the tām̐būla, give me the pieces.” The monkey said: “O great lord, I have no purity. How can purity come to a monkey after his having eaten fruits?”

Sadāśiva said:

227-230. Everything would be purified by my words. Due to my words poison becomes nectar. All Vedas are due to my words. Deities are due to my words. Knowledge of religion is due to my words. Salvation is said to be due to my words. Purāṇas, sacred texts and the codes of law are due to my words. Therefore, take the tām̐būla and give me the good pieces.

The monkey took the tām̐būla with the nut-pieces with his

left hand. (Then) from that he took the leaves and gave the nut-pieces (to Śiva). Śiva ate the camphor after taking it when it was given.

231-235a. When the god had the tām̐būla, Pārvatī holding the hands of Jayā and Vijayā, came to the sage's house from the Mandara mountain. Then, having saluted the feet of the god, she hung down her face in modesty. Lifting her face, the three-eyed god (Śiva) said these (words): "O you most respectable lady among gods, I have offended you. I have eaten without you. So also listen to (other things), O beautiful lady. Having kept you in my abode, without god of gods, and free from all bonds, I have committed a great sin. O you great goddess, (please) forgive (me), and giving up your anger, look (at me)."

235b-237a. She, who was thus addressed, did not speak, and went out with Arundhatī. Coming to know that she was going out, the sage (Gautama) saluted her (prostrating before her) like a staff. Beginning with that a man should salute the great god (prostrating before him) like a staff and praise him. Pārvatī said (to Gautama): "O Gautama, what do you desire?"

Gautama said:

237b-238a. O goddess, I am fortunate. If a boon is to be given to me (by you then), O illustrious one, now take food in my abode.

The goddess said:

238b-243. O sage, I shall eat in your house if I am permitted by Śaṅkara.

The brāhmaṇa Gautama went to the god and securing his permission, again went (to Pārvatī). He fed goddess Pārvatī and Arundhatī also. Then Pārvatī, after having eaten and with all perfumes and ornaments went along with hundreds of maiden-followers to Śiva. Then Śaṅkara said to the goddess: "Go to Gautama's abode. After having offered my sandhyā prayer I shall again come to (Gautama's) abode." When told like this, the goddess went to Gautama's abode. All (gods and sages) desiring to offer their sandhyā prayers went out. All of them, Maheśa and others offered their sandhyā prayers on the

bank (of the river). Then Śiva facing the north and going through the nyāsa muttered the prayers.

244-247a. Then Viṣṇu, of a great lustre, said these (words) to Śiva: “Which (prayer) will you, who are saluted by all, are worshipped by all, invoked in all sacrifices, mutter? All, having folded their palms so as to form a hollow, wait upon you only. To whom have you, O lord of gods, folded your palms (in obeisance)? O great god, you are the giver of the fruit of such religious acts as salutation. Tell (me) who gives you fruit, who is saluted by you, who is superior to you.”

Śaṅkara said:

247b-254. O Viṣṇu, I am not meditating upon anyone. I am not saluting anything. O Viṣṇu, I am not waiting upon anyone. I shall not mutter any prayer here; but O Viṣṇu, I have to exhibit (like) this for leading the unbelievers to activity. Otherwise they will be sinners. Therefore, for obliging the world, I have done all this.

Saying. “Yes”, Viṣṇu then saluted him and remained (there). Then all the hosts of gods and sages reached Gautama’s house and worshipped Pinākin (i.e. the Pināka-holder), the god of gods, O best of the Raghus, the god (i.e. Śiva) remained singing with Hanūmat. At that time they all muttered the five-syllabled great lore. Śiva, seizing the hand of Hanūmat, went near the goddess (Pārvatī). The divine couple sat on the same couch. That Hanūmat remained singing. So also Tumbura and Nārada. The great lord indulged into many kinds of sports. Calling Pārvatī, the lord said these words to her:

Śrī Sadāśiva said:

255-259a. I shall arrange your braid. O auspicious one, come before me.

The goddess said: “It is not proper for the husband to serve his wife. When my hair is dressed by you, another calamity may befall. O god, all the desired facts (may) not accrue on dressing (my) hair(?). When the (hair) is tied, the cleaning of the shoulders will have to be done; so also the cleaning of (i.e. removing of)

the hair, flowers adhering to my back (will have to be done). When this takes place (i.e. when you do this), if the noble ones would come, what reply would you saluted by gods and others, have? O supreme lord, if they do not come, my fear will come to an end."

259b-264. Śaṅkara drew her who was talking like this, (near him) and putting her on his lap, untied her braid of hair, separated the hair with his hands, and spread them with his nails. He put on her hair the garland of pārijāta flowers given by Viṣṇu, tied her braid, and also put on the garland (that he had) in his hand. Taking the garland of jasmine flowers he tied her hair. The great god also put the garland of flowers given by Brahmā. He also made Pārvati put on a pair of garments having unidentifiable fragrance. Then the great lord cleaned (i.e. removed the hair etc. from) her shoulders and back. The wearing garment of the goddess, with the tie loosened, had gone down. The god, saying, "What is this?" tied the knot of the wearing garment. "I am ardently looking for your nose-ornament."

265-266. Saying so, he took a bright pearl. The pearl was bright due to its contact with turmeric. (He said to her:) "Put on this pearl dear to me and you."

Pārvati said:

267-270. O Śambhu, your abode is rich with all articles. I have already known all the articles. Oh, due to superior and other ornaments the wealth is known. Your head is decorated with string of the heads of brāhmaṇas; you also have the Naraka-string as the ornament of your chest. The poisonous Śeṣa and Vāsuki are your bracelets. The quarters are your two garments. Your matted hair is your (beautiful) hair. The sacred ash is the unguent to your body. The great bull is your vehicle; and your pedigree and your family are already known! Your parents are not known. Your body has a deformed eye.

271-277a. To Pārvati who was speaking like this, Viṣṇu who was very angry, said: "O goddess, why are you censuring the god of gods, the lord of the world? O good lady, I shall abandon my dear life. Indeed this is your lack of restraint. Our vow is to die where the censure of the god is (undertaken),

O auspicious lady.” Saying so, Viṣṇu proceeded to cut off his head with his nails. Śiva seized his hand, and said: “Do not do this rash act. All the words of (i.e. uttered by) Pārvatī are dear to me, (though) they are not dear to (i.e. liked by) you. O Viṣṇu, what is desired to be done (by you) is not liked by me.” Saying ‘Yes’ the revered Viṣṇu remained silent. Then Hanūmat respectfully said these words to the god: “I desire to carry out my vow of worship without a desire. I would (therefore) go to worship (my desired deity). Please permit me.”

Śaṅkara said:

277b-279a. Whose worship (i.e. to worship whom are you going)? Where will the worship (be done)? What flowers (will you use)? What leaves (will you use?) Tell (all that to me). Who is your preceptor? Which is the hymn (you will employ)? How will the worship (be done)?

When the god was speaking like this, Hanūmat trembled very much. With his entire body shaking, he started praising (Śiva):

Hanūmat said:

279b-286a. Salutation to the great god Śiva of an immeasurable form. Salutation to the meditating sage, the prop of abstract meditation and to the preceptor of the meditating sages. Salutation to him who is known (only) by the meditating sages, to the god, and to the lord of the wise. Salutation to you, the lord of the Vedas; salutation to you, the lord of gods. Salutation (to you who are) meditation, who are understood by meditation, to the preceptor of creators. Salutation to the wise, to one who is understood by the wise, to the lord of the earth etc. I am your servant—with these and other words salutation to the treasure of the Vedic words. Salutation to you who is to be thought of with (the utterance of such) words as ‘stretch out’. O you eight-formed¹ one, salutation to you. Salutation to the lord of beings.

1. Aṣṭamūrti—For the eight forms of Śiva, see verse 373 of this chapter.

To Tryambaka (i.e. having three eyes), to Trinetra (i.e. the three-eyed one), salutation to you having the Sun and the Moon as your eyes. Salutation to you, to whom the excellent bhṛṅga-rāja, and dhattūra and flowers of droṇa are dear, to whom big nuts, punnāga, campaka etc. are dear. Salutation to you; my repeated salutations to you.

Then Śiva said to Viśṇu: “Do not be afraid. Tell me the whole (thing).”

Hanūmat said:

286b-294. With one's body dusted with the sacred ash one should worship Śiva's Phallus with flowers procured by day, and even now remaining (fresh) like that. O god, I shall respectfully narrate to you the auspicious rite of Śiva's worship. When evening has come, a man should bathe without (making) his head (wet). Then the most wise man should put on a washed garment and sip water twice. Then having taken sacred ash he should bathe in honour of Agni. Then muttering (a hymn) with Om eight times, or with the five-syllabled hymn or with any other name, he, with darbhas in his hand, should collect the sacred ash consecrated seven times. Saying '*Īśānaḥ sarva-vidyānām*' he should drop the ash on his head. He should sprinkle (i.e. apply) the ash over his face by saying '*Tat puruṣāya vidmahe*'. He should put on (i.e. apply to) his chest the sacred ash (after saying:) '*Aghorebhyaḥ atha ghorebhyaḥ*.' He should apply it to the private parts (of his body) saying '*Vāma-devāya namaḥ*.' He should throw on (i.e. apply to) his feet the sacred ash after saying '*Sadyojātam prapadyāmi*.' The wise one should dust his entire body with the sacred ash, with the utterance of *Om*. The excellent rite of bathing etc. is prescribed for the (first) three castes. I shall tell (you) about the rite for the śūdras and others as told by (my) preceptor.

295-304. Uttering the word *Śiva* the wise one should consecrate the sacred ash. Taking it seven times, he should put it on (i.e. apply it to) his head, (uttering:) '*To Śiva*'. It is said that (he should put the sacred ash) into his mouth (after uttering

the word *Śaṅkarāya* (i.e. to Śankara). He should put it on his chest after saying 'To the omniscient one'. Uttering the words *Salutation to Sthāṇu* (he should apply the sacred ash) to the private parts (of his body). Saying 'to Svayambhū' he should apply it to his feet. Then the sacred ash is purer. It is said that the entire body should be dusted with the sacred ash after uttering *Namaḥ Śivāya*. (Then) he should, having washed his hands and having sipped water, be composed. In the absence of darbhas gold should be (used). In its absence cow's hair (should be used). In its absence dūrvā-grass should be (used). In its absence silver should be used. Having offered the sandhyā prayer and having muttered (the names) of the goddess, he should go to the temple of the deity. The altar for the deity or a raised platform for the deity should be pure and made of clay. It should have the arrangements of lotuses etc. on it. It should be painted with four colours or with white colour only. (Then he should arrange) beautiful lotuses, Svastika-figures, blue lotuses etc., a mace, a conch, a trident and so also a drum; the five shrines as told by Śiva, so also the Phallus of Śiva, the tree yielding all fruits, kulaka, kolaka; it should have six angles, three angles or even nine angles. The swing should have twelve angles, so also wooden sandals and fans (should be kept).

305-309. The intelligent man should also fashion with powders (the images of) Viṣṇu, Brahmā etc. on the altar; or the wise one should arrange these where the worship of the deity would take place. The best (materials of worship are those) that are fashioned by his own hands. The mediocre are those that are purchased. Lowest are those that are begged; and the meanest are those that are (secured) forcibly. Whatever is secured with force, whether proper or improper, is fruitless. He should do everything properly, with red rice, japā flowers, kalamā rice, white or red rice, or ears just coming out from the paddy plants, according to the proper order, and with placing lotuses etc. which are said to be the best, the mediocre and the lowest. He should face the north or the east.

310-316. I shall tell (you) about the seat as I have seen it or heard about it. It should be made of silk, hide, which are like cloth, wooden or of palm-leaves; or of wool, gold, silver, and

copper or made of dry (cakes of) cowdung. He should make the seat (also) of the hide of tiger, ruru deer, antelope or deer. (Thus the seat) made of hide should be known to be of four kinds; so also it should be of bandhujiva (a kind of tree) as (anyone of of these) is available. He should sit in the padmāsana posture, or in the svastika posture. He should be seated with darbhas and with the sacred ash (applied to his body); he should control his breath and his speech. He till then is of the form of the deity. In the end he should practise meditation. He should meditate upon Śiva of a subtle body remaining at the end of the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (and of the measure of) twelve fingers, (Śiva) moving within (the bodies of) beings, in the cave (of the heart) and in all forms. (He should meditate upon Śiva) who is having all ornaments, who is endowed with qualities like (being) small. He should keep him in his heart; he should fill his (own) body by means of his parvasion.

317-322. Due to that brilliance the sin in the body perishes as gold becomes crimson or white due to its contact with mercury. Having fashioned the pure seat covered with twelve leaves (or eight or three leaves), he should place the Phallus there. Then he should think of Śiva remaining in the cave (of the heart as placed) in the Phallus. Into the pitcher that is cleaned, he should put water which is cleaned, perfumed with fragrances and containing fragrant flowers, and which is consecrated with (the sacred syllable) *Om*. Restraining the breath and (the utterance of) *Om* are not prescribed in the case of śūdras. In place of the restraint of the breath (they should have) meditation and (in place of) consecration with *Om*, (they should utter the word) *Śiva*. He should place near him the materials of worship like sandal, sacred rice-grains etc.; and then he will make a solemn vow: 'To please Śiva only, I shall worship Śiva.'

323-328. Having made a solemn vow like this, he should then invoke (the deity) etc., till (the deity is given) a bath. Then he should give bath (to the deity) with the hymn *Namaste* etc. and according to the rite of the Śatarudriya. A stream (of water) that is unbroken is called *muktidhārā*. He who bathes the deity with that (i.e. *muktidhārā*) for a month, while muttering (the names of) Rudra in a low voice, once, thrice, five times, seven or nine times or eleven times (is meritorious). This (bath) should

be known as *muktisnāna*; (when continued) for a month, it gives salvation. The bath (should be given) with (the accompaniment) of the Śaiva lore (i.e. hymn) or merely with (the utterance of) *Om*; or with clay pot and pieces of coconuts, with bell-metal, pearls, or string of flowers. Thus he should bathe the lord with materials as told and as are available.

329-343a. I shall tell (you about) the rite of the horn, and about how it would be fit for the bath (to be given with). Having cleansed it before and after, he should make a very glossy and small peg, and should cut it somehow. With (water from) the bucket placed at a low region near the door and with darbhas he should bathe the deity. Thus is said to be the water-form of the gavaya-horn. At the door having joints, he should fashion a staff, bent and of the shape of a peg; at the place of the plank he should fashion a goblet having even number of holes with a staff. There only he should cause to fall (the water) remaining in the pitcher (placed in) a machine above. He should make it fall with the other (i.e. the right) or with just the left hand. He is said to have put the muktidhārā. It is pure and destroys sins. Having thus installed the (representation of) the lord of gods, he should bathe it with the five products of a cow or with five sweet things, or with three sweet things.¹ Having adorned the deity with decorations and having again bathed the great lord, he should offer cold (water etc.). (Then) he should bring a piece of cloth, a sacred thread, pañcagandha, camphor, agaru (sandal), or (ordinary) sandal. Or both should be mixed. (Then) he should worship Śiva's Phallus. The entire seat may be full (i.e. fully made) of sandal, or according to his real wealth. The worship (should be offered) silently; he should offer seasonal flowers, like śripatra, sarala, according to his capacity, and unbroken. The incense of many materials, or similarly guggula (a fragrant resin) only along with ghee (made from the milk) of a cow are recommended for a full incense. He should offer incense according to his capacity, so also lamps burning with the ghee (made from the milk) of a cow, or he should offer lamps burning merely with ghee, and other offerings. He should offer flowers procured according to his

1. Pañcāmṛta—The collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

capacity. Then he should respectfully offer (water for) washing the mouth and tām̐būla. He should go round and salute (the deity). Thus the worship is accomplished. Then the five constituents of singing (should be gone through).

343b-347. They are: Songs, instrumental music, (recital of) a Purāṇa, dancing and mirthful talk. He should also wave the light (before the deity), offer a cavity-ful of flowers and everything. He should apologise to the deity, then dismiss the deity; this is said to be an upacāra¹. Similarly, ornaments, umbrellas, chowries, fans, Śiva's sacred thread and service to him are said to be six upacāras. He who would worship Śiva with thirtytwo upacāras in a day, will certainly have all his sins destroyed. The worship with thirtytwo upacāras is the best.

Sadāśiva said:

348-349a. O best among the monkeys, it is like this. I shall tell you about the worship. The couple of my feet are fit to be worshipped. Be the worshipper of all. Having thus propitiated the Phallus, you propitiate me.

Hanūmat said:

349b-354. My preceptor has certainly enjoined on me the Phallus-worship only. O god, I shall do it first; then I shall worship your feet.

Having just spoken like this, he saluted the lord, and became (engaged) in the worship of Śiva's Phallus. He should go to (i.e. he went to) the bank of a lake and having made a sandy altar, should arrange a seat made of palm-leaves. Having washed his hands and feet, and having sipped water, he became composed. He bathed with (i.e. applied) sacred ash; and again having sipped water, he controlled his speech. On the altar for the deity he put lotuses; then the monkey who had taken the posture called padmāsana, made a very beautiful (seat) of the palm-leaves. Having, along with the nyāsas, restrained his breath, he, endowed with pure meditation, saluted the great god and muttered (his names) thereafter.

355-362a. Then he also made an effort to worship the god.

1. Upacāra=service; worship; act of worship; article of worship.

He brought pure water in a couple of the hollows of palāśa-leaves. Placing the fire, to the accompaniment of three hymns, which was in the pitcher on the head, he made invocation etc. up to the bath only. Then he took (the representation of) the god in the hollow made by the palms of his hands to bathe him. Having observed, the monkey did not see the god and the seat. Seeing only the Phallus in his hand, he was full of fear. The great meditating sage said (thought) this: 'What sin have I committed so that (only) this Śiva-Phallus without the seat remains in my hand? I shall certainly die today if the seat does not come (back). I shall mutter the Rudra(-hymn); then the great god will come.' Thus having resolved in his mind, he muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn). Even then the great god did not come (there). Then the lord of the monkeys dropped Rudra on the ground. Virabhadra came (there). "O devotee, why do you weep? Tell me the cause of your weeping."

Hanūmat said:

362b. This Phallus is without the seat. See the heap of my sins.

Virabhadra said:

363-367. If the seat does not come to the Phallus, do not do a rash act. I shall burn the world if the seat does not come (back). See and show me the Phallus. (Let me see,) if Virabhadra saw the Phallus and (noted that) the seat had not come back, he desired to burn all the worlds.

He threw fire on the ground; in a moment the earth burnt at that time. Then he burnt the seven nether worlds, and again set out to lift them. He burnt the five upper worlds, the abodes of the people. Taking (out) with his nail the citron-like fire produced in his eye on his forehead, the lord put it on the palm of his hand.

368-375. If the seat would not come, then certainly the worlds are burnt. The brave Virabhadra knew (that the seat) did not come (back). The noble ones like Sanaka, having come to know (about this incident) through deep meditation, came (there). The brāhmaṇas came to the excellent hermitage of Gautama, but did not see the origin of gods (i.e. Śiva) though

he was there. They praised (him) with eulogies from all the Vedas: 'Salutation to that god of gods; salutation to that (god of) pure lustre and inconceivable form. Salutation to the lord of gods; salutation to the pure one concealed by the Vedas. Salutation to Śiva, the first god; salutation to (Śiva) having a snake as his sacred thread. Salutation to him who supports everything with the drops of the three (Vedas)—the heap of the joy of the gods. Our repeated salutation to that Śaṅkara whose eight forms are: earth, air, ether, water, moon, fire, sun and soul also, and who is known (only) through knowledge.' Having heard this praise, Śiva, who had given (back) to Bhaga his eyes, said to Viṣṇu: "Go and bring here those brāhmaṇas." They were brought there by Viṣṇu. They bowed before the god. Śaṅkara spoke (these) words to them: "Why have you come (here)?"

The sages said:

376. O god, heaps of the ashes of the twelve worlds (burnt by Virabhadra) are seen. This forest alone remains. (Please) note the destruction of the worlds.

Sadāśiva said:

377. We have a doubt about the burning of the five worlds that are above (the earth). How is there the shower of (burning) charcoals? Or how (i.e. due to what) is the great sound?

The sages said:

378-388. Now we have fear from Virabhadra. He alone, like one desirous to drink, has dropped the shower of charcoals.

Then the god called Virabhadra and said to him: "O Vira, what is (this)?" Vira (said:) "This was done due to the loss of the seat of the Śiva-Phallus of Hanūmat. To know the heart of the monkey, I did this great (deed)." Then the god, treasure of kindness, made (everything) as before. The supreme lord made all the worlds burnt (by Virabhadra) as beautiful as before. Then the universal soul (i.e. Śiva) said to Virabhadra; Śiva embraced him, smelt him on the head and gave him a tām̐būla. Then Hanūmat performed the worship of the lord. He then said to a gandharva

having a lute and wandering in the forest, these (words:) “Give the lute to me.” (The gandharva said:) “I shall not part with my lute. It is (dear to me) like my (own) life.” The lord of the monkeys said: “The lute is (dear to me) like my own life.” Then when by the stroke of his fist the gandharva fell down, he took the great lute endowed with notes and strings, and made it joined with a bottle-gourd resembling the form of a royal tree. Putting it on his chest, he came singing in the vicinity of Śiva. He worshipped the feet of the god with pure flowers of bṛhatī. Then the lord gave him a boon and (a span of) life till (the end of) the kalpa. He also gave him another (boon)—capacity to cross the ocean.

389-395a. He with his body well adorned with all decorations, having lessened the brightness of the gods with his own brilliance, of a pleasing form and an auspicious body, honoured all gods. The great god (i.e. Śiva) took a yellow pair of washed garments (and said to Viṣṇu): “O god Viṣṇu, you take this auspicious (pair).” The giver of wealth gave a red garment to Brahmā, and gave a good pair to (each of) all the gods, sages, demons etc. Rāma too, hearing this, offered a pair to Śambhu, so also a very subtle, very costly golden ornament. Then Rāghava, seated comfortably with his ministers and family-priest, also with hosts of many sages, kings and monkeys, after having eaten (food), on the bank of Gautamī, said to Śambhu who knew the essential nature of the Purāṇas: “You alone know the hundred secrets of all the ways of life. O brāhmaṇa, tell me what is the peculiarity of which yuga.”

Śambhu said:

395b-401. In Kṛta (yuga) meditation alone is the best. In Tretā (yuga) sacrifice alone (is the best). In Dvāpara (yuga) worship (is the best). In Kali (yuga) charity, a recital of Viṣṇu’s name (are the best). Everything is recommended everywhere, but not meditation in Kaliyuga. Due to the minds of men being in difficulty, being deluded, O lord, they do not have a firm mind in religious rites, in the Vedas and in the codes of law (smṛti). So also in sacrifice, in the exclamation of Svadhā (made at the time of offering oblation to a deity), and in listening to the Purāṇas. So also (they do not have a firm mind) in sacrifices,

sacred places and serving the gods; in offering sacrifices to deities, in the duties of their own castes, in remembering god: nowhere (have they a firm mind) in Kaliyuga. Therefore, men are incapable of having religious merit lasting for a long time. Due to the time being short a man is capable of giving (gifts). Therefore, for those who are polluted by Kali, there is no expiation. The destruction of the sins of some takes place due to expiations, not in any other way.

402-411a. All these—one who knows Brahman, one who performs the śrāddha ceremony at Gayā, one who goes to Kāśī—are inferior to him who knows the Purāṇas; so also the listener of a Purāṇa (is inferior to him), O Rāma. The brāhmaṇa who expounds a Purāṇa is superior, due to his explaining the meaning according to yugas, due to his convincing himself and others, and due to his illumining Brahman (or the Vedas). Even the sin committed by him would not stick. Then what about (sin) from another (source)? The Purāṇa would destroy certain other sins. There is no doubt that all the sins of him who believes in the Purāṇas, looks upon the speaker (of the Purāṇas) as his teacher, and upon the giver of the lore of Brahman (or Vedas) as superior to his kinsmen and relatives, perish. The worshipper of the great lord should go to Śrīśaila; the Purāṇa destroys the sin of men in Kaliyuga. O Rāma, I shall tell you an account (that) formerly (took place) in Kaliyuga. Listen to it. There was a brāhmaṇa named Gautama who was destitute of the Vedas. He had two brothers Puṣṭi and Paśu who (also) were destitute of the Vedas. With them (i.e. with their help) he did husbandry, and obtained prosperity. He also gave some wealth and grains to the king. Once he said a few words to the king: “Give me (some) authority. I shall not lose wealth. The two brothers of mine are capable.”

The king said:

411b-412a. A brāhmaṇa is qualified for the religious rites as told by the Vedas. The brāhmaṇahood of a brāhmaṇa employed at any other (job) than that perishes.

Gautama said:

412b-415. This is a way of life (followed) in other yugas.

The way of life in Kaliyuga is not like that. O king, behaving like a king is said to be the duty of kings. A brāhmaṇa who is extremely emaciated, is not at a fault if he practises it. Agriculture is the duty of śūdras. A brāhmaṇa is not to pursue it (even) in a calamity. Therefore, I shall live as a kṣatriya; grant me (a few) villages. I like to live as a kṣatriya at other place than this. (I do) not like anything else.

(The king) said, “All right”, and gave (a few) villages to the brāhmaṇa.

416-421a. He, the wicked official of the villages, behaved differently. He ate flesh, he drank liquor, he uttered bad words; similarly he approached others’ wives; he snatched away the wealth of others; he indulged in gambling; and he, the eater of bad things, ate the flesh of an animal struck with a poisoned weapon. He did not worship the lord of the worlds—Śiva or Viṣṇu. The king, after some time, spoke (to the brāhmaṇa) who behaved badly like this: “O brāhmaṇa, having given up brāhmaṇahood, you have secured śūdrahood (i.e. have become a śūdra). Therefore, I shall dismiss you by my order.” “I do not want brāhmaṇahood. The condition of a śūdra is better for me. Without that, even if they are brāhmaṇas, they do not enjoy. Therefore, śūdrahood is better for me. O lord of the earth, I am not able to give up all this.”

Śambhu said:

421b-423. When the bad brāhmaṇa spoke like this, the king remained silent. He, equal to a śūdra, ate food with flesh. Once that man of bad behaviour remained in a pavilion on the street. He heard this verse being recited by a brāhmaṇa; and the verse recited by the brāhmaṇa remained in his heart:

424-426. “Those who are greatly devoted to Viṣṇu go to a place higher than the highest. Those who hate the great lord (i.e. Śiva) will not go there.” Also on hearing the explanation he said to the public reader of the Purāṇas: “Of what kind is said to be Nārāyaṇa? And how is Maheśvara? What is said to be the great path? How is hatred explained? What is that known to be the highest? What is higher than that?”

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

427-429. That highest is Brahmā's place, whose only characteristic is the manifestation of happiness. Higher than that is Viṣṇu's abode. It is superior to that of Brahmā. That highest place is described as having (the quality of) indestructibility. In it the (supreme) man is Viṣṇu. The lord, O lord, dear one, is the highest. Water, due to the (supreme) man being born in it is called Nara. Nara (i.e. water) is his abode; therefore, he is declared as Nārāyaṇa.

430-431. Those who have a devotion to him are said to be tatparāyaṇa (i.e. devoted to him). He who is the controller of the principles like mahat etc., and whose eyes are the sun, fire, and the moon, and who is the lord of Umā would be (i.e. is) the great god (Śiva). Hatred should be known to be the enmity towards the lord, the highest soul.

Śambhu said:

432-441. In this way the brāhmaṇa who read the Purāṇa, uttered these words. Thinking (about it) he again said: "What would be the fate of (a person) like me?" Then the public reader of the Purāṇas said to him: "Listen, I shall tell (you) about your fate. With all efforts duly take an expiation. Practise religious merit according to your capacity at the proper time and according to the proper rules. Being free from sins, you will then reach an excellent condition. Or being attentive, listen to a Purāṇa every day. Or free from hopes, worship the great god, the trident-holder (Śiva), or Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), the god whose eyes are like lotuses and who destroys suffering. Or take to renunciation for good. Be devoted to the knowledge of Brahman. Or go to the lord of Kāśī, and obtain death for securing salvation. Or go to Gayā, and try to offer a śrāddha there. Or mutter every day with respect the Rudra(-hymn); pleasing Rudra, the essence of all the Vedas, and the destroyer of sins. Or go to Śrīśaila, or to Kedāra, if you please. Or practise bath in Māgha every year. What is the use of talking too much in this matter. Always be devoted to piety. (If you do) like this, you will not live in hell, O you mean brāhmaṇa."

Gautama said:

On hearing the Purāṇa from your mouth, I shall do all (this). Also tell me the sacred precepts, the cause of faith and the taboos.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

442-448a. (These are) prohibited: flesh, liquor, enjoying another's wife, gambling, boasting, harshness, falsehood, deceit, censure of god of gods, reviling preceptors, seniors, gods and expounders of Purāṇas and codes of laws, white egg-plant, living on bottle-gourd, citron, safflower, the rice called lohita, lotus, awl, coconut, pumpkin gourd, kovidāra fruit, cooked oil, human milk, so also milk of a rhinoceros, of a female donkey, the milk of a woman recently delivered, so also of a female goat, of a camel, of a one-hoofed animal, of a deer, sheep and of human beings, so also the milk of a calf-less cow and of one that is in heat, salt that is touched, the juice of coconut in a bell-metal vessel or in a copper vessel, honey in a lead vessel; he should never have butter-milk in a glass-vessel or have flour mixed with curds, smeared with ghee. A burnt offering or a cake offered as an oblation shines in a clay-vessel.

448b-453a. A wise man, desiring auspiciousness, should not serve a stranger in (this) world. The smearing of the inside of a vessel with a powder, or eating therefrom (is prohibited). Similarly eating betel-nut, and crushed (betel-)leaves (is prohibited). The eating of ripe betal-nut brings about a union with worms. So also salt added to milk merely with the hand (is prohibited). In (countries like) Sindhu, Saurāṣṭra, Kamboja, Magadha and Simhala milk accompanied by salt does not lead to a sin. In other countries all (kinds of) milk and salts lead to sin. There is a doubt here in case of drinking. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Good men should avoid what is censurable.

Śambhu said:

453b-464. Having heard these words of the magnanimous brāhmaṇa, he went to his own house, and being afflicted thought: 'Even a great man does not know whether death would

come at night or by day. In the other world there may be happiness or unhappiness. In this world there are pleasures and entertainments. The pleasures and pains of the worms and insects and of human beings etc. are separate for each being. The difference in purpose also is well-determined. Even for one being the condition is not of one kind (only). At the time of birth there is great ignorance. In infancy there is very little knowledge; when the steps stumble (i.e. in early childhood there is little understanding; it is also very little in childhood. In adolescence there is interest in sport; in youth there is a longing for carnal pleasures. When youth has passed there is the desire to secure wealth. In old age there is a desire for enjoyment, but (the old man) is not capable of enjoyment. He suffers from rheum of the eyes, phlegm, saliva, folds, greyness and trembling; the senses are overpowered by asthma, wind, and are defective. He is not able to hold anything, nor does he know anything. He would show (i.e. he shows) his private parts when wives of others are there. He is engaged in scratching his testicles, and is cruel due to the nature of living. He raises his garment, moves his buttocks, and scratches them. Eating (i.e. trying to eat) the mouthful he is not able (to do so) due to phlegm. When there is cough there is wind passing from the anus with a sound. So also the feces come out, and phlegm also comes out. He is rebuked by his daughters-in-law etc. and children laugh with clapping.

465-471. Having given a thought to the going out of the elders he was repeatedly invited for food etc. Having censured the eatables, food etc. and having for a long time condemned the hot (food) he again thought: 'I am a man who has done very bad deeds. How shall I eat? How shall I sleep? How shall I stand? How shall I go? How can I reach the other world (i.e. heaven)?' He was thus always worried. He, not having a thought for the highest one, did not bow down. O Rāma, he went to the house of a brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Purāṇas. With his face bent down through shame, he said: "What (should) I do (now)?" At that time the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, said nothing; knowing that he was a sinner he drove him away through his disciples. Gautama too, going out,

remained outside the house, at the door. To him who was (first) seated on the ground and who somehow reached the brāhmaṇa pondering over the meaning of the Purāṇas, a seat was offered (by the Paurāṇika). He did not occupy it. O Rāma, seated on the ground, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "I shall go through an expiation. Let it be done here only."

The brāhmaṇa said:

472-474a. Narrate fully the sins committed by you.

He too, saying, "I have done no sin", wept, and being extremely afflicted fell on the ground, saying, "how, O dear one, (can I save myself)?" The brāhmaṇa then said to him: "There is no expiation if a major sin is committed three times."

Gautama said:

474b-475a. O noble reader of the Purāṇas, how am I sinful even when I have come to you? If I am sinful even now, then the company of an excellent brāhmaṇa (like you) would be fruitless.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

475b-478. In the decision about the expiations of all sacred precepts are the (only) authority. If one would say anything about it then that would not be an expiation. (The expiation) is said to be gone through once, if (the sin) is committed once. For the second (sin) it would be double. For the third (sin) it is said to be triple, and for the fourth (sin) there is no atonement. You have committed many sins. Even the fourth one you have committed deliberately. How am I able to tell an expiation to (a person) like you?

Gautama too said again: "Where should I go now?"

479-487. O Rāma, the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, remained quiet. Gautama too went to the great Śrī-śaila. Then, having bathed in the river, and having seen the lord Mallikārjuna, and having observed three fasts (i.e. having fasted for three days), he had Śivarātri (i.e. it was the day of Śivarātri). He who was very much grieved, observed the fourth

fast; he also broke his fast by (eating) fruits and barks of trees on the new-moon day. Then the brāhmaṇa went round Śrī-śaila, keeping it to his right. He, extremely emaciated due to worry and heaving, then went to the temple. 'How will I, remaining silent, accomplish freedom from sins? Which is my very great, infinite sin that is inconceivable? (Even) having heard (about my sins) nobody would say to me—Go through an expiation. But on hearing some Purāṇa, it will be known.' Thinking like this, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "O dear one, may the revered one expound one Purāṇa to me. Quickly make me go through the sacraments like the one performed at the time of birth; I shall listen to the Purāṇa after becoming a twice-born; thereafter, I (shall) go through an expiation. If a Purāṇa is narrated to me, it will be helpful to me. So I determining the meaning of the Purāṇa shall do (whatever) is possible."

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

488-489a. I shall duly narrate the Purāṇa destroying sins to you, according to my knowledge (of it), according to my capacity, as uprightly as possible and according to the proper rules. Which Purāṇa do you desire (to hear)? I shall narrate that only.

Gautama said:

489b-490a. Tell me which Purāṇa should be said to be liked by all, and hearing which there would be no difference felt between Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

490b-494. That Purāṇa which is called Kaurma is said to be telling about the non-difference between the two gods. The sin of him who listens to it first, perishes. There would be no danger for him who would be its reader. If a sinner desires to hear it, his wife perishes; moreover, one difficult thing I shall tell (you) and that is the absence of the censure of the listener and the speaker. If the listener has love for the expounder, it becomes manifest through the merit only. When meritorious behaviour which shows (the path to) salvation, is noticed, then the great

god (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and Viṣṇu gives the desired fruits. He has emancipated his dead ancestors. They obtain the highest state.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Reciting and Listening to Purāṇas Is Meritorious

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, how did (the brāhmaṇa) knowing the Purāṇa explain it to the mean brāhmaṇa to whom heaps of sins had come?

Śambhu said:

2-7. Union takes place in teaching and learning. When they go together, O Rāma, in a year the sin of a sinner goes away. O you descendant of Kakutstha, when the knower (i.e. the reader) of a Purāṇa knows all the essential things, then even repeated heap of sins perishes, as the heap (i.e. column) of smoke perishes when a large fire perishes. A moth is capable of destroying a lamp, (but) not (capable of) destroying fire. As one who frees the mortals seized with the fear of ghosts etc., so a public reader of Purāṇas destroys the sin committed by others. One who knows a spell would send away (the ghost etc.), and not he who is afflicted. Similarly, a public reader of Purāṇas does not receive any sin. One who knows Purāṇas, destroys the sin committed by himself or by others, and even (the fruit of) a very wicked sin.

8-11. One who has discrimination looks equally upon (Śiva) the lord of Pārvatī and upon Viṣṇu. He knows the acts of the world and those that are told in the Vedas; he mutters the Rudra(-hymn); he is very desireless. He is contented; he is calm; he is diligent in work; he is mature; he practises abstract meditation; and is controlled, as your reader of Purāṇas—the

revered sage Vasiṣṭha—is, who has remained by your command in Ayodhyā and has protected the entire earth. The demon rushed to you. At the advice of Śukra the demon came to (attack) you. (He thought:) ‘I shall kill him when he is asleep. Otherwise there is no chance.’

12-16. Then the brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha, to whom your well-being was dear, knowing this (thought:) ‘There is no doubt that the demon will kill Rāma who is asleep and unaware. The demon has obtained a boon from Brahmā. I have to keep him off’. Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa sage took the army and went out. The sage was unable to kill the demon who was immune to death. Then the great sage himself became a demon and said (these) words: “Why have you come to this forest resorted to by sages?” He said: “The king (i.e. Rāma) kills the demons. I have come to kill him.” The sage said: “What have you to do with him, alive or dead? Having eaten my flesh, and having fought with me, go (back).”

The demon said:

17-20a. How can you, a demon, be fit for my food?

Then Vasiṣṭha too, becoming a human being, stood in the sky (i.e. air). He spat on his head and struck him with his fist. He struck the demon. The sage made him flee. The two running (after each other) went to the ocean. At that time, the demon was seized by a crocodile living there. The sage was in Ayodhyā as before.

Śambhu said:

20b-22. Therefore, he who knows a Purāṇa, should do what is agreeable to him. I shall tell you the auspicious manner of listening (to a Purāṇa). On a holy day in the bright half (of a month), when the day and constellation are in union, when there is the (proper) Karaṇa, an auspicious moment, when there is the strength of the planets and stars, when old Jupiter remains with a young, wise Planet (a Purāṇa should be heard).

23-25a. (It should not be heard) in a dark fortnight, on an eclipse-day, or in the vicinity of an atheist. A man should listen to a Purāṇa having the characteristics as stated before.

(He should listen to it) in a pure house, or on a pure altar, or in a place of learning, on the bank of a river, in a temple, in an assembly hall, in a beautiful monastery on the road, or in auspicious halls, O Rāma.

25b-30a. Having himself saluted the best brāhmaṇas, and especially him who knows the Purāṇa, a man should fashion a seat above (all other seats) and superior to all (other seats). He should gently say (to the reader of the Purāṇa): "Come to (this) religious seat." He should declare what is to be done on the day of the commencement of (the recital of) the Purāṇa. Having given the expounder of the Purāṇa auspicious, fine, new garments and ornaments for his hands, neck etc., so also a proper seat, he should honour him with garments etc. After having worshipped Viṣṇu having the complexion like that of the moon and having four hands, and having put on a white garment, with sandal, flowers and sacred grains, and having offered him a tām̐būla, he should, for the removal of all difficulties, reflect upon him, of a pleasing face.

30b-34. Having honoured the members of the assembly, he should then pray to Gaṇeśa. He should worship him with the hymn: *Om namaḥ* etc. (Then should follow) the eulogy of Sarasvatī. The commencement (of the recital) of the Purāṇa should be done in the morning. O Rāma, on the day of commencement three, five or ten auspicious verses (should be read). Double this number (should be read) on the second day. O Rāma, (the reading of) more verses than on the second day is prescribed for the third day. The narration and the hearing should go on without a break on all days. When (proper) arrangement is made, he should give the preceptor, the reader of the Purāṇa, tām̐būla etc. and should also listen to it on the next day.

35-39. The scripture says that every day Purāṇa should be listened to. If a man listens to the Purāṇa as a vow, he undoubtedly goes to that place wherefrom the Purāṇa (has come). There is no doubt that the sin committed on the day would perish, if he who desires to listen to (the recital of) the Purāṇa, has heard even one verse. He who would listen to the Purāṇa like this, would be free from the bond of the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder; so also from (sins due to) drinking liquor, snatching

gold, and the sin due to (enjoying) his teacher's wife. So also all the other sins which are committed and were formerly committed by men (perish). So also sins committed by the listener and the speaker in this world (perish).

40-49a. In Kaliyuga all brāhmaṇas do not know all things. Therefore, even if the narration is faulty, it gives fruit like the act of charity. Vyāsa, and none else, understood the import of the Purāṇas. I know it especially more than even Vyāsa or even Brahmā. In Kaliyuga, self-study, penance, hymns or oblation do not become so fruitful as listening to Purāṇa (is fruitful). There is no doubt that by listening to each Purāṇa even great sin perishes, as by living on Śrīśaila. Therefore, the knower of Purāṇa is the preceptor. He is venerable to the listeners and destroys (their) sins. There is no preceptor superior to him who would give the highest position. Those preceptors who are regarded as knowers of the hymns and Vedas, are not capable of giving all knowledge. Therefore, they are not teachers. O Rāma, generally goblins who are the ghosts of brāhmaṇas know the Vedic hymns, and not ones who know the Purāṇas. All who are averse to Purāṇas do not see (i.e. know) everything. Therefore, one who knows Purāṇas is a master who destroys sins. His worship is the worship of all. Troubling him is offending all. As among all gifts, gift of knowledge is praised, in the same way the public reader of Purāṇas is blessed; and giving a gift to him gives great fruit.

Rāma said:

49b-50a. What should be given to the public reader of Purāṇas? How much (should be given)? In what way (should it be given)? What kind of Purāṇa should be avoided? What kind of the reader of Purāṇas should be avoided?

Śambhu said:

50b-54a. O Rāma, a man should cause to give (i.e. should give) (the eatables having) the six flavours, food, drinks, oily substances, a house with furniture. All these are sufficient. (If) more (are given) greater fruit (is had). He should also give much wealth, a soft, decorated garment, ornaments of proper value.

(These) he should give according to his capacity. Every day he should give sandal, flowers, or only sandal, or merely a flower, and seasonal fruits also. Similarly he should give him a tām̐būla, and salute him devoutly.

54b-58. At the close (of the reading session) of the Purāṇa, he should give gifts etc. O king, more (things) like land, gold etc. should also be given. Nobody remaining silent (i.e. not giving anything) should listen (to the Purāṇa). The worship (should be) done by the members of the assembly or by one only. At a temple worship should be done by all according to their capacity. O Rāma, a man should honour the knower of Purāṇas at a sacred place. O king, I have already told you the characteristics of a listener. I shall now tell you about the characteristics of a public reader of Purāṇas.

59-60. (A public reader of Purāṇas having the characteristics mentioned below should be avoided :) A man without a family (i.e. one not born in a noble family), a man having a great (i.e. an incurable) disease, a great sinner, a man who is condemned, a man without pure conduct, a man without (i.e. not versed in) Vedas and codes of laws. Also, a man having (i.e. a devotee of) another god, a man having a stinking speech, a defective man or a man having an additional limb, a man who has married a woman having a husband, a thief, one who harms beings and one who is condemned.

61-64. O best king, now I shall tell you about the Purāṇa that should be avoided. (The reader) should recite that Purāṇa which is narrated by the ancient wise ones, or one which is narrated by the great sages, or which the sages like Vyāsa have narrated. He should read the text of the Purāṇa, and should explain it after (properly) thinking over it in any language (like) a regional language, O Rāma. A man would not get the (desired) fruit by listening to a text in the regional language. Whatever the explanation, it is good for the Purāṇa. Therefore, O lord, ask for the Purāṇa which I shall (i.e. should) expound.

Śambhu said:

65-68a. Thus spoke the public reader of the Purāṇa. Gautama also listened to it. He himself gave three garments to

the noble brāhmaṇa. It is learnt by us that he first listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa. He gave the (reader) more gold and bright garments. Then he listened to Laiṅga (Purāṇa), then to Vaiṣṇava and Vāmana also. So also to Pādma, Gāruḍa, and Saura, and Brāhma as well. Thus that Gautama listened to eight Purāṇas.

68b-73. Then he listened to Rāmāyaṇa, and also to Kaurma again. He always muttered the hymn *Śiva Nārāyaṇa*. He died, and went to Brahmā's place. Brahmā honoured that brāhmaṇa who then went to Viṣṇu's heaven. Being honoured by Viṣṇu, he then went to Śiva's abode. That best sage Gautama was honoured by all. I have also narrated the rules for listening to Bhārata. Formerly Vyāsa composed that auspicious book in three years. By listening to it (a man gets religious merit). He who expounds Bhārata should not salute any brāhmaṇa except an excellent meditating sage. He who expounds Bhārata should be honoured by all.

74-77. That brāhmaṇa who every day expounds or would read Mahābhārata, is superior to all, and would emancipate all men. He who expounds one parvan or all parvans or some parvans, becomes free from all sins, and is distinguished in the offering to gods and deceased ancestors. A man should salute that brāhmaṇa only; he should honour that worthy brāhmaṇa only; he should always feed him only; he should offer everything to him. The manner of honouring him at the time of exposition (is:). He should be honoured with garments etc. and a man should honour him according to the rules.

78-81. At the conclusion (of the recital) of Ādiparvan, (a man) should give (the reader) three garments, so also gold according to his capacity. At (the conclusion of the recital of) Sabhāparvan, a pair of garments (should be given). At the conclusion of the recital of Ānuśāsika, Āraṇya and Svargāroha, the same (kind of) honour should be done (to the reader) as is done at the time (of the conclusion of the recital) of the Ādiparvan, O best among men. At (the conclusion of the recital of the) Karṇa, Aśvamedha, Virāṭa, Śalya and Droṇa parvans, three fine, pure garments should be given, or a couple of niṣkas. At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) other small parvans, he should bring (and give to the reader) two niṣkas.

At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) Harivaṁśa, he should give the reader three garments with a niṣka.

82-84a. He should give (the reader a piece of) land at the time of the conclusion (of the recital) of the entire Bhārata. A man should worship the reader at the conclusion of the recital of every kāṇḍa, when Rāmāyaṇa is listened to. He should cause to give (i.e. should give) enough land or even gold. The words of the speaker, i.e. the preceptor destroy all sins. O best king, (they lead to) material welfare, religious merit, fulfilment of desires and salvation.

84b-88. All wise men become successful due to their listening to the exposition (of a Purāṇa-text). By (just) one listening (i.e. by listening just once to a Purāṇa) all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish. Have the men not heard about it on the earth? A man should every day honour the expounder (of the Purāṇa) with (the gifts of) a vehicle, wealth, gold etc. so that the heap of his sins perishes. Even other Purāṇas recited by sages destroy the sins of the listeners, especially of the speaker. The mind of him who would expound all the thirtysix Purāṇas, or listens to them, is never divided.

89-93a. The first Purāṇa is Brāhma; the second is said to be Pādma; the third one is Vaiṣṇava (i.e. Viṣṇu Purāṇa); the fourth one is said to be Śaiva; the fifth is said to be Bhāgavata. Bhaviṣya is said to be the sixth; Nāradiya is declared to be the seventh; Mārkaṇḍeya is said to be the eighth; the ninth is Āgneya (i.e. Agni Purāṇa); Brahmavaivarta is said to be the tenth; then (there are) Laiṅga (i.e. Liṅga Purāṇa), Vāmana, Skānda (i.e. Skanda Purāṇa), Mātsya (i.e. Matsya Purāṇa), Kaurma (i.e. Kūrma Purāṇa); Vārāha (i.e. Varāha Purāṇa) is also said (to be one of the Purāṇas); Gāruḍa (i.e. Garuḍa Purāṇa) is also said (to be a Purāṇa); so also Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. Thus the wise know the Purāṇas to be eighteen.

93b-97. Similarly I shall tell about the Upapurāṇas hereafter. The first one is Sanatakumāra; after that (comes) Nāra-simha; the third one is said to be Māṇḍa; then there is Daur-vāsasa (i.e. Durvāsas); then Nāradiya; the next is Kāpila; then is Mānava; then is said to be Auśanasa; then comes Brahmāṇḍa; then there is Vāruṇa; there is one called Kālikā; so also there are Māheśa and Sāmba, Saura and Pārāśara, Mārīca, and the

one called Bhārgava; so also Kaumāra. (These) are said to be eighteen Upa(purāṇas). Manu would be (i.e. is) the expounder of the eighteen Purāṇas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Narration of the Rāmāyaṇa of a Former Kalpa

Sūta said:

1-4. Rāma said to the sage: “Perform the rite of the (evening) prayer; this sun is setting; this flock of birds is going to the nests.” Having abandoned his conveyance, he himself, desiring to offer his prayers went to the northern direction. Songs were sung by (the gandharvas) Hāhā, Hūhū. His glory was praised by the chief bards. Rāma went to the bank of Gautamī. His pair of feet was washed by Hanūmat (the son of Vāyu). His hand was supported by Jāmbavat. He reached the excellent river Gautamī. Holding kuśa (i.e. darbha) in both his hands that Rāma went to the excellent quarter of Varuṇa (i.e. the Western direction). Having made a respectful offering to the deity according to the proper rite, Rāma who was delighted, muttered (the hymn) in his mind (i.e. silently).

5-8. Rāma, after having solicited Varuṇa, saluted, in due order, Śambhu and Vasiṣṭha. Being blessed by them, he went to the deity (i.e. reflected upon the deity) in his mind, and after his feet were washed by Hanūmat, he offered oblations into the fires. Then, being praised by bards and panegyrists, he set out. The sky was, as it were, smeared with bright rays of the moon, and was, as it were, a canopy everywhere having the flowers of bright stars. Then he went to the palace. The king (i.e. Rāma) went to the assembly-hall fashioned by the old minister and having many seats. Then that Rāma, having made the sage sit, himself occupied the first seat. The groups of monkeys with large bodies were seated around him in (proper) order.

9-13. Seeing the king comfortably seated, that brāhmaṇa Śambhu then said proper words: “O best king, you, honoured by all, remain here. What is the thing in your heart i.e. what is your desire?” The descendant of Raghu, having heard the brāhmaṇa’s words, desired to hear a story. His clever words were just then heard by all. “I desire to hear a wonderful tale referring to me or telling about the destruction of the demons.” Then the king said this: “The murder of Kumbhakarna took place first and Rāvaṇa was killed afterwards. Who is this best brāhmaṇa who, causing ungodliness (to spread) among all the people, narrates it in a different way after having gone to the king’s place? Should he be punished or honoured by me?” Then Jāmbavat spoke to this best of the Raghus about the story. “This is not your Rāmāyaṇa (i.e. not your account as told by Vālmiki). This is recognised as prepared (by someone else). O lord, now I shall tell it in detail. Listen to it. It was formerly heard by me from the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā).” Requesting Jāmbavat, Rāmacandra said (these) words:

Śrī Rāma said:

14-18. Narrate that tale of the past. I have curiosity to listen to it. Who propounded it and who knew it?

Then Jāmbavat spoke: Salutation to the Creator (i.e. Brahmā), so also salutation to (Śiva) having the moon as his ornament and to Viṣṇu. Now I shall narrate the ancient Rāmāyaṇa, by listening to which sin committed during the entire existence perishes. King Daśaratha who was equal to ten warriors fighting from chariots, who was full of great wrath, desired to conquer with his great army the city named Sumānasa. He called Vasiṣṭha, the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā), and saluted him. Permitted by the sage, he, mounting upon a horse having a body (white) like the moon, and saluting Viṣṇu, took out the expedition with an army of a hundred akṣauhiṇīs.

19-27. Sādhya (the king of that city), surrounded by his own army, faced Daśaratha to fight with him. The war between the two took place. Having fought for a month, Daśaratha seized that (king) Sādhya. Then, Sādhya’s son Bhūṣaṇa, having a few attendants, fought with Daśaratha. Daśaratha too,

observing Sādhya's son to be the ornament of world, did not desire to fight. (He thought:) 'How (should) I kill one like this? When he is killed, what will be (the condition of) his father, his mother and dear wife of full-grown youth? On his body are, as it were, seen flowers, having the receptacles of lotuses with fresher petals, due to embraces, kisses and rollings. My son, similar to him in complexion and age, handsome like him, causing great delight, eaten up by a bear (and thus) dead, comes to my recollection (i.e. I remember him). He, as it were, desires to protect me. He changes my mind.' Thus thinking in his mind, he commenced seizing the boy. That Sādhya also became subservient (to Daśaratha). He too, looking upon the depression due to the defeat as joy, lived happily with the boy.

28-33. Daśaratha also, living there for a month, and observing that pleasure which one gets from seeing the son, thought: 'Oh! this seeing the face of this (boy) is capable of removing all sorrows. Nourishing a son is equal to my conquering of all countries. It just makes me who remember the separation from (i.e. death of) my son, unhappy. Therefore, I shall ask him how such a son is born.' Thinking like this, he asked him. Sādhya also showed the entire path of salvation to the king (i.e. to Daśaratha): "(A man) should worship Viṣṇu and Śiva together. He should fast on all the Ekādaśī-days. He should propitiate brāhmaṇas on the Dvādaśī-days. Having justly procured the food, sauce, along with the seasonal fruits and flowers, he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with cow's milk and besmear it with the powder of kidney-beans. Then he should bathe (the image) with pleasing water, and besmear the entire body (of the image) of the deity with fragrant sandal rubbed by himself, and with excellent musk; then having worshipped (the image) with Tulasī-leaves, and jasmine flowers, karavīra-flowers, blue and other lotuses and red lotuses, with droṇa-flowers, with maruva, damana, girikarṇikā, and ketakī-leaves, as are available, he should propitiate the deity with (the hymn of) twelve syllables, with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn) or with the repetition of the deity's name or with the sixteen requisite articles, should salute (the deity), and after dancing, should apologise to the deity. So also he should practise vows to please Viṣṇu.

34-40. The revered sage, being pleased, gives the desired

son. So propitiate him." Thus he spoke to Daśaratha. He too installed Sādhya there (i.e. on the throne), went to Ayodhyā, and did all like that. When the sacrifice to obtain a male issue was over, the image of the sacrifice having a conch, a disc and a mace in the hands, came up from the Āhavanīya¹ and said to the king: "Ask for a boon." The king chose (four) sons; he said to (the deity): "Give me four sons who would be very pious, would have a long life, and help the world." The king had four queens: Kauśalyā, Sumitrā, Surupā and Suveṣā. They said to the king: "O lord, let one son be born to each wife (of you)." Then Kauśalyā said: "If this god is pleased, let him be born of me."

The king said:

41. This Viṣṇu is solicited (to give that) which is desired by me: "O Viṣṇu, O lord of gods, O lord of Kamalā, O you holder of a conch, a disc, and a mace, O you fearful one, O you whose couple of feet is saluted by all like the regents of the quarters in the creation, O you eternal one, O Hari, be pleased. My repeated salutations to you."

The lord, thus praised (by the king), said to the king.

Viṣṇu said:

42-45a. I shall be born as your son on Kauśalyā.

Then Viṣṇu entered the oblation of rice and barley boiled for presentation to the gods and manes. The king divided that oblation into four parts and distributed them among his wives. Then Rāma was born from Kauśalyā, Lakṣmaṇa from Sumitrā, Bharata from Surupā, and Śatrughna from Suveṣā; and a shower of flowers fell from the sky. The four-faced (Brahmā) himself came and performed the ceremonies like those performed

1. Āhavanīya—A consecrated fire taken from the householder's perpetual fire, the eastern fire; the other two fires being: (i) Gārhapatya—one of the three fires perpetually maintained by a householder, which he receives from his father and transmits to his descendants and from which fires for sacrificial purposes are lighted, and (ii) Dakṣiṇa—the southern fire.

at the birth of a child. He named Rāma as Rāma due to his being extremely pleasing in the three worlds; he named the second son Lakṣmaṇa for his being fit due to wealth and qualities like form and valour; (he named the third son) Bharata, since he protected the earth from burden; (he named the fourth one) Śatrughna, since he killed the enemies.

45b-46. Having named them thus Brahmā went home and the children grew. King Daśaratha having seen the boy Rāma who walked, who looked like the young moon, whose lips were like the bimba-fruits, whose nose was high and was like the sesamum-flower, whose jewelled leaf(-like ornament) moved in front of his crest, from whose ears ear-rings were dangling, the necklace of big pearls on whose chest was dishevelled, whose golden bracelets were bright, whose jewelled bracelets and rings were tinkling, whose girdle was fashioned with gold and gems, whose feet looked charming due to the jingling anklets, whose middle toes were adorned with rings, whose large soles of the feet were adorned with the marks of a diamond-pin, a goad and a lotus, whose shanks were like quivers, whose thighs were like the trunks of elephants, whose hips were large, whose waist was slender, whose navel was round like an eddy and deep, whose chest was large like an emerald-rock, whose neck resembled a conch, whose face was like the orb of the moon, whose forehead was like the half (i.e. crescent) moon, whose hair was dark and curly, who was engaged in playing, who had become grey due to dust (particles), whose eyes were reddish like the petals of a fully blown red lotus, who was dusted as Śiva with the sacred ash, who was naked like Śiva, had his heart full of joy, and having embraced and kissed his son, he firmly clasped him against his chest.

47-49. Then the boy also got on his lap from one side, and with his eyes charmingly fixed on him said something. The king, looking at his son asking (for things) here and there and saying, 'Father, I go; father, I sleep; father, I play' and thus repeatedly deriving joy from his son, became happy. Then once, when the king had come (to the dining hall) to eat, Rāmacandra, with his mind attached to child-sports, and having many toys in his lotus-like hand, was jumping and running, and taking with his left hand the food from the golden plate, decked with gold,

and lying before the king, threw it on the king. This too the king looked upon as pleasure (i.e. even this act of Rāma pleased the king). Rāmacandra did such and other (acts).

50-55. Once when Rāma was playing, a stormy wind knocked him down, and he fell down crying. In the meanwhile the ghost of a brāhmaṇa seized Rāma and he fainted. Then the boy, his companion, crying hither and thither, informed the king of Rāma in that condition. Then the king took Rāma and spoke to Vasiṣṭha. He asked him: "What is this (that has happened) to Rāma?" Then Vasiṣṭha took sacred ash, consecrated it, and got rid of that ghost of the brāhmaṇa. He asked him: "Who are you?" and he said: "I am a brāhmaṇa, proud of (my knowledge of) the Vedas. Having frequently snatched away the wealth of others, I became a Brahma-ghost. Think of my acquittance."

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-57. From now onwards you will experience demonhood (i.e. will live like a demon), (go to hell,) and then (after having) a bath in Gaṅgā, and having offered a hundred bilva-leaves to Śiva, and then (again) having bathed, you will be free from sin. If you might do (acts of) religious merit like that I shall give you a (good) status, and after that enjoy an excellent position.

Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, that ghost of a brāhmaṇa, due to (the acts of) religious merit as advised by Vasiṣṭha, got a divine body, and having saluted (him), he went to heaven.

58-60. Having invested Rāma with the sacred thread at the proper time, Vasiṣṭha taught him the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, both the Mīmāṃsās, and science of politics; he also taught him archery, the science of medicine, science of music¹ and dramaturgy, and of singing, the science of building houses, of omens², and various rules of war. Then Daśaratha who desired to get (Rāma) married, sent his messengers to the kings of various countries.

61-62. Then one messenger quickly came to the king, and said: "O king, the lord of the Vidarbha country is the king Videha by name. His daughter is Vaidehī whom he obtained

1. Bharata—Science of music and dramaturgy.

2. Śakuna—Science of omens.

from a sacrifice. She is like Lakṣmī in beauty; she is endowed with all (good) characteristics. She is proper for Rāma. The king is ready to give her (in marriage) to Rāma. So go (to that king) quickly.” Then he (i.e. Daśaratha) sent Vasiṣṭha and others. They went there, and having found out an auspicious moment, decided it; (then) they came to Ayodhyā and informed the king; and with Rāma, and with kings, they quickly (went) with many elephants, horses, carts, palanquins, swings.

63. Many ladies came there to celebrate the auspicious ceremony of marriage. They were very beautiful and were skilled in the acts of pleasures and amorous pastimes. They knew the various acts of gandharvas. They were adept in the science of love. Their breasts were soft and hard, and reached their necks. Their lotus-like faces had big and small foreheads and bimba-like lips. Their braids had curly and long hair. They had put on golden ornaments on their ears. Their teeth appeared reddish due to the japā flowers, adorned by the down rising due to the act of bathing. Their eyes were clear and tremulous like the small glittering fish. Their ears were like conches. Their noses were adorned with big pearls resembling the stars. Their cheeks were like mirrors. Their noses were like sesamum flowers. The nipples of their breasts were slightly bent in the middle. The wounds made by the teeth (of the lovers) on their lips resembled the indragopa insect (of red and white colour). Their bodies appeared even and tall. They were round in all parts. They were not very fat. The top knots of their garments were like balls. Their armpits were bent round. The armpits resembled the petals due to the down recently standing up and due their colour like that of turmeric. Their waists were soft, glossy and had fine circles. Their breasts looked charming on account of various jewelled necklaces dangling on the breasts with the neck ornament in between the two breasts, hard and large, and with the nipples slightly sunken in. Their bellies looked beautiful due to the uneven line of the short hair growing on the region round their deep navels, that had secured a foot round their breasts as a result of a series of the glances of the young. Their bellies were adorned with three folds, and their middle (part i.e. waist) could (just) be seized with the fist. Their hip-regions resembled the trunks of elephants. Their knees were soft, glossy, clean and even.

The pairs of their thighs were like the plantain trees. Their shanks had the knees slightly sunken in, were round and without fleshy swelling. Their ankles were slightly sunken in. Their feet had fine, glossy short and long toes, and were challenging Cupid with the jingling of the anklets. They were walking like swans and elephants. The ends of their lower garments touched their right toes. Above the hem of the lower garment, they had made folds which they had held in both their hands; their necks were not covered with garments (but) the garments (i.e. the bodices) of the breasts were covered with the upper garments. Their slim bodies were adorned with the fringes of their garments (hanging) from their left shoulders to their right sides.

64. Young girls, with their slim bodies purified with lightning (-like) (bright) silken garments, with their breasts adorned with various necklaces (put on) the breasts resembling lotus-buds that had shot up, talking something, and walking quickly (yet) gently (also had come there).

65. Old ladies also had come there. Then in a little wood of mango-trees, at a distance of a krośa (two miles) from Videha, Daśaratha, along with his ministers and family priests, and along with his sons like the lovely Rāma, camped comfortably. The young ones of the deer in it listened to the cooing of the various birds in the extensive regions of many bushes; in it there were various birds in the regions adorned with high and low palaces fashioned with gold; the row of trees there were adorned with the meditation and worship of the hosts of sages who were covered with the garments of campaka-barks, whose bodies were dusted with sacred ash and who had matted hair; which had a lake, the ripples on which were disturbed, being overpowered by the burden of the breasts of many young wives of vidyādhara; in which young men were invited by the young maid-servants who had gathered on the banks of the lake; the entire region of which was made fragrant with the flowers of many colours, in which prostitutes, with a desire to enjoy, had their bodies shining with the unsteady brilliance of their eyes resembling the small glittering fish, and largely exhibited here and there.

66. The king of Videha also decorated the city of Mithilā with many banners, with various palaces, city-gates, gardens and temples; it was crowded with young ladies skilled in sporting

with one another; the great supply of water of the city was embellished with sandal; its highways were adorned with people engaged in charming sports; its streets were decorated with various commodities; the places of learning everywhere were graced with the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas; in every house the study of Sāmaveda was done along with explanations of the Mīmāṃsā; where the orchards of the brāhmaṇas were having the fragrance of auspicious oblations and were full of the sacred texts like Sāmaveda recited with accents, and with each word being pronounced in its original form and independently of the phonetic changes and in due order; in which, at the entry of lordly abodes there were rewards like agaru (sandal), saffron and the abodes of the Adhvaryus; in which were ladies graced with bulb-like left shoulders looking charming due to the middle region of the breasts that were glossy and round, and that were rubbing against each other, and due to the upper part of the soft, white garment worn round the hips; which was graced with thousands of florists, smiling gently with their teeth resembling many pearl-necklaces and lips (red) like japā flowers; in which were abodes where pleasing spirituous liquors could be had; it had beautiful arches everywhere; its paths were clean; at every place desire-yielding trees were planted; its gates were adorned with plantain trees.

67-72a. The king went out with ladies who carried auspicious articles like turmeric, dūrvā, sacred rice grains, collyrium for the hair, braids, head charming due to parting of the hair, beautiful ornaments for the nose, face, so also articles like ghee, guggalu (a fragrant gum resin) and fruits put in golden pots; and (he was) also (accompanied) by other persons who had adorned themselves. At that time, the auspicious sound of the musical instruments, the sounds of small and big drums and of conches etc. became audible. The singers also sang auspicious (songs). The brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas filled the entire sky with the auspicious Vedic recitals, and the family preceptors filled it with the sound of drums. Then they, accepting one another after giving sacred rice grains (to one another) and being praised by bards and panegyrists, entered the city.

72b-87. Daśaratha entered the abode made in the western

part of the city. The rest (of the people) also duly entered the abode. At that time only Nārada had come to Mithilā. King Videha worshipped the divine sage and looking to his reception, fed him, and giving tāmbūla with camphor to the sage who was comfortably seated, said to him with respect: "Tomorrow (is my daughter's) marriage. Please stay on to get the marriage (-ceremony) performed."

Nārada said:

Tomorrow the stars such as the solar stars would (only) be seen. The marriage should not be celebrated on that day.

Then the king, having called his astrologer Gārgya, asked him: "Which is the auspicious time for the marriage?" Gārgya said: "Tomorrow". Then the king looking up at Nārada and Gārgya asked (i.e. said): "Oh, this is so." Then Nārada spoke to Gārgya: "How can you give the auspicious moment?" Then Gārgya said, "Avoiding the inauspicious time, I shall give (i.e. state) the auspicious moment." Then Nārada also said to Gārgya, "Do you not know the words of Brahmā?" Gārgya, who was pleased, quoted the faults: "Formerly Brahmā has observed that a meteor, the curse of a brāhmaṇa and causeless trembling lead to the destruction of the entire undertaking.

88-92. Except in the rites of thread ceremony and consecration, in all other (auspicious) rites like the installation (of images), marriages, a man should avoid inauspicious moments. One who performs the rites after (these are avoided) is not at a fault. Afterwards I shall tell about the defect in rites like marriages". "A meteor would burn the entire family; a brāhmaṇa's curse would destroy (it); the causeless tremor would lead to death and to the disturbance of the rite." Having heard (these words) uttered by Nārada, the sage Gārgya became silent. He thought (to himself): 'Avoiding the Sun, the lord of Planets, and inauspicious time, the marriage should be performed.'

Nārada said:

93. How are the words of the brāhmaṇa? (i.e. what does the brāhmaṇa say)?

The Sun said:

94-95. The arrangement is said to (be based) on the difference in regions. In this country the marriage must be celebrated by avoiding the inauspicious time.

Nārada also consented.

96-98. He said: "The kṣatriya-marriage will take place tomorrow afternoon. So let the kings come for the self-choice marriage. O king, send messengers (to the kings)." Then, having brought all the kings with Daśaratha's consent, the king thought: 'How should Vaidehī be given to Rāma, after condemning all (other) kings?' At night, he though sleepy, did not get sleep.

99. At midnight the king, having purified himself mentally thought of Tryambaka who was with Ambā (i.e. Pārvatī), who had worn an auspicious silken garment, whose lotus-like feet were being served by all gods led by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra, by the leading sages like Bhṛgu, by gandharvas led by Hāhā, by Tumburu (and others), so also by the sacred texts, the codes of laws, historical works and Purāṇas in bodily forms, so also by the hosts of divine mothers, by siddhas, vidyādhara, and by the attendants led by Nandin, who removed all inauspicious things, whose region of the head was being waited upon by Gaṅgā of holy water and by the spotless moon, to whom a tāmḃūla was being offered by Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) seated on his left lap, who took it with a smile, willingly and with a glance, who was (fair) like cow's milk, whose neck was (having the colour) opposite to that of musk, who had arranged his matted hair with soft, fine, glossy, clotted hair, the regions of whose cheeks were graced with pure, golden ear-rings, whose age was twice eight (i.e. sixteen), whose region of the head was wrapped up with a skirt having the colour of large pearls like cow's milk and of Kausumbha, whose chest was adorned with (ornaments) of gold decked with various jewels, whose body was graced with a very white sacred thread, whose body had become reddish and fragrant due to the saffron (from) Pārvatī's body touching his body, who was observing and deriding Cupid's arrow, who resembled a crore of Cupids.

100-102. He (i.e. the king) muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn);

with that (hymn) only he offered desired oblations and praised (Śiva) with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn). Then the king saluted him and praised him.

The king said:

103. O you, having eight forms (constituted) by earth, water, sky (i.e. ether), air, fire, the sun, the moon (and) the sacrificer, O you of a universal form, O you of the form of the world, O you of the form of the three worlds, O you of the form of the Vedas and the Purāṇas, O you of the form of sacrifice, O you of the form of Nārāyaṇa, O you of the form of all deities, O you full of the three (Vedas), O you the authority on the three (Vedas), O you having eyes in the form of the three (Vedas), O you loving the Sāma (Veda), O you to whom the capital of Kubera is dear, O you who are (easily) accessible to your devotees, O you who are away from those who are not your devotees, O you who like praise, O you who like incense, O you who like a light (to be waved in front of your representation), O you who like ghee and milk, O you to whom droṇa and karavīra are dear, O you who like śrī-leaves, O you to whom lotuses and white lotuses are dear, O you who love Nandin's curly hair, O you who love bakula, jasmine, kokanada, a watery place in summer, O you who like restraints and curbs, O you to whom one with one's senses controlled is dear, O you who love muttering of a hymn, O you to whom śrāddha is dear, O you who love singing, O you to whom the Gāyatrī(-hymn) is dear, to whom the five, Brahmā (and others) are dear, O you to whom good conduct is dear, O you whose feet are worshipped by the three, viz. Indra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, O you who manifested the disc sought for by Viṣṇu and produced from water, O you who give recollection and reasoning, O you who grant auspiciousness when remembered, O you victory on the earth, my repeated salutation to you.

104. Having heard this hymn of praise Lord Śiva said to the king: "I shall grant (you) a boon. Ask for one."

The king said:

105-108. O lord, I desire to give my daughter (in marriage) to Rāma. If, in the gathering of all beings like many kings,

demons, brāhmaṇas, someone of a superior strength and endowed with (birth in a noble) family, power and energy takes her away then my words would be falsified, and sin will come to me; (and) on the other hand, when Daśaratha capable of destroying the kṣatriyas comes to conquer all these, so also when Rāma (comes), then what will my daughter do? Whom will the king, with a big army and horses and elephants, send? What will he get done? What will he do to me? He may destroy all the three worlds. Moreover, for me of a small energy you alone are the refuge. Tell me the remedy so that it would be helpful to the marriage, and Rāma will be my son-in-law.

Śambhu also said: “I shall do like that. Rāma only will be the husband of Sītā. Today only I shall do auspicious things for Rāma. Take this Ājagava bow (of mine).”

The king said:

109. What is the use of this Ājagava bow? You yourself (should) take (i.e. marry) Sītā to Rāma.

Śaṅkara said:

110-113. Make this pledge: “This bow is not strung. I shall give Sītā (in marriage) to him who will string it.”

Speaking like this, Śiva vanished with his attendants. Even with a great effort the king could not take up the bow. Then calling Ujjvala, having the strength of a thousand elephants, he said to him: “Take (this bow).” He too, saluting his maternal uncle, having laughed loudly, having jumped, raised the bow with his two hands upto his knees. The maternal uncle (of Rāvaṇa), viz. Mārīca, alone put on the garb of a brāhmaṇa, and solicited (king) Videha: “Know me to be a guest who has come at the end of the offering to all deities.”

The king said:

114-117. Welcome to you. O brāhmaṇa, this is the seat. (Please) be seated on it.

The guest also, saying, ‘All right’ sat there. Then the king

took water, washed his feet (with it) and after having worshipped him with sandal, flowers and sacred rice grains, and having offered him (the cooked meat of) a big goat, requested him to eat it. He too, as it were looking here and there, saw that food having six flavours and put in a golden plate.

118. At that time only Sītā came there. She had the splendour of lotus-filaments. She had put on a reddish garment. Her forehead was graced with hair which was dark and curly, which was unsteady, which attracted the minds of young men, which spilt up the sight of the seer, thereby as it were showing that ladies' hearts are like this only. Her eyebrows were like Cupid's bow. Her eyes were reddish like lotus-petals. Her nose was like the sesamum. Her reddish lips were close to her glossy, hairy cheeks, and resembled rubies. Her teeth were like (the seeds of) a pomegranate. Her lips were reddish like the japā flowers. Her chin was very beautiful. Her ears were like oyster-shells. Her neck was even and long. Her breasts were fleshy. The bud-like breasts were round and raised. She looked beautiful with many necklaces. Her figure was beautiful. Her creeper-like arms were not very fleshy. She was innocent. The tips of her fingers were moderate, even and were dyed with the alaktaka dye. She had put on various jewelled rings. She was holding a white lily. She came in front of Mārīca who was eating.

119-122. Seeing her, he thought: 'How shall I kidnap her? How shall I embrace her? How shall I do something else?' Thus (he thought). (But) not getting an opportunity, he just quietly went out. Then the gods strove to string the bow. They stood there competing with one another and disdaining one another. Indra reached that excellent bow. But he was not able to do more than (just) bending the two ends. Then the Sun took the bow, but fell down while bending it. Vāyu, the best among the mighty, seized the Ājagava bow and while lifting it with his own hand, fell down; and the bow fell on him. All laughed at that time.

123-128. In the meanwhile, demon Bāṇa having a thousand arms, surrounded by demons with many heads, and accompanied by Prahlāda came there after having mounted upon an excellent horse. Then, making the directions bright with his ornaments, making the gods void of glory by means of his glory, hearing

many songs, he was able (to lift it to the height of) two fingers, and gave up. Prahlāda and Bali also ran, but they also stopped. When the demons became quiet, very powerful kings arrived there, were unable to string the bow, (so) went away (i.e. withdrew) and remained (there). Then brāhmaṇas came there. Then Viśvāmitra took the bow, and after stringing it upto the length of a finger, stopped. The others retired.

129-132. And then in the space of the day, when the bow was silent, Rāma came with his brothers, and observing the bow, touched it. Then princes, adorned with all ornaments, came in hundreds. They saw the bow, touched it, but were unable to move it. Then other boys, led by Daśaratha's (other) sons arrived (there). Then men having canes and drums in their hands came there, and drove away all.

133. Then Rāma holding the hand of Lakṣmaṇa and adorned with all ornaments reached the bow, touched it, saluted it, went round it keeping it to his right. Then he took it, and lifted it.

134-138. When he took it, all laughed and said: "Here (i.e. in the attempt at lifting it) very mighty warriors have failed." Then that Rāma, bent the place of the string of the bow, and putting his knee on the bow, strung it, raised it with one hand, and bent it at the tip. Seeing the bow strung (by (Rāma)) all kept their fingers on the tips of their noses (i.e. were amazed). Rāma also made the twang of the bow. Due to that sound the minds of all were agitated. Everywhere there was the talk; "Rāma has strung the bow".

139-141. Janaka too gave Sitā to Rāma. Having fought with the kings, and having vanquished them, he came to his own city. Then once Daśaratha consecrated Rāma as the heir-apparent, and became happy. There was a talk among all the subjects that Rāma was liked as a king due to his pleasing the subjects. Then, Suveṣā, the daughter of the king of Kaikeya, not enduring (that) Rāma (was to be) the king, said to the king (i.e. Daśaratha): "This is the time for granting my boons." The king thought: 'What should be given (to her)?'

The queen said:

142-144. Let Rāma enter (and live in) a forest for fourteen years. Let Bharata look after the kingdom.

Due to the fear of lying the king somehow accepted (her demand). Then he spoke to Vasiṣṭha about (Rāma's future): "Rāma is going out to the forest. What will happen to him? Having thought (about it) tell (me) (what is) good and (what is) bad (in his future)."

145-148. Vasiṣṭha thought over (it), and gladly spoke to the king: "Having gone to the forest, he will kill all the brave demons. He will worship Śiva in many ways. Rāma, being angry due to being separated from Sītā, will cross the ocean with the army of the monkeys, and will kill Rāvaṇa. Having come (back to Ayodhyā), Rāma will rule for many years. Having had great fame in the entire world, he will live for a long time with god Śarva (i.e. Śiva). He will be endowed with good sons, will perform many sacrifices; he, the lord, will be superior to all in virtues."

149-151. Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, Daśaratha, remembering the virtues of Rāma, spoke thus: "When Rāma goes out (of my kingdom), it is better for me to die." Then Rāma, having saluted his mother, father, preceptor Vasiṣṭha, the preceptor's wife, left for the forest. Then having lived for one day in the park, having arranged the matted hair, having put on a bark-garment, having worn one sacred thread, having cleaned his teeth, having tied his matted hair with one sacred thread, having dusted his entire body with sacred ash and thus looking rough, wearing on his head a rosary in place of a necklace of pearls and jewels, accompanied by Sītā adorned with a few ornaments, and followed by Lakṣmaṇa, entered the interior of the forest.

152-154. Then he killed many demons in it; did everything like you; everything like Sītā's being kidnapped took place as in your case; then he went to R̥ṣyamūka mountain, to the hermitage of Sugrīva; and having found a mango tree with a dense shadow, put up there a resort with the help of Lakṣmaṇa. He put the two bows on the tree; put his head on Lakṣmaṇa's lap, and lay on

a bed of deer-hide; listened to a known song; observed the fruit of the tree; he (then) saw a monkey, having jewelled ear-rings, tawny like gold, with the girdle of muñja grass firmly tied around his privy, having, a clean sacred thread, being very fickle, taking a fruit and throwing it to himself, scattering flowers and shoots, imitating the song, fanning Rāma with a fan, fanning him, even after having climbed the branch of the tree, having tied only the mango fruits, and said to Lakṣmaṇa: "Lakṣmaṇa, who is this monkey?" Lakṣmaṇa also said: "I do not know". Then Rāma called (the monkey) and asked him: "To whom do you belong? What is your name?"

155-157. He said, "I am Hanūmat (the servant) of Sugrīva." Having saluted him (i.e. Sugrīva; he said): "There is a man, who is like another Viṣṇu, who is young, who is dark like a cloud, who has matted hair, whose hands reach his knees, who is extremely glorious, and who is accompanied by another man resembling the sun. The two princes, endowed with all good characteristics are staying in the shade of a tree. They saw me and said to me: 'Inform Sugrīva.' Therefore, I have informed you."

158-161. Then Sugrīva quickly got up, took materials like flowers and water, and having washed their feet etc., having offered fruits, he said respectfully: "Who are you, young men? What have you, ascetic princes, come (here) for?" Having heard (these) words of Sugrīva, Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa, said: "We two are Daśaratha's sons, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. We have come to the forest for curbing the wicked and protecting the good." Then Sugrīva said: "It appears that your help is harmful; otherwise you would have come with an army."

162. Lakṣmaṇa said: "There is another mission. This one's wife has been kidnapped by someone. We do not know (by whom). We have come to search for her. That is our (main) mission. Other (things) are incidental. For that we would even cross the ocean, we would even enter the nether world, we would even go to heaven, we would even knock down Indra, we would even strike Bali; (in short) we would do anything."

Sugrīva said:

163-165. I shall show you certain ornaments dropped by a lady who was-kidnapped by Rāvaṇa and collected by me.

Saying so, and inviting Rāma to his abode, he showed them (to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa). Rāma too observed them and having decided (that they were Sītā's ornaments), wept and asked: "Where has that Rāvaṇa gone?" He replied: "He has gone to the southern direction." Rāma formed friendship with him (i.e. Sugrīva) and asked him: "Why do you remain here without your wife?"

Sugrīva said:

166-173. My very mighty brother Vālin, having snatched away my kingdom and my wife, lives in Kiṣkindhā. I was defeated by him in a battle; all my anxiety is about killing him. If you kill him, then I also, restraining the ocean, will offer you Sītā kidnapped by Rāvaṇa and living in Laṅkā on the other shore (of the ocean).

Speaking like this, and taking an oath, he invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight, and fought with him. Then Rāma too, not being certain (about the identity of Vālin), did not kill him. Then Sugrīva fled, and said these (words) to Rāma: "Not knowing (what was in) your mind, I set out to die" Rāma also (said): "Not having particular knowledge about you two, I kept quiet. Having observed (i.e. recognised) you who would have a mark, I shall kill him." Then Sugrīva making a mark (on his person), invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight. Tārā said to Vālin: "It appears Sugrīva has some companion. Otherwise he would not challenge like this. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, Daśaratha's sons, and portions of Viṣṇu, who have come to lessen down the burden of the earth, have become his companions."

Vālin said:

174-179. I have heard that Rāma has political wisdom. A man like him would not leave a strong man and resort to a weak one. Let Rāma come. He will be frightened after taking the one who has approached him as superior. If Rāma himself comes to fight, then fight has to be gone through.

Having said so and honoured Tārā, he went out to fight with Sugrīva. Then between the two a fight of fist took place. Rāma

too struck Vālin; Vālin fell down. He said (to Rāma): “You have struck (me) with an arrow in a fight without weapons.” His entire body was full of blood. Then Tārā and Aṅgada came (there) and were afflicted. Then the monkeys came to Rāma, fell near Vālin, and wept.

180-184. Then Tārā said to Rāma: “Formerly the descendants of Raghu were well-versed in sacred texts, brave and righteous. How is it, O Rāma, that you have committed a sin? You do not know the way of the life of a kṣatriya, which is followed by hosts of kings. In a fight (between two warriors) fighting with each other, victory or death would take place. The one who kills the other one (not fighting) is called the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Have you killed Vālin due to enmity or with a desire for (eating) the flesh of a monkey? The flesh of a monkey is not to be eaten. If you think that others are like that (i.e. like you) because of the absence of happiness (i.e. unhappiness) of you, or if you, through infatuation, have done this to take me (away), then (you have to remember that) you have the vow of having one wife (only).

185-187. If you have done this for (getting) Sugrīva’s help to bring (back) Sītā kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, then there is a great difference (between Vālin and Sugrīva). Your mission would succeed when Vālin, rich in might, able to bring (back) Sītā in a day, able to give (you) Rāvaṇa (just) when you remember him, and having fifty parārdhas of the army of monkeys and bears, is there. Then what is the use of Sugrīva, the monkey who is the general of seven parārdhas (of army), who has little might? What mission of you who keep your promise, would succeed” “O! what you have said and which is auspicious to all is understood (by me).” Rāma says, “By me who am a king, curbing of the wicked and the protection of the good is to be done. Vālin took away Sugrīva’s wife Rūmā and his kingdom also. Therefore, there is no sin in killing one like him.”

Tārā said:

188. Then Sugrīva also should be killed. Vālin, fighting with Dundubhi, entered a cave, and remained there for a year. In the meantime, Sugrīva kidnapped me and ruled (over Vālin’s kingdom). Therefore kill him first, then him (i.e. Vālin).

Rāma said:

189. Tell me before which time this took place.

Tārā said:

190-193. In the eightieth year before sixty thousand years Sugrīva took away the kingdom in a battle with the demons. Then when a year was over Vālin made Sugrīva flee. He took away his wife and kingdom also. On that day only the consecration of your father Daśaratha (as a king) took place.

Rāghava said:

194-196. By the order of my father and due to the custom of not transgressing the words of elders, I curbed the wicked in his kingdom. At the time of her being kidnapped, he who was the king, did not act (properly). Or the beasts are free. Vālin, one of the two beasts, is killed. Beasts tear off one another and dislike one another. Say, since my hunting is of the beasts that are moving, stationary or bound, or of those moving away, getting confused and having fled, when I parted company (with the king), I had given up hunting.

197-199. I have executed this hunting according to the rules of the science of hunting—(sometimes) running, and (sometimes) not running. The spot higher than a creeping plant in case of those belonging to the same family, is pierced through (*obscure*). Hunting without eating the flesh (of the animal killed) is the rule in the hunting done by a king.

Having heard Rāma's words, all nodded their heads.

200-205. Having put the hollow made by his palms on his head, Vālin said to Rāma: "I salute you, O Rāma; listen to my words. I have heard that you are actually Viṣṇu himself having in his hands a conch, a disc, and a mace, wearing a yellow garment, and the master of the world. The meditating saints think of you (only). The sacrificers offer sacrifices to you. You alone enjoy the oblations to deities and dead ancestors. You take up the form of the deities and the manes. The salvation of him who thinks about you at the time of his death, is not far

away. That you, O Rāma, is (today) seen by me. My sins have perished. O you descendant of Kakutstha, take your arrow. I am very much afflicted.’ Then, Rāma, saying, ‘All right’, took an arrow and said to Vālin, “Tell (me) what desired thing should be given (to you).”

The monkey (i.e. Vālin) said:

206-209. If the revered one is pleased, then give me beatitude. Thus, Sugrīva should be protected by you, so also Aṅgada, and Tārā (also should be protected). I, a sinner had committed a sin; I have experienced its fruit.

Then looking at Rāma, Vālin died and went to heaven. Then (Rāma), having consecrated Sugrīva as the king, entered the forest.

210-212. Then, Rāma, with him as his companion, went near the ocean, and said to Sugrīva: “Where is Laṅkā? Where is Sītā? Where is the enemy?” Then Hanūmat said: “May the lord order whether after having entered Laṅkā, having looked for Sītā, and having known the full truth, truce or war should be made. What suggestion do you make for crossing the ocean?” Then Rāma said to Sugrīva: “How can this take place?”

The monkey (i.e. Sugrīva) said:

213-214. I have crores of monkeys led by bears. Having appointed one (of them), and having known the whole (truth), what is proper should be done.

Then Jāmbavat said:

215-217. Let Hanūmat alone go and know (i.e. find out all about) Laṅkā.

Then Hanūmat went to the city of Laṅkā, looked for Sītā seated in the Aśoka-grove, talked to her, secured her confidence, devastated the grove and baffled the demons. He was bound by the demon (Rāvaṇa); he burnt Laṅkā, went to the northern shore, saw Rāma, told him the account, and remained silent.

218-220. Then Rāma had consultations with all. Jāmbavat said: “I was told by Nārada that Rāma will destroy Laṅkā through the monkeys. So we should strive to cross the ocean.”

Then Rāma propitiated Śaṅkara, and told him: "I shall do whatever is told by you." Uttering these words, having worshipped Śiva and having saluted him, he said (to him) respectfully:

221. "O great god, O you who swallow great beings, O you the cause of the great deluge, O you having ornaments of the great serpents, O Mahārudra, O Śaṅkara, O highest god, O Virūpākṣa, O you having the serpent as your sacred thread, O you having the garment of an elephant's, hide O you having the ornament of the string of skulls, O you having the ornaments of the demon's bones, O you to whom ash is dear, O you who love Nārāyaṇa, O you of an auspicious conduct, O you the god of the five like Brahmā etc., O you who are known by the five-faced one, the four-faced one, and the Vedas, O you who are easily accessible to your devotees and difficult to be obtained by non-devotees, O you who are great joy and knowledge, O you who knocked the teeth of the great Pūṣa, O you who cut off Dakṣa's head, O you who removed the fifth head of Brahmā, O you dear to Pārvatī, O you whose auspicious life (-story) is sung by Nārada, O Śarva, O you having three eyes, O you trident-holder, O you having the bow (called Pināka) in your hand, O you having matted hair, O you having many forms, O you having the bull (viz. Nandin) as your vehicle, O you resembling a clear crystal, O you having four hands, O you having many weapons, O Dakṣiṇāmūrti, O lord, O god, O lord, O you having Gaṅgā (on your head), O you conqueror of Tripura, O you having your abode on Śrīśaila, O Kāśīnātha, O you the ornament, of Kedāreśvara, O Siddheśvara, O Gokarṇeśvara, O Kanakhaleśvara, O Pārvatīśvara, O giver of the disc, O you who removed the worry of Bāṇa, O you whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by the conqueror of Mura, O Soma, O you, having the moon as your ornament, O you omniscient one, O you full of lustre, O you full of the world, salutation, salutation to you."

222. Before Rāma who was praising like this, an image, full of lustre, and remaining in the Phallus, appeared. He granted fearlessness also.

223-225. Rāma saw the lord who was seated in the posture called padmāsana, who had Pārvatī on his lap, who had tied (i.e. put on) all ornaments, whose crown was very bright, who

touched the waist of the daughter of Himavat, granting a boon of fearlessness with both hands, full of lustre due to many wavy directions, whose face was smiling, whose face was pleased; with his palms joined he saluted the highest lord, and again fell (i.e. prostrated before him) like a staff. Then the lord also said to Rāma: “You ask for a boon; I am the giver of boons.”

Rāma said:

226. I shall go to Laṅkā. O Śambhu, give (i.e. show) me a way to cross the ocean.

Śambhu said:

227-233. I have the Ājagava bow; it becomes (i.e. changes itself) according to the time and has no alternative. Having got on it, having crossed the ocean, reach Laṅkā.

Rāma, saying, ‘All right’, remembered the Ājagava (bow). The bow came (there). Rāma then worshipped it. Then Śiva took the bow and gave it to Rāma. Rāma too dropped it into the ocean. All the monkeys and Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa also got upon it; when the sixty parārdhas of monkeys mounted upon it, it reached the (other) shore according to (Rāma’s) desire. Then the monkeys also having gone (here and) there, observed.

234-237. Then a demon named Atikāya saw the army of the monkeys and said to (i.e. told) Rāvaṇa (about) it. Rāvaṇa too said: “Has our food fortunately come through the monkeys, or through the human beings—Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa?” Then, when the sun went to the west (i.e. when the sun was setting), Sugrīva, along with innumerable very strong monkeys of large bodies like Hanūmat, Jāmbavat etc., went to the side of (i.e. near) Laṅkā, entered the park, ate various fruits, drank water, made the demons guarding the park flee, seized the entire forest (by seizing the trees) one by one, and ran away. Then he went to Laṅkā, the city-gate, climbed the palace, shattered it, took every pillar and fought with the demons. Some broke to pieces the hall, pounded the houses, killed all the young and the old and women etc.

238-246. Then having known that one rampart was acquired

by conquest, Rāvaṇa ordered Indrajit. The monkeys also fought with Indrajit, were frightened and ran away. Then Hanūmat having come to know that all had gone out, so also knowing Rāvaṇa, and calling the monkeys and having considered Rāvaṇa, was delighted. Then Indrajit, remaining in the sky (i.e. air) only fought, and the monkeys did not notice him. Then Hanūmat and Jāmbavat jumped into the sky and struck Indrajit with the peaks of mountains. Then he fell on the ground, and Lakṣmaṇa made him go to the world of Yama. Then Atikāya and Mahākāya struck the army of the monkeys in various ways, harassed Lakṣmaṇa, fought with Rāma, hurt Sugrīva, fought with Hanūmat and Jāmbavat. The two (i.e. Hanūmat and Jāmbavat) defeated them, and capturing the two warriors, took them near Rāma, and reported to him. Rāma said to Atikāya: "Tell (us) about the war between me and Rāvaṇa and other very fearful ministers."

Atikāya said:

247-248. Having divided the army, we shall first certainly have war (with you). There is a demon by name Vidyunmālin. He is very mighty. He is a strange fighter. He is visible or invisible when he fights. He alone will fight with all monkeys. Many other strong, great (warriors) who have been taught (the use of) weapons, have come. We two also shall fight with you. Having got into the Puṣpaka, from the other side Rāvaṇa shall kill you only.

249-253. Other demons like Kumbhakarna also, taking their own forms, will surround and seize you; then they will show you to Sītā and kill you near her only.

Rāma said: "Oh, what cannot be accomplished by the powerful! The way of destiny is crooked." Sugrīva, getting very much enraged, looked angrily at Rāma and said to him: "These two should be killed. They should not be released". Rāma said: "They should not be killed; they should be released. Bring garments and ornaments". As soon as he said these (words), Hanūmat brought them, and Rāma gave them to the two (demons). Having saluted Rāma, (they said): "Śukra has said that when the wood bent at five places, which is seen at the

gate of Laṅkā, is broken, Rāvaṇa will be killed.

254-260. The order stated by Bhārgava written down is : 'Immediately after the cutting of the wood, he should go to the nether world.' Therefore, cut off this wood in one effort by dropping your arrow into the five parts. Then, knowing your power, we shall have a very close fight." Then knowing the words of Bhārgava, Rāma strung the bow just by touching the first end of it, and fixing the arrow on the bow, and just while making the demons and Hanūmat hear (the stringing of the bow), discharged an arrow. The arrow left the bow. The two demons marked the path of the arrow. The wood was cut off into five parts by the arrow. Seeing this they requested Rāma : "Our children should be protected by you." Rāma said : "All right." The demons entered Laṅkā. Then the monkeys went to fight at the rampart; everywhere they covered it with their hips, feet, knees, hands and backs and made it level, and then went to another rampart. Then that Rāvaṇa came (there), and made them flee by (striking them with) his arrows, and as he followed them, he went to Rāma. He struck Rāma also with five arrows. Then Rāma wounded Rāvaṇa with ten arrows.

261-275. Then a very fierce fight took place between the two. Rāvaṇa struck (Rāma) with ten arrows. Then the demon, with his body wounded by Rāma's arrows, became intent upon running (away). The monkeys and Lakṣmaṇa killed crores of demons. Then the next day, Bibhiṣaṇa discussing (this) with Rāvaṇa, said these words to Rāvaṇa : "This is the time (to use) the third means of success against the enemy. Do not think of the fourth. The fourth one, which is wrong, is not recommended for one who acts according to (the rules of) material welfare. Knowing the power of the enemy and of his own, and if his own power is superior, then war is recommended. The opposite would be destructive. You who are weak should not fight with the strong Rāma. He killed Vālin with (only) one arrow; and you have known Vālin before. He (killed) Mārīca with one arrow; and you too have fled. The brave demons are killed. Your son Indrajit also is killed. The excellent triad is broken; (so) do not fight with him. Accept his service after having given (back) Sitā to him. The wood at the city-gate, crooked at five

places, was cut off by Rāma with one arrow. Therefore, Rāma will kill you. For your sake many have perished; and many others will perish. O my brother, justice alone leads to happiness and not folly. Dismiss the loyal human wife who is embracing death, of the strong (Rāma) after honouring her. There will be a series of calamities if you unite with her when she is unwilling. The union with a woman accompanied by stinking filth is censured. If there is detachment, then doing what is prohibited leads to unhappiness. If you love her, then there would follow your death, and then (you will go to) hell.

276-281a. In vain will you die today if you unite with her; and, O dear one, you will either abandon your religiously wedded wife, or she might also die. There will be this and other sin. I shall make to you another suggestion dear to and beneficial for all. Going to Rāma and saluting and praising him say to him respectfully: 'O Rāma, loving those who have sought your refuge, forgive me. We all are vicious demons and are great sinners. Giving up (i.e. making us absolved of) the sin of kidnapping Sītā, protect our sons. O Rāma, we depend upon you. Protect or kill us as you wish.' O Rāvaṇa, we who, after having spoken like this, stand before that Rāma, will have a stable life, and a stable kingdom."

281b-283. Then Rāvaṇa said (these) words: "Oh! you are not a demon, you are not brave; you do not know the eternal way of life of a king. The best way of life for the brave-and not for the impotent ones like you, is by means of resorting to another man's wife, another man's wealth, and another man's kingdom. O prince, if you desire, join the enemy's side; get out."

284-288. Then Bibhiṣaṇa, having (first) gone to his abode, (and then) near Rāma, sought his refuge. Then Rāvaṇa went out of his city and fought with Rāma. The (other) demons also fought with Lakṣmaṇa and the monkeys. Rāma was unable to kill Rāvaṇa of a great might. Then he looked at Bibhiṣaṇa's face, and struck with his arrow the spot with a mark as told by Bibhiṣaṇa. Then Kumbhakarna took a great mace, brought about everything, swallowed many monkeys, and struck on the head of Rāma with (his) mace. Then with a hundred sharp arrows Rāma struck him. Kumbhakarna died.

289. Then Rāma made Bibhiṣaṇa perform the śrāddha ceremony etc. of Rāvaṇa and others; he got a Śiva-temple erected in his name; he consecrated just that Bibhiṣaṇa only on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of Laṅkā. He made Sītā, purified by means of her entering the fire, salute Śiva and Pārvatī; he who was given by the conqueror of (Tri-)pura full nectar-like power and life, got into the Puṣpaka, crossed the ocean, settled his army on the other side, installed (a representation of) Śiva there, and being honoured by sages and gods went to Ayodhyā.

290-291. Then accompanied by Bharata and others, and honoured by the citizens, Vasiṣṭha and (other) sages, he went home. He honoured gods like Indra who had come to him by offering them seats; having well honoured the monkeys, and having untied his matted hair, he was consecrated on the kingdom. Gods delighted by the elimination of Rāvaṇa, said to Rāma:

292. “You have put us back on our kingdoms (i.e. thrones); always protect us; you are the first (man) Viṣṇu; you have descended (on the earth) for curbing the wicked. By killing Rāvaṇa along with his relatives, you have become the protector of the three worlds. Be happy with Lakṣmī.” Saying so, they went to heaven.

293-298. Then the residents of Ayodhyā, being very much delighted, said to Rāma: “You have come (back) after having killed your enemies. You saw and met Śiva. Rāma, fortunately you shine; fortunately you are protecting the subjects. You will perform sacrifices; you will cause righteousness to grow.” Hearing these (words) of his citizens, Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, honoured all the citizens with (i.e. by giving them) garments etc. Worshipping the sages along with all people, the righteous one said to them: “I hope your penance is prospering; I hope your sacrifices are performed well. I hope you are devoted to your wives. I hope you worship the lord. I hope your wives bring forth good progeny. I hope you (enjoy) all excellent pleasures.”

The sages said:

299. O descendant of Kakutṣtha, everything about the ascetics is well-settled. From here we (shall now) go home. Or, O king, what do yōu think?

Rāma said:

300-305. Śamhbu is pleased with him with whom brāhmaṇas are pleased. He with whom Śiva is pleased, becomes happy. Therefore, please go after taking food here.

Saying, “All right”, the hosts of sages ate excellent food, and congratulating him with blessings, and being delighted, they went to their respective abodes. Rāma also, along with wife and younger brothers, was very much pleased. He who was dear to all people ruled over the kingdom free from bad elements. Even if a sinner listens to this episode, he becomes free from all sins, and reaches the highest Brahman. The man who would remember this (episode) would not meet with a calamity; so also the same is said about him who would narrate this episode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Fruit of Worship by Justly Procured, Stolen and Impaired Material

Sūta said:

1-10. Rāmacandra, of a pleased mind, ate along with the best sages, Viṣṇu, the monkeys and the bears at the hermitage of Bhāradvāja. The sky was covered with clouds; breezes were blowing gently; in that forest, there was somewhere the excellent house of Sudeva. It had eight pillars; it was fashioned with golden strips; it was (decked) with gems and pearls; it had silver pitchers in it; it was made fragrant with sandal, camphor, musk and saffron; it had multitudes of mire and was covered with pieces.*

Moonlight did not reach the walls in its middle part, and also they could not be seen by the sun (i.e. the sun's rays also did not reach them). The entire floor in the house was sprinkled with excellent juice of flowers. The entire (portion on) the north was without a construction of a wall (i.e. without a wall). On every

*कर्मैर्जालिकयुतं शकलोपरिसंवृति—this half of verse 4 is obscure.

pillar there were pictures; its courtyard, measuring a hundred cubits had natural parts and was fashioned with crystal. There was a desire-yielding tree in the courtyard, and it covered a larger part of the courtyard by means of its shadow. There was a dense grove of plantain trees forming the entire hedge. With the grove of the plantain trees there was the hedge of ketakī grove. It was full of the cries of peacocks, and bees were sweetly humming in it. It had the cooing of pigeons and was graced with many parks. It was thronged with hundreds of mansions; it was resounding with the notes of intoxicated cuckoos. It had many trees which were graced with big gems hanging from their branches.

11-17. The quarters were filled with the sound of the songs of the female kinnaris. It was pleasing due to many gardens. (Nearby) there was the excellent bank of Gautamī. The abode of Bhāradvāja was auspicious and was having many excellences. It was full of many male and female servants (respectively) resembling Cupid and (his spouse) Rati. The auspicious abode of Bhāradvāja was full of various implements. Inside it was a white-washed mansion, and there were eight orchards inside it. In the midst of them there was an extremely beautiful house. It was beautified with the palace-like abode of the great god on (all) the four sides. Each temple had graceful nocturnal instrumental music. It was just fashioned for the excellent heavenly women to rest (in it). Rāma moving out of the house of Bhāradvāja went accompanied by all to the great house in the middle of the forest. He entered it, the interior of which was covered with blankets; it had also separate seats (covered) with cloth; at the centre there was a throne; it had many seats for the sages.

18-21. Near the incomparable seat of the public reader of Purāṇas were the excellent seats for the king, the monkeys and the bears. Having seated the public reader of Purāṇas in the east, and then Vasiṣṭha and the best men, as well as Viṣṇu and the kings, he took a low seat. The sky was covered with clouds; the quarters were bright; the earth, with the seeds sown, was having good flowers. The courtyard was neither hot nor cold, had santāna flowers, and was fragrant with dama flowers. Looking at Śambhu, Rāma said (these) words: “(Please) tell (us) the story of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I who am hearing the excellent account of the great lord, which destroys a stream of

sins, am not satisfied. Tell me what the great lord, surrounded by the host of gods, did in Gautama's hermitage."

Śiva said:

22-23. The son of Vāyu, seated with a great lute, asked Śiva; "Tell (me) what the fruit would be by worshipping the lord with materials brought (after) they are procured justly. (Tell me also) what fruit would accrue if they are offered after stealing, and when materials that are collected are impaired. O lord, tell me (about these) one by one. Give the answers (to these) questions quickly. What is the use of the story, O Śambhu?"

24-27a. Then the lord said to the monkey: "I shall tell everything to you. Listen attentively. That Gautama, having worshipped the unborn Sadāśiva with (materials) procured justly, obtained this splendour. Formerly a brāhmaṇa named Ākatha, Maṅkaṇa's son, obtained as his chaste (wife) Suśobhanā. He was poor, full of pity, and without parents. He ate (every) sixth day. When, after having fasted for five days, he proceeded to eat, (just then) an ascetic came (there). The ascetic spoke sweet (words) to Ākatha: 'I who have fasted for a month, stand (here) after having come to you to eat. I shall eat if you have (food). O sage, I do not have a desire to eat in another's house.' "

Ākatha said:

27b-29. O best brahmaṇa, I do not eat for five days. On the sixth day my (turn to eat) food has come. Then I have to think what ought to be done. Come, I shall today wash your feet.

Then the meditating saint said, 'Yes,' and with his both feet being washed, desired to eat the food. He ate that food brought with ghee after it was cooked on the piece of a leaf of plantain tree. It was well furnished with wild articles; it (was) respectfully (served). Nothing was left of the food.

30-33. The ascetic Ākatha, seeing the sage to be pleased, was (himself) pleased along with his wife. The ascetic, having eaten, left. That Ākatha also, with his mind pleased, muttered (a hymn). With his wife he followed the way of the life of pigeons. The sage, with his wife, became ready for the expansion

of his austerities. Having put the lord of Umā in Śiva's Phallus on a seat, he worshipped him accompanied by his attendants. After putting the Phallus when he saw, he observed an unknown brāhmaṇa of an emaciated figure. The lord was naked, without feet, squint-eyed, a cripple with a withered arm, without ears. He recited Sāmans; he was well-versed in many sacred texts. He saw him who had come to his house.

34-36. Then Ākatha said (these) words to his wife Suśobhanā: "This brāhmaṇa of a loathsome dress is coming. Half the food should be given to him. Preserve half the food. When this day also passes, then, I think, on the sixth day you will not live for want of food. Tell me what you think?"

That Śobhanā said:

37. The (span of) life is written on the forehead. Nobody dies in between.

Ākatha said:

38-43a. Virabhadra had cut off the head of Sacrifice(?) of a fixed (span of) life and of a perpetual character, then what to say of human beings of a sinful nature? So if, avoiding (to give) him (food) you eat it, then I shall give him (my) food. I shall do according as you wish.

The wife said: "How shall I eat when you have not eaten? Have I formerly eaten (like this)? Listen to this another (thing). Food is the life of beings. This is actually seen by all living beings (i.e. men). Therefore, she who gives food is said to be the giver of life. Beings are produced from food; and since they grow (because of food), there is not greater gift than that of food. The gift of food is highly fruitful. The life of him who does not give to a being a drop of water sticking to the end of a shaking leaf of Aśvattha, is useless. Piety alone helps (a man) in the next world. Neither the wife nor the relatives.

43b-45a. The wife, the parents, the sons are helpful as long as a man's life lasts (i.e. as long as he is alive. They are) not (real) kinsmen. Wealth, youth, friends (of a man live) here only. He, best of those practising piety, enjoys piety here and in the next world. 'What about us?'"

Having heard these words of his wife, Ākatha, the treasure of kindness, gave, without any apprehension, the excellent food to him (i.e. that ascetic).

45b-50. 'This is god Śiva, of many acts, who has come (here)'. Deciding like this, he washed his body—destroying sins—his feet up to his knees, his shanks and ankles below them. Then he made the brāhmaṇa sip water. Then Ākatha brought that brāhmaṇa with crippled feet to his courtyard. He lifted him, of crippled feet, and made him sit on a seat offered to him. Ākatha, having worshipped the sage, fed him. In the meanwhile, some mad man came to the house. He took the man with the crippled feet and took him out of the house. He also burnt their house, and beat up the couple.

51-54a. The brāhmaṇa Ākatha who was beaten, quickly entered the burning house to take (out the representation) of the god. Then the best brāhmaṇa took (the representation of) the god whose worship was burnt, and coming out saw the heat on his face. Despising the worship that was (thus) burnt, and seeing (the representation of the god) with a burnt body, the pious one said to his wife: "Certainly my entire body should be rendered like that (i.e. should be burnt) as the worship of the great lord (is burnt)."

The crippled one said:

54b-55. Your worship done even afterwards will be fruitful, as when other materials are burnt, people give the material like those (as were burnt). In the same way, when (the materials of) worship are burnt, worship should be done like that (i.e. with fresh materials).

Ākatha said:

56-59a. O brāhmaṇa, nothing beneficial takes place by means of the worship which is done with stolen materials. So also, O brāhmaṇa, Śiva's worship done with materials unjustly procured, does not give auspicious (things).

Saying so, Ākatha quickly started to burn his body. Then the mad man took the burnt Phallus and vanished in a moment. Then the crippled one having become Hara (i.e. Śiva) warded

off Ākatha: “O brāhmaṇa, why are you dejected? I am the giver of boons. Ask for a boon.” Ākatha also asked for a very steady devotion for the feet of the lord.

Sūta said:

59b-61. Hearing this account, Rāma, surrounded by sages, was pleased. He saluted Bhāradvāja, and solicited his order to leave. Then the sage Bhāradvāja, being pleased, and having saluted Śambhu, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, Viṣṇu and the hosts of sages, dismissed them. They also went after saluting (Gautama).

The (sages) in the Naimiṣa (forest) said:

62. What did Rāma, of great lustre, along with all sages, do? So also (what did) that Śambhu of great glory (do?)

Sūta said:

63-67a. Rāma, desiring to perform the monthly śrāddha of Kauśalyā on the next day, invited excellent brāhmaṇas almost like sages. Rāma, who was singly devoted, (also) invited Śambhu who knew the entire truth, Nārada, Romaśa, Bhṛgu and Viśvāmitra. He slept on a comfortable bed on the ground. When the next morning came, he, having bathed in the morning according to the proper rites, got prepared by cooks pure food, vegetables etc. He (got) prepared various agreeable foods (dishes) to be sucked and chewed; so also thirty-six (other) dishes fit to be eaten like cakes.

67b-71a. He (got) prepared sweetened milk of six kinds, and two hundred cooked vegetables. He kept ready three hundred varieties of uncooked and mixed (articles); so also kāla vegetables, and various (kinds of) fruits. So also Rāma got ready roots and bulbs and bark-garments. With his brothers and family priest he went to the river; and having bathed in the water of Sarayū, having offered oblations into the fire, and speaking words of welcome to the guests the king worshipped the deities. Having restrained his breath, and having decided upon the object he gave them the invitation.

71b-76. Rāma invited Romaśa, Nārada at the all-god sacrifice. He invited Śambhu, Bhṛgu and Kauśika at (the rite in honour of) divine mothers. Then having prepared a circle and

having properly worshipped, he washed the feet (of the sages) with water given by Sītā. Having made those brāhmaṇas sip water he was about to go home. (At that time) a guest came (there). He was old. His figure was deformed. He was slim. His limbs were trembling. Similarly his feet and head were shaking. His (loose) skin was hanging. He was troubled by the excess of asthma. His cheeks had rheum of the eyes clinging to them. His beard was smeared with saliva. He said to king Rāma: "I am the only brāhmaṇa that remains (unfed). Give food also to me who am old and weak."

77-80. Rāma too, hearing his words, said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa: "You wash his feet. I shall worship the brāhmaṇa". The guest also spoke (these) words to Rāma who was absorbed (in the ritual): "I desire (to have) food (only) if you wash my feet. Do you insult me because (you think these) brāhmaṇas are superior to me? You do not know the method of performing a śrāddha as is practised by the great sages. If you insult me, then all brāhmaṇas are insulted. The śrāddha (would) be harmed and you will go to hell."

81-88. Then Rāma himself washed the feet of the brāhmaṇa; and having made the brāhmaṇa sip water he took him into the house. Then Rāma having sipped water, himself gave him a seat. When the brāhmaṇas were seated on their seats, he controlled his breath, and having obtained (their) consent to the performance of his rite, he would throw (i.e. he threw) water with sesamum seeds, with (the accompaniment of) the hymn *Apahata* at the region of the door. Then he should throw it at the place where the vessels for the dead ancestors are kept, with (the utterance of the hymn) *Udīratām*. Then he should throw the water with the sacred rice grains with (i.e. by reciting) the *Gāyatrī* (hymn) at the place where vessels for the gods are placed. Then having sprinkled the entire (food) that is cooked, he should utter this hymn. Then having thought of the place of śrāddha as Gayā, and having reflected upon Viṣṇu, so also having meditated upon the Vasus and (his) dead ancestors, he should proceed with the śrāddha. Then he should offer worship to all gods with grains of barley or rice. Then he should take along with sacred rice grains, two darbhas with their roots and tips joined. Touching the ground with his right knee, he should

offer water into the hands of the brāhmaṇas. Then, he who offers the śrāddha, should offer a seat with (the utterance of these words) *Purūravārdravāṇām devānām idamāsanam*, and should request them.

89-97a. Then having made a respectful offering on the tips of the darbhas at the north, he should turn the pot making it lie with the face on the knot of the darbhas. Then he should make the vessel lie with its face upwards, and should sprinkle it with water and golden ornaments. He should put water into the pot in which the pavitra (darbhas) have been put, with (the hymn) *Śam no devyā*. He should also (recite the hymn in honour) of all gods as long as the rite enjoined by the rules goes on. He should put barley-grains into the pot to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yavosi dhānyarājo vā*. Then he should offer water-pots mixed with honey (i.e. in which honey is placed) and with sandal and flowers. Then the respectful offering should be made with the utterance of the words: 'O brāhmaṇa, this is a respectful offering to you'. Then he should ask (the brāhmaṇas): 'May I invoke the gods'. Then saying *Viśvedevāḥ* he should put the darbhas on the head of the brāhmaṇa. He should then mutter: 'The Viśvedevas listen. May they come (here).' Then having come and being seated, he should take the pot with the darbhas. Then having thrown the water from the main vessel on his right foot, he should put the water from the pot on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa in front of the pavitraka, to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yā divyā*. Then saying: 'This respectful offering to you' and collecting the water of the respectful offering in a pot, he should put that vessel containing the water used for the respectful offering somewhere.

97b-102a. Then having put water on their hands, he should worship them with barley-grains. Requesting them: 'Worship, propitiate', he, the giver of the water, having worshipped from the foot to the head, and repeating the hymn *Gandhadvāreṇa*, he should, likewise, worship the dead ancestors, with his sacred thread hanging down from his right shoulder. Then having invested a brāhmaṇa with a sacred thread, and with the darbhas with the sesamum seeds, he should, with his left knee put on the ground, offer him a seat. Then facing the south he should ask them about the appropriate moment. Then he should put the

pot in the darbhas with their tips in the southern direction, in such a way that it lies on its face. Then having been tied with three darbhas he should make it lie with its face upwards.

102b-105a. Then having sprinkled (water) into the pots with two darbhas and sesamum seeds, he should put water to the accompaniment of the hymn *Śam no devyā*, and should put the sesamum seeds, uttering (the hymn) *Tilosi*. Then having offered sandal and flowers, he asks them: 'Are you satisfied with the respectful offering?' When they give the answer: 'The respectful offering (is satisfactory)' he should invoke his dead ancestors. Then, he should stand, and holding in his hand the respectful offering made of sesamum seeds, flowers and darbhas, he should offer the water of the respectful offering with the (utterance of the) hymn: *Uśantastvā*.

105b-106a. Then after that he should worship them, and should, as before, put the sacred thread so as to hang from his right shoulder. He should use a golden pot for (offerings to be made to) gods after having washed it.

106b-110a. He should use a silver pot for (oblations to be offered to) the dead ancestors, or as is available. In its absence a pot made of bell metal, not obtained from anyone else, is excellent. In its absence vessels made of palāśa leaves would be (used). But not a mediocre one. So also vessels made of leaves of plantain trees, mango trees, jambū leaves, punnāga leaves, parāka leaves, leaves of campā, madhūka, kuṭaja, so also leaves of mātuluṅga should be given by men at a śrāddha. Having brought the food in a ladle and ghee in hands, he should ask the brāhmaṇa about the spreading of the food after wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit. (He should say to the brāhmaṇa:)

110b-112a. 'I shall put (the oblation) into fire'. The reply (would be:) 'Do so.' Then having spread it out he should wear the sacred thread (in the usual way) and having sprinkled (water) should collect it. Saying *Somāya pitṛmate svadhā namaste* he should offer (oblation) to Soma. (He should also say:) *Yamāya pitṛmate svadhā namaḥ*.

112b-115a. Then he should offer the second oblation and then having scattered sacred rice grains (he should say:) *Agnaye*

kavyavāhanāya svadhā namaḥ. Then having offered oblation, and wearing the sacred thread over the right shoulder, he should surround the brāhmaṇas and go. Then he should repeatedly drop it into the vessels meant for the dead ancestors. Then he should wash the vessel meant for the piṇḍas and the ladle. Then he should arrange the vessels.

115b-116a. Then to the right side of the vessels he should offer food. He (i.e. Rāma) gave all (kinds of) food, edible vegetables.

116b-117. Then a very old guest, looking here and there, said to the calm Rāma: “Quickly salute me. I am hungry. I shall eat with your (i.e. after you) order.”

118-121a. Rāma spoke (these) words: “O sage, wait for a moment. I shall now quickly salute the deities and the dead ancestors.” Saying so Rāma offered the food in the vessels. He put the darbhas on the pavitraka meant for gods in such a way that their tips faced east and north, and those darbhas on the pavitraka (i.e. the two darbhas placed on the ground) meant for the dead ancestors in such a way that their tips faced west and south. They offer food and darbhas, barley grains and sesamum seeds looking upon them as ‘the earth’.

121b-125. He should first offer that, saying *Ye devāḥ*, to the gods, which is touched by the thumb of the brāhmaṇa to the accompaniment of these words: *Idam Viṣṇuḥ*. Then he should offer it to the dead ancestors and then to the guest. Then saying *Devatābhyo* he should offer the prayer repeated before and after eating. Having muttered the Gāyatrī(-hymn) three times, and with his sacred thread over his left shoulder and under the right arm-pit, he should face the east; then wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit he should say, ‘Hereafter (please) eat madhutraya’. When the brāhmaṇas have eaten, he should repeat a hymn that kills the demons, and should cause the food and (other) eatables to be served. I shall (now) tell in brief what great wonder that brāhmaṇa who was the guest, performed.

126-132a. With one mouthful he swallowed the entire (food) that was there in the pots; and said (to Rāma): “Give me that much food which would be enough for oblations to the vital airs. Why are you engaged in (performing) the śrāddha rite,

if you are unable to give this much? O Rāma, if you are unable to give (food) to me alone, then why are you intent upon giving to many (brāhmaṇas)? Deeds done rashly are not (properly) accomplished. All (the varieties of food) prepared by you are not enough even for making an offering to my vital airs. Tell me how you will give food to me and also to these (brāhmaṇas).” The hero Rāma said to him: “You eat according to your pleasure.” Saying so, Rāma observed that very wonderful deed of him. Then calling Śambhu, he said: “You spread out (i.e. serve the food). I think that you are my father and Śivā, Pārvatī is my mother. I think Bhavānī is Annapūrpā and the highest goddess.”

132b-142. That Pārvatī said (these) words: “I shall give him sufficient (food).” Then Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) brought a bell-metal-vessel full of boiled rice and adorned. With (i.e. in) a golden ladle she brought fragrant and bright boiled rice. “Let this be inexhaustible for him”, saying so she gladly gave once (only) the boiled rice on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa. He, with his head trembling, looked up. He had his hand stretched out. “Taking the boiled rice in the hand, give it to me. Is it sweet and well-cooked?” Śambhu’s wife (i.e. Pārvatī) said to him: “Eat from your hand, then (only) I shall give.” Then the brāhmaṇa again ate the food that was (placed) on his hand. Knowing that was inexhaustible, he stretched out the other hand. The goddess put the boiled rice on that hand. The chaste one gave the cooked, inexhaustible food to other brāhmaṇas (also). Then that brāhmaṇa, having seen that inexhaustible boiled rice on both his hands, stretched out another (i.e. a third) hand; and he said: “Give me excellent food, with soup and ghee.” Then that goddess Śivā, dear to Śambhu, gave the inexhaustible (boiled rice) to him. Whatever the chaste lady gave was all inexhaustible. (But) again and again another (i.e. a new) hand was produced. Thus having produced a thousand hands he stopped. The brāhmaṇa said to her: “Give me a mouthful of water. O good lady, you have satisfied me. Neither Rāma nor Sītā has satisfied me.”

Śambhu said:

143. Now Rāma has given you; Sītā has given you; I too

have given you. What full (food) should be given to you hereafter. Tell that to me.

The brāhmaṇa said:

144-147. I am satisfied. More should not be given to me.

As he knew that there was food on his hand, it somehow did not fall down. Seated (there) he thought a long time: 'How is it that I have (but) one hand? This is prepared for my enjoyment, and not for any other act of mine. Therefore, all this of another's activity will be empty.' Determining like this with his mind, the guest besmeared his body with (the food). That wonder took place when all gods were watching. Knowing that the brāhmaṇas were pleased, Rāma who knew the highest truth and who had a ladle in his hand, duly asked them: "Are you satisfied?"

148-153. The excellent brāhmaṇas (said:) "We are satisfied." He should, having scattered the food to the accompaniment of hymns, and facing the south, place the piṇḍa near the vessel. There only he should give mouthful (of water) to the brāhmaṇas. They threw their mouthfuls into the vessels of leaves in which remnants (of the food) were kept. Those brāhmaṇas entered the house without the guest. The guest said: "O king, I shall sip the water outside (only). O Rāma, I cannot get up. Give me your hand." Then Rāma gave his hand. (But) the best brāhmaṇa did not get up. Then Hanūmat also gave him his strong hand. Then taking the best brāhmaṇa with his other hand, the lord of the monkeys dragged him. The brāhmaṇa said with a loud cry:

The brāhmaṇa said:

154-160. Oh, clearly my hand is being cut off. Lift me by holding at any other (place) than that.

Then he (i.e. Hanūmat) covered (i.e. tied) his back up to his head with his tail, and forcibly ran over the ground. But the brāhmaṇa did not move. Then the brave monkey, cutting the ground with his feet, put both his feet on his head. The house became shattered; (and) all the brāhmaṇas stood outside. Then that Hanūmat came out along with that old brāhmaṇa. He put that old brāhmaṇa on a seat. Bringing water for the brāhmaṇa

in an earthen pot, Jāmbavat said (to him): “O brāhmaṇa, you should take clean water along with the pot. Sītā would wash the body, and Lakṣmaṇa will give (i.e. pour) water.” Then Jāmbavat told Rāma all that the brāhmaṇa had said. Rāma ordered his younger brother and his wife to wash (the body of) the brāhmaṇa. Then Lakṣmaṇa brought water to wash the brāhmaṇa’s body.

161-165. Then the king washed his entire body as he would wash an image. Then by Rāma’s advice the two (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā) did just like that. Then the guest threw his mouthful on the face of Sītā. She, having ornaments (on her person) was covered with water. Then that chaste lady cleaned the brāhmaṇa’s face full of phlegm and saliva. Again she washed, and his nose gave out phlegm. Then having made the brāhmaṇa sip water, Lakṣmaṇa said to him, “Get up”. The brāhmaṇa said: “It is not possible.” Then Hanūmat also came (there). The guest said to him: “I, a brāhmaṇa guest, am troubled by Hanūmat. Some time back while lifting me, the monkey dropped me down.”

166-170. Then Jāmbavat said to him: “My body is soft like the down. I shall hold you. O brāhmaṇa, you will not have any harm.” Saying so, Jāmbavat lifted the brāhmaṇa after supporting him with both his arms. Bringing him to the verge of the place occupied by the brāhmaṇas, he put down the sage. Then Rāma went round the best brāhmaṇas keeping them to his right. Blessed by the excellent brāhmaṇas he gave them tāmbūla and saluting, along with his brothers their feet, said: “O Sītā, you have not washed the feet of this guest. There is dirt at the couple of shanks of him. His face also is full of dirt. Wash his face properly. The brāhmaṇa cannot stand dirt.”

Sītā said:

171a. It was properly washed. (The dirt) has again come out.

Rāma said:

171b-174. Again wash off the dirt. Otherwise it would be my fault.

Then Sītā, having done like that, remained silent. That brāhmaṇa, highly enraged, said to Rāma and Sītā: “O best

king, Sītā should support my feet, you should support my hands, and let Bharata fan me. Let Lakṣmaṇa dress the multitude of (i.e. my profuse) hair. Let Śatrughna remove (i.e. cleanse) the phlegm on my body with his own garment.”

Sūta said:

175-182a. Then they did all that in the case of the guest as was told by him. The brāhmaṇas, men, monkeys and demons were amazed. Goddess Pārvatī and Śambhu looked at him with the knitting of their eyebrows (i.e. with frowns). Then the guest and Śambhu spoke mentally. The guest holding a conch, a disc, a mace, wearing a yellow garment, with his entire body adorned and very bright, was pleased. That Śambhu who had three eyes, who resembled pure crystal, who was adorned with all ornaments, who was (bright) like a crore of suns, who had put on a crown, who was the treasure of compassion, and who was formerly propitiated, became pleased. Sadāśiva holding the hand of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) got up. Rāma who was very righteous, and whose body was horripilated, and whose eyes were full of joy, fell (i.e. prostrated) on the ground like a staff. His brothers, lying on the ground like staffs, saluted him (i.e. Śiva). Śiva, having raised Rāma, embraced him, smelt his head and spoke sweet words to Rāma having lotus-like eyes.

Śiva said:

182b-183a. I am pleased, ask for a boon which is difficult to be had even by Brahmā and others. I have nothing to receive from you. You ask for a boon. Do not delay.

Śrī Rāma said:

183b-187a. O lord of the worlds, I have nothing to ask for. Now I have (in my possession) the kingdom of the earth. Heaven is secured through (one's) deeds. I have devotion through seeing your feet. I am enjoying good health, (as) you see. That Sītā (my wife) is the best among women. I have subjugated all kings. My subjects are endowed with righteousness. O you imperishable one, due to your arrival I am glad. Yet I shall ask for something. Let my devotion for you be stable. So also, O god,

O lord, stay in my house for three years in this form and expounding all duties.

Śiva said:

187b-192. Let it be so, O Rāma. Everything will be possible for you.

Then the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) said to the lotus-eyed Rāma: "O noble one, ask for the boon that you desire. I am pleased with you." Śrī Rāma said (these) words: "I have nothing to be solicited. Whatever I wanted to have, I have had it from Śambhu. All else has (already) been said. Yet, O Viṣṇu, I ask for one (thing). Always be pleased (with me)." Then Viṣṇu said to Sītā: "I am now pleased with you. Ask for a boon. I shall grant it." Then Sītā said (these) words: "Before (some) time my husband has asked for a boon. I have no other boon (to seek from you). If you willingly grant (one), then let my mind (always) turn away from another man (than my husband). O brāhmaṇa, O lord, my salutation to you."

193-197. Then all the sages saluted the two excellent deities. He then said to Rāma: "(Now), eat along with your brothers. With the goddess (Pārvatī) I shall stay in your charming, secluded mansion. Let Viṣṇu who does all things, and who is accompanied by the daughter of the ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī), stay in one mansion, O Rāma, for he is very greedy." Then the revered sage Vasiṣṭha sat in front of the two in a clean, great house, rich with seats and containing many vessels. Other sages and kings also sat according to their (seniority in) ages. Then king Rāma, along with his brothers, made them sit on a soft, even seat.

198-205a. Rāma, comforting his servants led by Hanūmat, said: "You should stand round about. I shall eat afterwards. (This will not be) in a different manner." Then they all gave them respectful offerings one by one. All those who were Rāma's attendants, also ate (food). Giving them tāmbūla etc. (Rāma) fed the chief monkeys and others. Then the lotus-eyed Rāma, after they all had eaten (food), gave food to the helpless, the blind, the poor so also to the beasts, birds and animals, and started offering the sandhyā (prayer). Then the king offered his sandhyā (prayer) and muttered (the hymns), and having saluted

them occupied the throne. That Rāma, the descendent of Raghu, being waited upon by the citizens and inhabitants of the country, shone, when in the assembly, as god (Indra), the lord of Śacī, surrounded by all gods. He executed all the work of (the administration of) the kingdom along with his brothers; (then) Rāma, (calling) each one by his name gave leave to all. He also dismissed his brothers and other monkeys.

205b-207. Then the very lustrous Vasiṣṭha said (these) words to Rāma: “O Rāma, do not forget the duty that you have to perform in the morning. The venerable lord of Ambikā, the lord of the worlds, Śambhu is seated there. The glorious one should be diligently remembered and saluted.” Saying, “All right”, the king (i.e. Rāma) saluted his preceptor, and gave him leave; and thinking of the lord of lords, he resorted to his wife.

The sages said:

208. O preceptor, tell us what Rāma, the best among the intelligent, did after having got up in the morning. We have a curiosity to listen to it.

Sūta said:

209. Then seeing Śambhu, Rāma said to him: “(Please) narrate the tale of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I am not (fully) satisfied with (the account of) the greatness of Śiva, which destroys the stream of sins, (though) I have been hearing it.”

Śambhu said:

210-217. Now I shall tell you the reply given by the lord to the remaining question. Those who wait upon the deity with materials procured unjustly, become deformed, as (for example) a demon, named Rūpaka, propitiated Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. He made a bell to please the lord by (spending) that wealth only. His son was known as Sampāti. He worshipped Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. Both of them died one day. They went to Śiva’s heaven. Virabhadra spoke to them: “O Rūpaka, you offered worship with wealth that was unjustly earned; you also made a bell etc. Due to that conduct you will be deformed and will be (born as) a thief. Clearly due to

not listening to the utterance of Śiva's name, his ears would perish due to the sound (of the name) and he would not see (the lord). By this much, O lord, you have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have devotion". Thus Virabhadra directed the attendant named Anaśana, wandering somewhere. The two, who were reduced to that state, stayed in Śiva's heaven.

Śambhu said:

218-223. I shall now tell (you) the story about the impaired materials of worship which the great lord told Hanūmat: O Rāma, listen to the account of each of the goblin-attendants of Śiva. I shall also tell you (about) the ripening of actions.

Śiva who was asked by Hanūmat to narrate (the account of) the attendants with impaired bodies said: "Listen to what is said about him who is a knower, and who will knowingly offer impaired materials to the lord: He has perspiration on his entire body; for all the time he has perspiration on his body; his garments are wet due to perspiration; his body has a small stream brought about by perspiration; drops of perspiration fall from the tip of his nose. He is seen to be unfit for touch. Formerly, he, while perspiring, propitiated the lord. I shall tell you a historical account about this:

224-230a. There was a brāhmaṇa peasant named Cekitāna. Everyday he had agricultural produce after having bathed in the morning. When the time of mid-day came, the brāhmaṇa muttered (a hymn). He then said to his wife: 'Quickly bring me food.' With the food she brought, he who always perspired and who was tormented by the sun, speedily worshipped Śiva with sandal, flowers, sacred rice grains full of (his) perspiration. When the evening came, he, with his body washed and looking very handsome, worshipped the lord of gods with means (i.e. materials) available in the season. The very intelligent one died and went to Śiva's heaven. Virabhadra also said to him: 'Be Śiva's attendant (named) Svedila. Formerly you worshipped Śambhu with materials touched by your perspiration. You were always full of perspiration. Therefore, you become the attendant (called) Svedila.' "

Śambhu said:

230b-231. O Rāma, thus ordered by Vira (i.e. Virabhadra) he became an attendant. O noble one, see this Ghaṇṭāmukha. He was a vaiśya named Vibhāvasu in his former existence. He was pious. He was a great donor. Everyday he fed brāhmaṇas. He practised religious rites. In the morning he saluted and worshipped Śiva with flowers. He smeared a small (portion of the ground) with cowdung; and having worshipped the lord and offered him a lotus etc. he sounded his impaired bell.

Rāma said:

232. How (i.e. due to what) was his bell impaired?

Śambhu said:

233-236. Formerly there was a stout (person) known as Soma. His son, called Manda, was ten years old. He had put kulmāṣa grains cooked in fire into a bell, O king; and he had eaten them. Therefore, it had become impaired. Trying to seize that vaiśya he said these (words). The vaiśya himself cleaned (other) materials but (not) the bell. Due to his using it (without cleaning it) he contracted sin, and so became the attendant Ghaṇṭāmukha.

Rāma said:

237. When the materials of worship were purified, it was also purified. Then how could it cause sin? It is properly said that the purifier of materials is for purifying the materials(?).

Śambhu said:

238. In the ordinary parlance there will be none who will not be devoted to you. He will go to Śiva's place. The narrator also would be like that.

Sūta said:

239-242. He who narrates this story, will be like him on the earth. This most secret (account) would give the knowledge about Śiva. O brāhmaṇas, I have told you this great (account) helping (you) to lead an auspicious life. He who listens to it

devoutly, is honoured in Śiva's heaven. To the reader of the Purāṇa one should give a garment, a cow, golden ornaments, fertile land according to one's capacity. He who recites or listens to this dialogue between Śiva and Rāghava destroying the entire stream of sins, goes to the highest place.

THE
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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA : SECTION VI: UTTARAKHAṆḌA

1. The Contents of the Section in Brief	2313
2. Nārāyaṇa Grants Boons to Rudra	2318
3. Jālandhara Is Born and Blessed by Brahmā	2320
4. Jālandhara's Marriage and Consecration	2323
5. War Between Gods and Demons	2327
6. Death of Demon Bala	2333
7. Lakṣmī Intervenes in the Fight between Viṣṇu and Jālandhara	2336
8. Conditions During Jālandhara's Rule	2342
9. The Creation of a New Powerful Weapon by Śiva	2344
10. Jālandhara's Messenger Rāhu Meets Śiva	2347
11. Śiva's Attendants Fight the Demons Off	2351
12. Śiva Arrives on the Battlefield	2355
13. Jālandhara Disguised as Śiva goes to Pārvatī	2360
14. Viṣṇu Creates Illusion for Vṛndā	2363
15. Vṛndā Goes to Heaven	2369
16. Jālandhara Gives up His Disguise	2373
17. Śukra is Confined by Kṛtyā inside Her Vulva	2376
18. Jālandhara Is Killed	2382
19. A Description of Śrīśaila	2392
20. The Story of Sagara	2394
21. The Greatness of Haridvāra	2396
22. An Eulogy of Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Prayāga	2398
23. The Importance of Tulasī	2404
24. The Importance of Prayāga	2407
25. A Three-night Tulasī Vow	2408
26. Gift of Food Praised	2412

Contents

27. Constructing Tanks, Planting Trees etc.	2413
28. Merit Coming From Exposition of a Sacred Text	2417
29. The Importance of Gopicandana	2420
30. The Greatness of the Vow of Lamp	2422
31. The Vow of Janmāṣṭamī	2430
32. A Gift of Land Is the Best	2433
33. A Hymn to Śaṇi as a Remover of Trouble	2438
34. The Account of Trispṛśā	2442
35. The Vow of Unmilanī	2448
36. The Vow of Pakṣavardhinī	2453
37. Keeping Awake on Ekādaśī and Dvādaśī	2456
38. The Origin of Ekādaśī and Killing of Demon Mura	2462
39. The Importance of the Mokṣadā Ekādaśī	2471
40. Saphalā Ekādaśī	2475
41. Putradā Ekādaśī	2478
42. The Vow of Ṣaṭṭilā Ekādaśī	2481
43. Jayā Ekādaśī	2485
44. Vijayā Ekādaśī	2489
45. Āmalakī Ekādaśī	2491
46. Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī	2496
47. Kāmadā Ekādaśī	2500
48. Varūthinī Ekādaśī	2503
49. Mohinī Ekādaśī	2505
50. Aparā Ekādaśī	2508
51. Nirjalā Ekādaśī	2510
52. Yoginī Ekādaśī	2514
53. Devaśayanī Ekādaśī	2517
54. Kāmikā Ekādaśī	2519
55. Putradā Ekādaśī	2522
56. Ajā Ekādaśī	2525
57. Padmā Ekādaśī	2526
58. Indirā Ekādaśī	2530
59. Pāpāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī	2532
60. Ramā Ekādaśī	2534
61. Prabodhinī Ekādaśī	2538
62. Kamalā Ekādaśī	2543
63. Kāmadā Ekādaśī	2546
64. The Importance of Cāturmāsya	2548

Contents

65. Cāturmāsya Vow to be Concluded Properly	2555
66. Propitiation of Yama	2557
67. The Importance of Gopīcandana	2563
68. The Greatness of Viṣṇu's Devotees	2564
69. The Vow of Śravaṇa Dvādaśī	2565
70. The Vow of Nadi-trirātra	2569
71. Viṣṇu's One Thousand Names	2572
72. Merit of Reciting the Viṣṇusahasranāma	2597
73. Rāmarakṣā Stotra	2598
74. Merit Earned Through Gifts	2599
75. The Greatness of Gaṇḍikā	2602
76. The Hymn Causing Prosperity	2603
77. The Vow of Ṛṣipañcamī	2606
78. The Hymn called 'Apamārjana'	2610
79. The Importance of Apamārjana	2616
80. The Greatness of Viṣṇu	2618
81. The Importance of Gaṅgā	2629

VI UTTARAKHAṆḌA

(The Sequel or Concluding Section)

CHAPTER ONE

The Contents of the Section in Brief

1-2. Om, salutation to Śrī Viṣṇu. Om salutation to Śrī Veda-
vyāsa.

Om, having saluted Nārāyaṇa, so also Nara, the best among men, and goddess Sarasvatī and Vyāsa, one should narrate the (god's) glory. Salutation to the preceptor who opened the eyes of one who is blind due to the darkness of ignorance with the pencil of the collyrium of knowledge.

The sages said:

3-4. O best among the learned, we have heard the Pātāla-khaṇḍa full of various accounts and giving great joy, which you narrated (to us). Now we desire to hear what remains (i.e. the remaining portion) of the Padma (Purāṇa), and which augments devotion to the lord. O preceptor, please narrate it.

Sūta said:

5-7a. O sages, listen, all of you, to what Śaṅkara told Nārada who asked him, and which is the knowledge that destroys sins. Once Nārada, dear to the lord, while roaming over the worlds went to Mandara mountain to ask Śambhu some secret. There he saluted the lord of Umā who was seated. Directed by Śiva's order, he sat on a seat in front of the lord. He asked the god the same as you, the best ones, have asked.

Nārada said:

7b-8. O lord, O god of gods, O lord of Pārvatī, O preceptor

of the world, tell me that by which the knowledge about the truth of lord can be had.

Śiva said:

9-15. O Nārada, listen to the Purāṇa which I shall tell you, which is like the Vedas and hearing which a man is free from all sins. There is no doubt about it. First there is the glory of Uttara. Then there is the story of the Parvata (Mountain). Then there is the narration of Haridvāra; then there is the account of (Gaṅgā) rising from Viṣṇu's feet. I shall also describe the holy place of Prayāga, so also the (holy place called) Aśvamedhika. I shall tell (you) about the greatness of Tulasī; so also (I shall describe) the conch, the disc, the mace etc. Then there is the account of Dvārakā. (Then there are) the rules about a great festival. (So also) there is the description of the religious merit obtained from (bathing in) a lake, so also (from bathing in) a reservoir of water, a well, or a cistern; (there is the description of the views of) the Gāṇapatya, of the holy texts of the Vaiṣṇavas; (then) there is (the description) of the greatness of repairs (of old temples etc.); of visiting Gangā; of the greatness of Sābhramatī; so also of the banks (of rivers etc.), of the duties of women and śūdras and of what (course) should be followed by those who are forsaken.

16-19. In the dialogue between Umā and Maheśa *The Thousand Names of Viṣṇu* are told. That was brought from Kailāsa by Nārada, the brāhmaṇa. It should be recited with a concentrated mind to the people, brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and especially to women and śūdras. It is holy; it is pure; it increases (the span of) life; it should be especially recited; (thereby a man) would obtain intimate union with Viṣṇu. That hymn containing the thousand names of Viṣṇu is known in the world to be purifying. It (i.e. the Uttarakhaṇḍa) will tell about the places of the twentyfour images.

20-24a. I shall tell about their parents and their interior. I shall also tell you about their family, their Vedas, their deeds; so also about their wives, as I see these from my knowledge. (I shall tell you) about the importance of the twentyfour Ekādaśī days and Dvādaśī days. (I shall narrate to you) the greatness of Godāvarī; so also about putting on (one's person) the conch and

ths disc. Brāhmaṇas especially should put these on with a rite. O sage, I shall describe to you the importance of Yamunā, so also of Gaṇḍikā. I shall undoubtedly tell you about the greatness of Vetravatī. (I shall tell you) about the religious merit due to (a visit to) the holy place called Gilli. I shall describe to you the Śilā Kṣetra which is great.

24b-28. All that I shall describe in the Khaṇḍa called Uttara. (I shall narrate to you) the greatness of Arbudeśvara and the holy places etc. that are there. (I shall similarly tell you about) the importance of Sarasvatī and the holy place called Siddhakṣetra. (I shall tell you about) the rise of Padmanābha and the wearing of Tulasī(-leaves etc.). (I shall tell you about) the greatness of gopīcandana, and about the worship of the throne. (I shall describe to you) the greatness of Nirañjana (i.e. Śiva); so also about the vision of knowledge; so also about offering of lights there, and especially of incense. (I shall tell you about) the importance of Kārtika and also that of Māgha. I shall tell you about the greatness of all vows (performed) duly.

29-33a. O Nārada, I shall tell you about (the holy place of) Jagannātha, the best one, seeing whom men are freed from the sin of the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (Please) listen; whatever is performed and experienced there gives (i.e. leads one to) the other world. (Even) brāhmaṇas, well-versed in the Vedas eat there; then what to say about other people, O you of a good vow! Here there are twentyfive serpents and various female dancers also. On seeing Jagannātha (the sins due to murders such as) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, the murder of a child or that of a cow, all perish. A being (just while) uttering (the name) *Jagannātha* is free from great sins.

33b-36. I shall tell you about Viṣṇu's worship with flowers, and its importance also. I shall tell you all that—the description of the mountains; so also the description of countries; so also the supreme greatness of worshipping the cow etc.; so also about the worship of the siddhas; (I shall also tell you about) the religious merit which is obtained when boiled rice is given (to brāhmaṇas). (I shall tell you about) the gift of the interior of a Kadalī; the gift of a tree. After that (I shall tell you about) the gift of a horse; the gift of an elephant; so also about the supreme importance of muttering (a hymn); so also about the

knowledge of hymns and initiation; about the characteristics of a preceptor.

37-43. In (the Uttarakhaṇḍa) the characteristics of a disciple, as the public readers of the Purāṇas know them, are also told. (So also it contains) the importance of the water (flowing) from the feet (of the superiors), and (the information about) śrāddha etc. offered to the dead ancestors; (it also contains information about) the gift to the manes on the days (fixed for making offerings to them); so also the rite of giving sapphires. (It also contains information about) the lunar and solar eclipses and (about) what gifts should be (given on these days). (It tells about) the importance of the gift of a Śālagrāma (stone); so also of flowers and sandal; about the time of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth (days) and about the days sacred to Viṣṇu. (It contains information about) their greatness and the names of Rudra etc. (It also gives the information about) the greatness of Mathurā, and (about) Kurukṣetra etc. (It also contains) the account of the construction of the bridge (over the sea); so also (the account) of Śrī Rāmeśvara. (It also contains the information about) the greatness of Tryambaka, and (about) the fruit of (staying at) Pañcavatī. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the importance of the Daṇḍaka forest. (It tells about) the greatness of the Daṇḍaka forest and about the cause of the birth of Nṛsimha. (It tells about) the greatness of the Gītā; so also of the Bhāgavata, so also the importance of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā), and the description of Indraprastha.

44-50. (It contains) the life of Rukmāṅgada and (tells about) the greatness of a devotee of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, listen; if a devotee of Viṣṇu is fed but once, the man who feeds him gets that fruit which he would obtain by giving the entire earth along with ocean. The sāttvika are endowed with goodness; the rājasa are said to be lustful. The tāmasa are described to be vicious. The characteristics of the devotees of Viṣṇu are also described (in it). O Nārada, I shall tell you about the greatness, as described, of the brāhmaṇas who are devotees of Viṣṇu and who are intent upon practising the way of life as told in the Vedas. O best sage, then I shall tell you about the sin of those who, through greed for wealth, are engaged in censuring Viṣṇu. (I shall tell) you the account of Jvālāmukhī, and (about) the importance

of) seeing the Himālaya. I shall describe to you the region where Brahmā was born. I shall tell you about the origin of kāyasthas; so also the account of Gayā. (I shall describe to you) the nature of Gadādhara and (give you) the description of (the river at Gayā called) Phalgu.

51-56a. In the Padma (Purāṇa), the importance of these is seen (and) is also heard (from it). (It also contains) the nature of great knowledge, and the glory of Kalki. (It contains the description of) Rāmagayā and Pretaśilā. I shall tell you the account of Brahmā and Śilā; so also the account of Brahmā's origin, and of the banyan tree called Akṣaya. Great religious merit (accrues) by (performing) a śrāddha there. I shall tell (you) all about that. (I shall tell you about) the worship of Śiva done by the noble Viṣṇu. Even now Mahārudra mutters (the names of) Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu). After that, O Nārada, I shall describe to you the greatness of the ocean; so also the religious merit due to the offering of sesamum seeds and also due to (the offering of) barley-grains; so also (the religious merit) due to the offering of water mixed with Tulasī leaves and due to the (worship of) deity.

56b-59a. I shall tell you about its greatness as Brahmā told it to me. (I shall describe to you) the greatness of the sound of the conch and religious merit of its innumerable (varieties). (I shall tell you about) the greatness of Sunday, and of abstract meditation on him called Viṣṇu. (I shall tell you) the importance of Vaidhṛta and also of Vyatipāta (i.e. a great calamity). O Nārada, I shall tell you all this, as has been told.

59b-64. Uttarakhaṇḍa tells about the gift of food, the gift of garments, the gift of land, so also (of) a bull, about the greatness of Janmāṣṭamī, the importance of the Matsya (Purāṇa), the importance of the Kūrma (Purāṇa) and so also of the Vārāha (Purāṇa). I shall also tell (you) the importance of the gifts of cows etc. After that I shall describe to you the greatness of the devotees like Prahlāda, who are well-known on the earth. Listen, O best divine sage. O best divine sage, (it contains) the importance of keeping awake (during certain nights); so also of the gift of lamps; so also (it tells about) the fruit of the separate worship (offered) during different watches. (It contains) the account

of Paraśurāma; so also (of) the murder of Reṇukā; so also (of) the gift of land made to brāhmaṇas and whatever Rāmā did.

65-66a. I shall describe fully the religious merit due to (the stay in) Rāma's hermitage. I shall tell you the account of Narmadā, and that of the religious merit and the worship; so also (I shall tell you about) the gift of (the texts of) the Vedas and the Purāṇas and the form of the (various) stages of life.

66b-70. (I shall tell you about) the religious merit due to the gift of gold and that of the world; (about) the gift of the Padma Purāṇa and the nature of (its) Khaṇḍas. The first is Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa; the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The third is Svargakhaṇḍa and the fourth is called Pātāla. The fifth is called Uttara. These are the Khaṇḍas in order. The noble Vyāsa composed this Padma Purāṇa for the well-being of the people and for the welfare of brāhmaṇas. It creates religious merit in śūdras, and removes acute poverty. It gives salvation and happiness and quickly brings about inexhaustible good fortune. O Nārada, having listened to it, a man should give gifts according to the rite (told therein).

CHAPTER TWO

Nārāyaṇa Grants Boons to Rudra

Maheśa said:

1-8a. There are one lakh and twentyfive thousand mountains. In the midst of them stands the very holy, excellent Badarikāśrama where, O Nārada, lives Nara-Nārāyaṇa. I shall now tell (you about) his nature and lustre. O brāhmaṇa, two men, of the form of Kṛṣṇa and called Nara and Nārāyaṇa, live on the peak of the Himālaya. One man is white; the other one is black. Those striving (to reach) the Himālaya go along that path (and reach them). The great lord is of a tawny and fair complexion and has matted hair. This is Kṛṣṇa, Nārāyaṇa, the origin of the world and the great lord. He has four arms; he is great; is rich (or has Lakṣmī); is manifest; is unmanifest; and is

ancient. O you of a good vow, in the period of the summer solstice a great worship takes place there. (Then) for six months no worship is offered. The (region) is then covered with snow till the period of the winter solstice sets in. Therefore, such a deity was never there seen in the past nor will ever be in future.

8b-12. Gods live there; so also the hermitages of the sages are there. The oblations to Agni are made, the Vedas (are recited, and so) the sound (of their recital) is always heard there. A man should see the deity; it destroys (the sin of) a crore murders. A man should bathe where there is Alakanandā-Gaṅgā (confluence). He is free from a great sin after bathing there. There is no doubt that the god, the lord of the universe, dwells there. O brāhmaṇa, on one occasion I practised good (i.e. severe) penance (there). Then god Nārāyaṇa who favours his devotees, who is the immutable Puruṣa, who is actually the god having Garuḍa as his banner, was very much pleased, and said to me: “O you of a good vow, ask for a boon”.

Śrī Nārāyaṇa said:

13. O god, whatever desire you have, I shall fulfil it. You are the lord of Kailāsa; you are actually Rudra, the protector of the universe.

Rudra said:

14-18. O god Janārdana, you are well-pleased. I shall completely accept (the boons). If you desire to grant boons, then grant me two boons. Let me always have devotion to you. I shall be (i.e. let me be) the chief among the devotees. Let all people say: ‘This one is a constant devotee’. O lord, through your favour I shall be the giver of salvation. I shall grant (salvation) to those people who will resort to me. There is no doubt about this. In the world I shall be famous as Viṣṇu’s devotee. O lord, let him whom I (will) grant a boon, have salvation. I, having matted hair, and with my body smeared with sacred ash, (would stay) near you. By the grace of your feet I shall be well-known in the world.

CHAPTER THREE

*Jālandhara Is Born and Blessed by Brahmā**Sūta said:*

1-6. Once Nārada went to the Kāmya forest to see the Pāṇḍavas emaciated due to grief. They properly received the brāhmaṇa. Then saluting the greatest sage, Yudhiṣṭhira said: “O venerable one, due to which act (of ours) have we fallen into this ocean of distress?” To him the sage said, “O son of Pāṇḍu, give up your grief. Which man is happy in this mundane existence which is an assemblage of pleasures and pains? Even the lord is not stable. He is troubled by the heaps of bodies. Nobody is free from grief; everyone has to put up with grief, since (even) the Sun’s body is seized by Rāhu. Rāhu’s head is also cut off by Viṣṇu at the time of enjoying (i.e. drinking) nectar. That god holding the Śārṅga bow (i.e. god Viṣṇu) also was thrown into the deep ocean by brave Jālandhara. He too was killed by Śiva.”

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

7-8. Who was that brave Jālandhara? Whose son was he? Due to what was he strong? How did the bull-bannered god (Śiva) kill Jālandhara in a battle? O you treasure of penance, tell me all this in detail.

Thus addressed by the king (Yudhiṣṭhira), Nārada told (it).

Nārada said:

9. O king, listen to the divine tale which destroys the entire stream of sins; so also (listen to) the very wonderful (account of) the battle between Śiva and (Jālandhara) the son of the Ocean.

10-15. Once Indra who was crowded with the bebies of celestial nymphs, who was surrounded by many gods, who was crowded by gandharvas well-versed in the art of (playing upon) the lute, went to praise Śiva. (The celestial nymphs) Rambhā, Tilottamā, Rāmā, Karpūrā, so also Kadālī and Madanā, Bhārati, Kāmā adorned with all ornaments and other female dancers went into the vicinity of the god (Śiva). Gandharvas, yakṣas, siddhas, so also Nārada and Tumburu, and kinnaras and female kinnaras repeatedly came there. So also

Vāyu, Varuṇa, Kubera, the giver of wealth, Yama, Agni, Nirṛti, so also other groups of deities (went there). Indra, seated in an aeroplane, celestial ladies seated in aeroplanes, and (other) gods seated in their own vehicles speedily went to Kailāsa.

16-23a. Then the gods saw that Kailāsa, an excellent mountain, the best among all the mountains, the ornament of the earth as it were. It stood giving pleasure on all sides, (was) pure and (stood) like the heap of superhuman powers. The trees there were the desire-yielding trees. The stones there gave whatever was desired. The mountain looked charming due to pun-nāga, nāga, campā, tilakā, devadāru, aśoka, pātala, mango, mandāra (trees). The breezes there carried the fragrance from the adjoining forest. The breezes from the Malaya (mountain) became crippled on account of a great movement. The wells there had crystal staircases, and their water was clean and deep. The lotuses (in them) resembling gold had clung to the emerald-like stalks. There the brightness of the white lotuses shone in all directions. The wells there were beautiful with white lotuses, and were covered with rubies. They were decked with green gems and were, on all sides, covered with the gomeda¹ (gems). They were constructed with ruby-stones, and were beautified with various minerals. They saw the Kailāsa mountain, more beautiful than heaven, and fashioned superior to it.

23b-30a. Seeing that greatest mountain Kailāsa, they were amazed. Indra and those deities got down from their aeroplanes. Then having come to Nandin, the door-keeper, they spoke (these) words: "O you best among the excellent attendants, listen to these good words: Quickly inform respectfully the lord of gods that the chief of gods (Indra), surrounded by all gods, has come here to dance." Having heard (these) words of Indra, Nandin said to Śiva: "O lord, this lord of gods, Indra, has come here with all (deities) to dance." Then (Śiva) said to him: "Quickly bring (in) the lord of Śacī (i.e. Indra)." Then Nandin brought in Indra along with them. He (i.e. Indra) seeing god Śiva, having the bull as his banner, praised him. All the female

1. Gomeda: A gem brought from the Himālayas and the Indus, described as of four different colours, viz. white, pale, yellow-red, and dark-blue.

dancers like Rambhā gladly danced there, near Śiva, with (i.e. to the accompaniment of) tabors, lutes and (other) musical instruments. Others, holding bell-metal musical instruments, lutes and large drums performed a zealous dance.

30b-34a. Indra himself excessively performed a beautiful dance, difficult (to be seen even) by gods. The god was delighted, (and) spoke (these) words to Indra: “O best among the gods, I am pleased with you. Ask for a boon”. When the god of gods (i.e. Śiva) spoke like this, Indra who was proud of the might of his arms, said in reply (these) words to Hara (i.e. Śiva): “I ask for that battle in which I shall have a warrior like you (to fight with). O lord, grant me such a battle.” Saying so, and having obtained a boon from lord Śiva, he went out.

34b-37a. When that Indra had left, Śiva said (these) words: “O attendants, listen to my words. The chief of gods has become very proud.” Saying so, Śiva then became angry. Then his wrath manifested itself in a bodily form, and stood before him; (that) wrath, (dark) as dense darkness, then said to Śiva: “Give me the order. O lord, what do (i.e. should) I do for you?”

37b-41a. Then (Śiva) the lord of Umā said: “You, the brave one, (should) after reaching the heavenly river of the Ocean, go and conquer Indra.” That wrath that was told like this, vanished. Those attendants were amazed. When the lord’s ordinance took place, the celestial river due to the heat of her excessive youth, was excited with lust; and seeing her, the lordly Ocean was full of the billows of water. Then, O best king, the union between Gaṅgā and the Ocean took place. The great river, reaching (the Ocean) enjoyed according to her might.

41b-43. Meantime, a mighty, very brave son was born on the great river by the Ocean. O king, the son of the great Ocean, weeping as soon as he was born, shook the earth. The three worlds resounded. Brahmā gave up the position of his fingers formed during profound concentration.

44-45. Meantime (Brahmā) the creator seeing the three worlds alarmed, went to the great Ocean at the words of Indra. Thinking that it was a wonder, he, mounted on his swan, speedily went (to the Ocean). Seeing Brahmā to have arrived, the Ocean offered him worship. Then Brahmā said to him: “O Ocean, why do you roar in vain?”

The Ocean said:

46-48a. O lord of gods, I am not roaring. It is my mighty son (that is roaring). (Please) protect my child. To see you is difficult.

“Let the son be seen (i.e. Present the son to Brahmā).” (Thus) he spoke to his very charming wife. She, at the behest of her husband, approached Brahmā along with the son. Putting him on the lap of Brahmā, she saluted his feet.

48b-49. Then seeing the Ocean’s son, Brahmā was indeed amazed. When Brahmā was unable to free from the hand of the child his beard seized by the child, the Ocean laughed and freeing the beard from the child’s hand, seized the child’s hand and left.

50. The self-born (Brahmā), seeing the child’s valour like that, affectionately called him Jālandhara, and he became Jālandhara by name (i.e. was named Jālandhara).

51-52. The lord of the beings (i.e. Brahmā) affectionately granted him a boon: “This Jālandhara will be unconquerable (even) by gods. By my favour he will enjoy (the lordship of) the heaven along with the nether world.” Speaking like this, Brahmā, mounting upon his swan, hurriedly disappeared.

CHAPTER FOUR

Jālandhara’s Marriage and Consecration

Nārada said:

1-5. That boy thus gradually growing in his childhood, jumped on his mother’s lap and ran to the ocean. Having brought the young ones of lions he, intent upon playing, put them into cages. Thus his was a fight of a lion with an elephant etc.; his valour was useful for a fight. From there he would fly into the sky and would drop down the birds on the ground. He, by means of his roars, frightened the heaven along with the ocean. O king, all the beings in the ocean were stricken by him

and due to his fear they concealed themselves. Seeing the water (of the ocean) without beings the submarine Fire, due to his fear, left his own region and entered the Himālaya (mountain).

6-8. That son of the Ocean gradually gave up childhood, reached youth, and valorously went to the heaven. Once the Ocean's son (i.e. Jālandhara) said to his father, the Ocean: "O father, give a very extensive place proper for my residence." Having understood the words of his son, the great Ocean said: "O son, I shall give you a kingdom difficult to be obtained on the earth."

9-10. Then Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), the preceptor of the demons, went to the Ocean. Seeing him coming, the Ocean worshipped him duly. Then when he was seated on the seat which had the lustre of gems having beauty spreading out, and which was offered by the lord of rivers, he had the great lustre like that of the lotus-born (Brahmā seated) upon the beautiful region of the peak of the Meru mountain charming with lustre.

11-13. The Ocean, joining the palms of his hands, said to Śukra: "Luckily (for me) you have come here. Tell me what I should do." Then Śukra, the preceptor of the family of demons, said to the Ocean: "What is the use of him who, being born, (simply) robs his mother of her youth, and does not grow above (the members of) his own family like a flag? Your son, due to his valour, will certainly enjoy the three worlds.

14-17. You have inundated a great seat on the Jambūdvīpa which is resorted to by the female attendants of Durgā. Give it up as the abode of Jālandhara. O great Ocean, give the kingdom there (i.e. of that region) to this son of yours. Being there he will be unconquerable and free from death." The Ocean thus addressed by Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra) with love, easily moved away, and due to his love for his son, showed (him) the place in the water. It was a hundred yojanas extensive, and was three hundred yojanas long. The auspicious country was well-known as Jālandhara after him.

18-31. The Ocean having called the excellent demon Maya, said to him: "Fashion a city for Jālandhara in the seat (i.e. region) of Jālandhara." Thus told by the ocean, Maya fashioned a city full of gems, having ramparts and city gates and having houses with staircases. In it the peacocks, engaged in violent

dances, and remaining on the grounds of the mansions decked with sapphires took them to be the movement of the clouds. In it the birds resorted to the rays rising from the ground (decked) with corals and rubies, taking them to be the lovely mango-sprouts. In it the peacocks, seeing in the golden mansions, the brilliance (as) in fires, ran away fearing it to be the wild fire. In it the directions are mingled with the lustre coming up from the crystal chambers. They appear as it were rising from the Mandara (mountain), and resemble the ocean with foam. In it the bright women, standing in groups in their mansions and with their faces resembling the full moon of the evening caused infatuation. In it the joys from the park with breezes made fragrant by indranipa flowers etc. entered the women's hearts and brought about the fever of fascination (in their hearts). In it a man, on seeing a coitus drawn in a picture, doubly indulges in it while engaged in a coitus with his wife. In it the lines of the smoke of the incense rising from the windows have become the sky resembling the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The entire sky in (i.e. above) it looks like being covered with a rainbow due to the lustre coming out from many houses and with autumnal cloud rising in it. In it the horses of the Sun, that have constantly wandered (and therefore are) very much vexed, take rest after remaining on the tops of mansions at midday. In it the excellent women in some of the mansions, wearing jasmine wreaths, shone like stars rising at night. In it the sound due to the friction of the chains of the golden swing made the ground beautiful like that of the Meru (mountain).

32-33. The Ocean along with the rivers and with Śukra consecrated there his son (as the king) with self-sounding musical instruments. We expect (i.e. think) that (Śukra) performed the auspicious rite at the time of the marriage of the Earth (with Jālandhara and his consecration as the king) with gay incantations and with words—the beautiful female swans as it were, in the lake of the mouth of Brahmā, with which the self-lustrous self-born (Brahmā) (performed the auspicious rite) at the time of Skanda's victory over Tāraka, and with which Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) performed (the auspicious rite) at the time of the festival of the sovereignty of Indra.

34-36. The great Ocean gave Jālandhara a fierce army that

sprang from his interior and that (amounted to) a thousand mahāpadmas. Śukra also gave Jālandhara through love his infatuating lore called *Mṛta-sañjivantī* and infatuating Rudra. Brahmā also gave the Ocean's son (i.e. Jālandhara) various other lores (secrets) of weapons and missiles. All else was then explained to him by Śukra.

37-40. Then having consecrated Jālandhara, his son, the Ocean, surrounded by the rivers, went with a divine body to his place. Jālandhara saw that divine city adorned with city gates; and being well honoured by groups of brāhmaṇas, moved with Śukra (into the city). In the meanwhile all the very mighty demons residing in the nether world and led by Kālanemi, came to Jālandhara. Then the very mighty heroes appointed the demon Śumbhāsura the general of the army resembling the milky ocean.

41-44. Then that Jālandhara, having brought under his control his army on the earth and making the water stable, looked after the kingdom given by his father. Meantime there was formerly in heaven a celestial nymph named Svarṇā. Due to Krauñca's favour a daughter named Vṛndā was born to her. The Creator fashioned the body of Vṛndā, to see the beauty along with splendour which he had made separately in one place. Svarṇā gave that young, beautiful girl Vṛndā, charming in all limbs and infatuating people, to Śukra who solicited her for (being married to) Jālandhara.

Śukra said:

45-52. O you beautiful lady, live long and be happy with the wonderful weapon of Cupid, that (hurts) the eyes of the world. Obtain him—the brave man—of large eyes, as your husband, not seeing whom the women have fixed Cupid as the man.

(Jālandhara), the son of the Ocean married Vṛndā according to the Gāndharva type of marriage. O king, the couple caused delight to the people. She gave up her fickleness. Jālandhara too, following the practice of wise men, did not long for any other woman. Once, while seated in his assembly, he saw Rāhu with his head cut off; he asked Śukra, "Why is he one whose half body (only) remains?" He told him the old account from the beginning

as to how the milky ocean was churned by the gods for (securing) nectar. Hearing it, the demon Jālandhara who was amazed, spoke (these) words: “You become favourable to Rāhu and of a handsome form.” With the advice of Śukra, the valorous son of the Ocean, remembering his paternal uncle started a war with the gods, O brave one.

CHAPTER FIVE

War Between Gods and Demons

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Who is the paternal uncle of the Ocean’s son? What happened to him in the war? How did the demon fight? O Nārada, tell me that.

Nārada said:

2-5. O best king, listen. The Milky Ocean is the paternal uncle of Jālandhara. After the gods and the demons had churned from him Lakṣmī, the Moon, the elephant (called Airāvata), the horse (named Uccaiṣravas) the gods snatched the wealth. Hearing that the demon Jālandhara fought with the gods. Once the mighty one, having instructed his messenger what to speak, sent him, Durvāraṇa (by name), to the residence of the lord of gods. Then, getting into a chariot, Durvāraṇa went to heaven. Desiring to enter the residence, he was prohibited by the door-keepers.

The messenger said:

6-11. I am Jālandhara’s messenger. I have come to Indra. Please go there and respectfully inform (Indra) about me (i.e. my arrival).

Then a door-keeper, having heard his words, just then went to (Indra), the lord of Śacī. Having saluted him, he said: “O lord, a messenger from the earth has come.” To him Indra said:

“Bring (in) the messenger.” He, holding the hand of the messenger, brought him near Indra. Durvāraṇa entered the assembly of the gods. He saw Indra who was surrounded by thirty-three crore gods, (who was seated upon) a divine, golden throne, who was waited upon with the breezes (produced) by chowries, whose one thousand eyes resembling fully bloomed lotuses were full of the feeling of love for Śacī. Then Durvāraṇa, seeing the lord of gods along with Bṛhaspati, (and) laughing at the beauty of his eyes, saluted him.

12-20. That messenger of Jālandhara occupied the seat that was pointed out. Indra said to him: “To whom do you belong? On what mission have you come?” He said to Indra: “I am Jālandhara’s envoy. He is the king of all worlds. From my mouth listen to his order: ‘Why did you, by employing the Mandara mountain (as the churning rod) churn my uncle, the Milky Ocean? You took away the treasure, the great wealth like Lakṣmī, the Moon, the elephant (viz. Airāvata), the horse (called Uccaiṣravas), gems like corals. Give (back) all that. So also, O Indra, quickly leave the heaven. By my words, quickly do everything that is proper. If you desire to live, apologise to the king.’” Then Indra laughed and spoke to Durvāraṇa: “O messenger, hear in brief the reason for churning the Ocean. Formerly my enemy Maināka, the son of Himālaya, was held by the foolish Ocean in his side, and the wicked Ocean also held (i.e. supported) the Fire in the form of a horse, who had burnt the mobile and the immobile. This lord is the place of refuge of the demons, the haters of Dharma. He always gives curd, ghee, milk to the demons.

21-24. O Durvāraṇa, therefore, he was churned by us; and he, with his wealth lost, was punished by the ancient gods. O messenger, listen. He was dried up by the brāhmaṇa (Agastya) born from a pitcher, due to his (i.e. Agastya’s) association with me. Moreover, he is tormented due to his bad company. (If) he also, surrounded by his entire army, will come to fight with us, he will just then meet with destruction.” Speaking like this, (Indra) the killer of Vṛtra, ceased (speaking). He loudly praised the messenger of the Ocean’s son. (The messenger), having come (back) to the son of the Ocean, told him everything from the beginning that the lord of gods had said.

Nārada said:

25-34a. Having heard Indra's words (i.e. message) from the mouth of his messenger, the Ocean's son became angry and called his entire army. Then by (Jālandhara's) order the demons who lived in the lower world, so also those who lived on the earth came there with their armies to Jālandhara. He set out on a march. Due to the roars of the army of the Ocean's son, O king, the sky, the nether world and all the quarters burst. (Demons) fearful with faces like those of horses, elephants, camels, cats, (so also those) having faces like those of tigers, lions, rats, having eyes like the lightning, (and) some having serpent-like hair, large bodies, some with sword-like nails, and others also ran and roared with the sound (like that) of the clouds. O king, that entire army, full of chariots, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers, and fearful due to the multitudes of amusements in the war shone at that time. Having got into the aeroplane which was a hundred yojanas extensive, to which crores of swans were yoked, which had a stream of a thousand grandeurs, which was filled with all things, Jālandhara quickly went (out). On the first day, he, with his armies, reached Mandara at mid-day. It was broken (into portions) by palanquin carriers and divided by many elephants. On the second day he, along with his army, reached Meru. That great army remained on the peak (called) Ilāvṛta.

34b-40a. Then the chief demons destroyed the Khāṇḍava, Nandana forest. The best demons shattered the peaks of Meru. The best demons, after having tied the couch-like swings to the santāna trees, dallied with siddha women. The river on Meru was filled with saffron on the breasts, tāmḃūlas, sandal, agaru (sandal) ornaments, and flowers dropped from the hair. The eastern side of that good Meru was shaken by his elephants. The chariots moved to the south and the warriors to the north and west. Then the demon Jālandhara made the demons set out. Others also, along with the sounds of drums, went to the Mahendra peak. Having destroyed the city of the king of kings, and of Yama and Varuṇa, so also (the cities) of other regents of quarters, they came to Amarāvati.

40b-42. Then divine portents, so also portents in the sky, the earth and the atmosphere appeared. Much dust fell (down);

mass of darkness spread (out). Then the thunderbolt, being lustreless, fell down from Indra's hand. Seeing fearful omens, Indra said to Bṛhaspati: "What should we do, and whose refuge should we seek? See, the war is imminent."

43-45. Then Bṛhaspati spoke these words to the king of heaven: "Approach the feet of Viṣṇu living in Vaikuṇṭha." Indra, thus told by Bṛhaspati, went along with the gods to (Viṣṇu's) abode—Vaikuṇṭha—and quickly sought the refuge of (Viṣṇu) the enemy of Kaiṭabha. Vijayā, the doorkeeper, informed Viṣṇu (of his arrival). All gods, trembling through fear of Jālandhara, came (there).

Śrī said:

46-49. You who are fighting for gods, should not kill him, my brother. He, O god, should only be cursed and not be killed.

Hearing these words of Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu the protector of the three worlds, mounted upon Garuḍa that covered the sky (just) by the flapping of his wings. Hari quickly moved out of his Vaikuṇṭha abode and saw the gods trembling through the fear of Jālandhara and with their lustre lost. All the gods saw Viṣṇu resembling a dense cloud, and with his four hands adorned with the Śārṅga (bow), the conch, the mace and the lotus.

50-56a. Having recited a hymn of praise in front of (Viṣṇu) Indra said: "O god, Jālandhara, the son of the lord of the rivers has devastated the heaven." Hearing these words (of Indra) and having granted safety to the residents of heaven (i.e. the gods), (Viṣṇu) the destroyer of the demons, shone along with the gods to conquer the demon. Then Indra, holding the thunderbolt and getting into the chariot brought by Mātalin, went before Viṣṇu. All the gods were on the left side. He came from the left. (Agni) to whom the oblations are dear, seated on a ram, was on the southern side. Indra's son, Jayanta, mounted upon the elephant Airāvata, and Indra mounted upon (the horse) Uccaiḥśravas, and both (remained) in front of the lord. (There were) Dhātṛ, Aryaman, Mitra, Varuṇa, Amśa, Bhaga, Indra, Vivasvat, Pūṣan, and the tenth was said to be Parjanya. Then Tvaṣṭṛ shone, so also Viṣṇu, the younger brother (of Indra).

56b-60. Thus these twelve Ādityas stood before Indra. Virabhadra, Śambhu, and the very glorious Giriśa, Ajaikapād, Ahirbudhnya, Pinākin who was (never) defeated, Bhuvanādhiśvara, Kapālin, Sthāṇu, and Bhaga, and Bhagavat, are said to be the eleven Rudras, O king, before him (also stood) the eight Maruts, viz. Śvasana, Sparśana, Vāyu, Anila, so also Māruta, Prāṇa, Apāna and Sajīva. Vivasvat also went among them with his ten forms. At that time Dhanada (i.e. Kubera), the lord of kinnaras, having got into a palanquin (also) went there.

61-67. The Rudras mounted on bulls, so also Māruta, being carried by a deer and having the weapons like tridents and iron clubs, went in front of the army. Gandharvas, cāraṇas, yakṣas, piśācas, snakes, guhyakas holding all weapons went in front of the army. The soldiers also crossed the eastern and western oceans. In it Hari, with the body (i.e. in the form) of a boar moved with a desire to kill the army of the demons, after he had speedily come from the heaven. The northern part of the Sumeru mountain was covered by the army of the gods. Having resorted quickly to the southern peak of the golden mountain, the wonderful huge army of Jālandhara remained. The battlefield remained day and night in the region of Ilāvṛta where it was arranged between Meru and Mandara (mountains). The demons, full of joy, quickly went to that region described as bringing victory by Śukra, so also the gods went to that region described (like that) by Brhaspati.

68-71. It was surrounded by excellent chariots, surges of elephants giving out the streams of rut resembling clouds. The land causing (the armies) move shone with innumerable horses and footsoldiers walking in front of Garuḍa. Then there was the great sound of the musical instruments of both the armies; so also the tumult of the warriors roaring at one another. Then a great war, causing fear, took place between the demons and the gods. There was the friction of the entire army like the destruction of the three worlds. Śruti (the sacred text) overpowered with fear, and much fatigued wept again and again. The battlefield was at that time filled with arrows concealing the forms of the chariots.

72-75. The Sky also, tossing the garment of dust, was horripilated. She (i.e. the Sky) was as it were crying through fear with

the loud notes of the birds. Then Indra ordered the clouds like *Saṁvartaka*. They, mounting upon tall elephants fought in the war. *Gandharvas* and *kinnaras* became the drivers of the horses of gods. *Sādhyas* and *siddhas* (became) chariot-fighters. *Yakṣas* and *cāraṇas* (became) elephant-riders. Serpents eating (i.e. living upon) air, so also *kinnaras* (became) the foot-soldiers. O king, the leader *Yama* (became) the chief of the diseases, viz. consumption.

76-81a. A fierce battle took place there between the demons and the diseases. The demons (struck by) diseases like acute pain and fever fell and rolled on the ground. The diseases struck by the demons dropped on the battlefield. Certain diseases fled to the mountains. There were natural herbs which rendered them free from trouble. With them the servants of *Yama* rendered (the soldiers) in the armies free from trouble. The groups of foot-soldiers among the demons killed all the foot-soldiers (among the army of the gods) with arrows, mallets and spears with sharp edges, sharp swords, and hatchets. *Crores* (of the warriors) with their bodies tawny due to blood killed one another. The quick horses threw up in the sky the horse-riders at that time. With their bodies tawny due to blood, they clung to one another, and struck one another.

81b-86. The fierce mass of the fighters from chariots covered the earth with streams of chariots. They pierced with sharp arrows discharged from the bows the great fighters from chariots. The elephants, with their temples emaciated due to rut, and being angry, knocked down the elephants after binding their trunks with their own trunks. Some demon lifting a chariot with his arms went to the sky. He knocked down on the ground the horse-riders, horses and elephants. Taking them on his shoulder he quickly went to *Jālandhara*. Someone, taking two elephants on his two sides, a third one on his belly and a fourth one on his head, runs (i.e. ran) on the battlefield. A demon, taking out his sword from the sheath and shaking the clear sky, went after knocking down thousands of gods on the battlefield.

87-88. A semidivine female able to fly, of stout breasts, lustful, slim-bodied, quickly came from the sky and took away a demon from the battlefield. She kissed his face fixed with sharp

arrows. Then Kālanemi, having bound the army of the gods, danced.

89-93. Then angry Viṣṇu went out to (attack) Kālanemi; Yama (went against) the hero Durvāraṇa, and Rāhu (against) the Moon and the Sun. God Vaiśvānara (went out to attack) Ketu, and Bṛhaspati went (out to fight with) Śukra. The restrained Aśvins went (out to attack) the demon Aṅgārāparṇaka. (Jayanta) Indra's son (went to attack) Saṁhrāda, and Kubera went (to attack) Nihhrāda. Rudras surrounded Niśumbha and Vasus surrounded Śumbha in the war. Viśvedevas went (out to attack) Jāmbha who stood in the form of a cloud. Vāyus (went out to attack) Vajraroman, and Mṛtyu went (out to attack) Maya. Vāsava with the Śakti-missile in his hand, ran to Namuci who was distracted. The other gods also surrounded the demons matching them in valour.

CHAPTER SIX

Death of Demon Bala

Nārada said:

1-18a. When the duels in this way had commenced in many ways, the angry Viṣṇu struck Kālanemi with his mace. He, giving up his swoon (i.e. regaining consciousness) thought, and struck Viṣṇu with arrows. Then the angry Viṣṇu dropped him dead on the ground. O king, having reflected, Candramā (i.e. the Moon) struck Rāhu with a sword. Rāhu at that time leaving him ran to the Sun. Having vanquished the Sun in the battle, Rāhu ran to the Moon. The lord of the night (i.e. the Moon) struck him with a sword in the battle. Due to the hardness of the body of Rāhu the sword at that time was powdered. Rāhu struck him deeply with his hard fist. Having lifted up Candra (i.e. the Moon) he swallowed him speedily in the great war and again spat him out. He, putting his mark, the deer on his chest, dismissed him. That Rāhu, seizing (the horse) Uccaiṣravas, took him to Jālandhara, and offered him to him (i.e. to

Jālandhara) with devotion. The angry Durvāraṇa struck Yama with a mace in the war. Saṁhrāda, pierced with sharp arrows by (Jayanta) the son of Indra seized Jayanta who fainted due to the stroke of the iron club, mounted upon Airāvata, and went to Jālandhara. Kubera also struck Nirhāda with his mace in the battle. The Rudras vigorously hit Niśumbha with the strokes of their spears. Niśumbha too very much harassed them with volleys of arrows. The demon Śumbha filled (i.e. covered) the hosts of gods with arrows. Maya, full of deceit, tied Yama with nooses, and took him (to Jālandhara). He gave him to Jālandhara, and Jayanta also to the Ocean. The Ocean too threw him into his mouth (so that) the world should be free from fear. Then Indra also, having tied Namuci with nooses, took him, the destroyer of the universe; then Jālandhara went. O king, a very fierce battle took place between Indra and Bala. The splendour from the body of Bala shone, like that of the Sun, in the ten directions. All the missiles of Indra were shattered on (striking) the body of Bala. The mighty Bala struck Indra with a mallet on his chest. Then Indra roared fiercely. Hearing that Bala laughed. From the mouth of him who was laughing, pearls dropped down. With a desire for (securing) his body, Indra did not fight.

18b-24. Then he very much praised Bala, the ocean of might. "O best among gods, ask for a boon." When told like this, Indra said to Bala: "O lord of the demons, if you are pleased, then (please) give your body to me." Hearing these words of Indra, that Bala also said: "Cutting me (i.e. my body) with weapons take me (i.e. my body)." Then he also (said): "What is that which cannot be (i.e. is not) given by the noble?" "Like speech to one who cannot hear, like a woman of fickle eyes to a blind man, like a garland of flowers to a dead man, wealth is fruitless to a miser. The noble ones do not seize their enemies though they harm. The Rivers also take their co-wives (i.e. other Rivers) to the Ocean. A good man, engaged in the welfare of the others, does not get perturbed even at the time of their destruction. The sandal tree, though cut, makes fragrant the mouth (i.e. the edge) of the axe. Even a divine body perishes, but not the wealth given to the good. That digit of the Moon alone, which is on the head of Śiva remains (intact). Those who show goodness to those

who harm them, are the good that are at the top of the earth. Even a wicked man loves them who for their own cause get their bodies cut off for those who have harmed them before.” Saying, ‘All right’, Indra struck Bala with a mallet. Yet his body did not split up. Indra became worried. Being reminded by Mātalin, he hit the body (of Bala) with his thunderbolt. Due to that stroke of the thunderbolt the body of Bala was shattered. A portion of Bala’s body fell on the golden mountain. Another (fell) upon the Himālaya. The third one fell upon the Go mountain. The fourth one (fell) into the divine river. The fifth one (fell) upon the Mandara (mountain). The sixth produced from the body of Vijaya fell into the mine of diamonds.

25-31. All the limbs of his body born pure, became the sources of gems due to the pure act. Particles of the bones fell from the thunderbolt. The hexagons became gems. From his eyes (dropped) sapphires. Rubies were produced from his ears, (so also) rubies were produced from his blood. Emeralds were produced from his marrow. From his tongue corals were produced. In the same way his teeth became pearls. Emeralds were produced from his marrow. So also emeralds were (also) produced from his nose. His excrement became bell-metal. His semen turned into silver. Copper was produced from his urine. From the unguent of his body brass came out, so also lustrous wealth. From his loins lapis lazuli came out; so also more charming gems. Gold was produced from his nails. Mercury came out from his blood. Crystal was produced from his marrow. Corals were produced from his flesh. The gems were (thus) produced on the earth from the body of Bala. They are enjoyed by pure persons due to the wealth of the collection of their religious merit.

32-37. Meantime, having heard that Bala was killed in the battle by Indra, his queen named Prabhāvatī, went near (i.e. to) his (i.e. Indra’s) feet. Seeing her husband with his limbs shattered in the battle, Prabhāvatī, full of tears, with her hair loose, of stout breasts, lamented: “O lord, O Bala, O you brave one, O you of a handsome body, O you dear to the world, why have you, abandoning me, gone to aloofness? Men do not cast their bodies, even on realising that they are full of old age, and leprosy; but O dear one, you have in vain cast your body; O dear one, by means of your divine body the string of pearls is adorned. O

dear one, untie the braid of me afflicted with the grief of widowhood, which you yourself, eager to fight, had tied.” The Ocean’s son, seeing the queen lamenting like this, and being afflicted, said to Śukra: “O Bhārgava, bring him back to life.”

Śukra said:

38. He died willingly. How can I bring him back to life? Yet due to the power of the hymn he will utter words.

Jālandhara said:

39-42. O Bhārgava, I wish (to see Bala’s) form (and) hear his words.

Being thus addressed by Jālandhara, he became engrossed in meditation. Then from his mouth sound pleasing the ears came out, addressing Prabhāvatī. It as it were came out from a musical instrument “O Prabhāvatī, unite your body with the parts of my body.” Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Prabhāvatī turned herself into a river. She got united with the parts of Bala’s body, and flowed towards the east. Due to her water, excellent brilliance was produced in gems.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Lakṣmī Intervenes in the Fight between Viṣṇu and Jālandhara

Nārada said:

1-3a. Then Jālandhara who was angry, spoke to (Indra), the killer of the demon: “O you of a mean power, where will you go after killing Bala through trickery?” Speaking thus to Indra, that brave son of the Ocean, cut off, with arrows, his chariot along with the charioteer, horses and flag. Indra, wounded by the arrows, fell after fainting on (i.e. in) his chariot.

3b-9. Seeing that Indra had fallen down, the Ocean’s son roared. Giving up his swoon (i.e. regaining consciousness), Indra discharged his thunderbolt against Jālandhara. Then holding a

piece of a mountain the Ocean's son held the thunderbolt at his side and quickly getting down his chariot, ran to Indra with a desire to seize him in the battle. Then, Indra, abandoning the chariot and remembering Viṣṇu, ran away. The arrogant son of the Ocean got into Indra's chariot, and making Mātalin the charioteer, went with his desire fulfilled. That mighty-armed Jālandhara went quickly like a cloud after getting into Indra's chariot (as he liked). Then, Viṣṇu through anger raised his sword (called) Nandaka in the battle, and inciting Garuḍa, having mind's speed, struck the army of the demons angrily. He, with force, knocked down chariots, horses, elephants and foot-soldiers in thousands.

10-12. Viṣṇu, surrounded (i.e. accompanied) by Kaśyapa's son performed a fierce feat in the battle. (The battlefield had become) a river, which carried hair, bones, marrow and stream of blood, which was resorted to by goblins, vampires and birds, which was filled with hands, thighs, shanks, missiles and weapons, which was very difficult to cross, which was resorted to by tigers and lordly elephants, which was adorned with blood, entrails, necklaces and armlets. Seeing the army which blocked the beautiful festival to the the rolling eyes, struck by Viṣṇu, all the excellent demons, obstructed Viṣṇu on all sides at the order of Jālandhara.

13-15. There those demons showered volleys of arrows, as clouds shower (water), as bees shower (i.e. moisten) a lotus, as the clouds shower a mountain (with water), or as hosts of birds shower (i.e. moisten) a mango-tree, or as a mass of incense showers (i.e. fills) the sky. In that danger of the battle, Viṣṇu was not visible, so also Garuḍa was not visible. All those great demons who had got into their chariots, roaring with fearful sounds, struck Viṣṇu with all weapons.

16-20. The angry enemy of the demons (i.e. Viṣṇu), with a fierce form, knocked down all of them in the war as wind knocks down a mass of leaves. Then the demon Śailaroman, angrily ran to Viṣṇu. Even the arrows of Viṣṇu were shattered on (i.e. after striking) his body. Śailaroman also struck with arrows the body of Viṣṇu who taking out his sword cut off his head. When the demon's head was cut off, his trunk, walking on the battlefield seized Garuḍa by his wings with his hands. His head

too quickly jumped and stuck fast to his shoulders. Then^{*} seeing the fighting of his face even Viṣṇu was amazed.

21-25a. Seeing the head stuck (to the shoulders), Garuḍa fell down on the ground. Again speedily flying, he resorted to the place of the head. Then the powerful Śailaroman snatched off Viṣṇu from Garuḍa. Viṣṇu struck him with the palm of his hand; and he fell dead on the ground. Then Jālandhara said to Khaḍgaroman, his charioteer: "Drive the chariot there, where god Viṣṇu is." By the words (i.e. the order) of Jālandhara, Khaḍgaroman took the chariot (to that spot). Seeing that Viṣṇu in front of him, the Ocean's son said: "O Viṣṇu, kill me fearlessly. I shall not kill you, O Mādhava."

25b-29. Hearing those words of him, Viṣṇu, with his eyes red due to anger, filled (i.e. covered) him with fatal arrows. The Ocean's brave son, with his body pierced by Viṣṇu, continuously covered Viṣṇu with streams (i.e. volleys) of arrows. Garuḍa, pierced by his hundreds of arrows, fell unconscious. Seeing Garuḍa fallen on the ground (after being struck) by the arrows of the Ocean's son, Viṣṇu was reminded of his chariot that stood in Vaikuṇṭha. That chariot, without a charioteer, (but) surrounded by horses, came to him. Seeing that chariot yoked with horses on the battlefield the lord was amazed.

30-34. Having brought Garuḍa to consciousness, he appointed him as its driver. That Viṣṇu, putting the crown on his head, the Kaustubha gem on his chest, and prompting the horses to exert, went up to Jālandhara. With (other) gods, he tore the earth with the chariot's wheel(s); he quickly struck the army of the demons with (his) arrows. Ordered by the lord of gods, Fire burnt the demon's army (as he was) aided by Wind. At that time, the lord, along with the gods, destroyed the army of the demons. Seeing his army of which a small portion was left, Jālandhara thought, and then (he) the king said to Śukra:

35-39. "When (even) you, well-versed in incantations, were there, the gods destroyed my army. You are well-known for your lore. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of the lore which does not protect those who are afflicted with diseases, and what is the use of that kṣatra power which does not protect those seeking refuge?" Hearing the words of Jālandhara, Śukra said to

him: "O king, (now) see the power of me, a brāhmaṇa." Saying so, he touched them with water (i.e. sprinkled water over them, and) roused them with the 'hum' sound. They were (thus) roused by Śukra. The Ocean's son struck the gods with fatal arrows, and they fell in the battle all around. O king, with their bodies shattered by arrows, they sustained their life. They, pierced by arrows, did not die because of their immortality, O best one.

40-45a. Then god Viṣṇu said to Bṛhaspati: "O preceptor of gods, fie upon the power of you who are not bringing the gods back to life." Bṛhaspati then immediately said to the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O lord, by means of the herbs I shall bring the gods back to life." Speaking like this, Bṛhaspati too went to the mountain Droṇa, lying in the ocean; and comfortably taking the herbs (from the mountain), Bṛhaspati, by using them, brought the gods back to life. Then the gods who rose, killed the army of the demons. Seeing the gods to have risen, the Ocean's son (Jālandhara) said to Śukra: "O Śukra, how did they get up without your lore?" Hearing these words spoken by the demon, Śukra said to the Ocean's son:

45b-48a. "There is a great mountain named Droṇa, that lies in the ocean. There are herbs there, which bring the dead back to life. The preceptor of gods (Bṛhaspati), having gone there, and having taken the herbs (from there), rouses, with an incantation, the gods killed in the battle." Hearing what Śukra said, Jālandhara, having entrusted the responsibility of his army to Śumbha, went to the Ocean.

48b-54. Having gone into the Ocean of Milk, he entered a divine, very bright house and saw there the pleasure-chamber of the Ocean of Milk. In it neither hot nor cold breezes (blew). Darkness was not noticed there. There excellent females, rich with the burden of breasts, having slim bellies and good teeth, sang, danced and sported. The sportive females served there by casting amorous glances, moving to and fro, with fascinating bodies, by means of lovely movements of their creeper-like arms, and the sounds of their steps, with sweet words and eulogies, by giving the pleasure of fragrance, with the hummings of the bees in the form of their eyes, by sportively moving the chowries, with garlands, and smiling glances. Having gone there

the Ocean's son who was eager to fight and seeing the Ocean of Milk sporting there, saluted the Ocean of Milk, and said to him: "O uncle, you are killing me. With the water inundate (Bṛhaspati) under the pretext of the herbs from the Droṇa mountain."

The Ocean of Milk said:

55-61. O son, how shall I inundate with my waves him who has sought my refuge? The best sages do not praise him who abandons him who has sought his refuge.

Hearing the words of his paternal uncle, the king of the demons continuously, angrily, struck the (Droṇa) mountain with the soles of his feet. Then, O king, mountain Droṇa who was very much afraid of Jālandhara, came, in his (original) form to Jālandhara, and said to him: "I have become your servant. Protect me who have sought your refuge. O you of great arms, by your order I shall (even) go to lower region. I shall stay (there) till you rule the kingdom." Accompanied by the cry of the herbs and the weeping of the siddhas, the (Droṇa) mountain went to the lower region, (even) when the Ocean's son was observing. Then the hero Jālandhara came to the great battle-field. Having got into the chariot already made ready, he went to Viṣṇu. The son of the River (i.e. Jālandhara) seeing Viṣṇu seated in the chariot, laughed loudly. (He said to him:)

62-69. "Wait in your chariot till I kill (other) enemies." Speaking like this, he quickly struck the army of gods. The gods rent by (his) arrows, said to Bṛhaspati: "Protect (us)." Then Bṛhaspati quickly went to the Ocean of Milk. O king, not seeing (the mountain) Droṇa (there) he became very anxious. Then Bṛhaspati, having quickly come (back) to the battlefield, said to the gods: "O gods, all of you run away. The Droṇa mountain has perished." Of Bṛhaspati who was speaking like this, the Ocean's son, laughing at the gods, cut off the sacred thread and hair with sharp arrows. Then Bṛhaspati afflicted through fear to his life speedily ran away. O king, all gods (also) leaving the battlefield, fled. Having thus made the gods flee, he ran to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu also, eager to fight, ran to the lord of demons.

Then a fierce battle took place between Viṣṇu and Jālandhara. Dreadful by means of his volleys of arrows he overcame Viṣṇu.

70-74. Cutting to pieces those arrows and filling (i.e. covering) him with arrows, mighty Viṣṇu, harassed the demon Jālandhara with arrows. Jālandhara, with his body injured by the arrows, abandoned his chariot, and quickly ran to Viṣṇu standing in the battle to vanquish him. Seeing him coming, Viṣṇu pierced him with arrows. He bore the arrows of Viṣṇu on his body and came near his chariot. Whirling repeatedly Garuḍa with one hand and Viṣṇu's chariot with the other (hand), he dropped them on the Śveta-dvīpa. Garuḍa, thrown from Jālandhara's hand, also fell down. For a long time he took rest in Krauñca-dvīpa only. Viṣṇu, freeing himself from the whirling chariot, came to the battlefield, and said to the lord of demons: "Wait, wait."

75-78. The Ocean's son who liked fighting, seeing Viṣṇu who had again come to the battlefield, covered the ground with arrows and roared. Viṣṇu quickly pierced the demon on his chest with a (missile called) śakti that was throbbing. He (then) fell down. His son (then) took him from the battlefield to his residence, and said to him: "Oh, who has made me void of shame?" Then a great fight between (Viṣṇu) the enemy of the demons and Jālandhara, standing on the ground, took place there. Viṣṇu did not kill the demon out of his love for Lakṣmī; (but) himself fell down (struck) by his arrows.

79-83. Then seeing Viṣṇu fallen on the ground, the Ocean's son, took him and got into his own chariot. Then Lakṣmī, dear to Viṣṇu, came weeping to him. Lakṣmī stood there. Seeing her husband, having eyes like lotuses, fallen, Lakṣmī said to the Ocean's son: "O brother, listen to (my) words. You have vanquished and held Viṣṇu. O you of great power, it is not proper for you to bestow widowhood on your sister." Hearing her words, he released the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu). (Then) Jālandhara, of mighty arms, devoutly saluted his sister (i.e. Lakṣmī). Then he quickly saluted Viṣṇu's feet through his love for his sister. Viṣṇu said to Jālandhara: "I am pleased with your act. O lord of demons, ask for a boon. Which boon shall I grant to you?"

Jālandhara said:

84-86. O Viṣṇu, if you are pleased with this (act of) valour of me, then you should stay with Lakṣmī, at my father's abode.

Saying, 'All right', the lord of the earth, remembered (i.e. thought of) Garuḍa (and on his arrival) mounted upon him and (went) to the Ocean of Milk with his wife (Lakṣmī). Since then Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) lives in his father-in-law's house. The lord of the gods desiring to do what is dear to Lakṣmī, lives in the ocean.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conditions During Jālandhara's Rule

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Nārada, tell me what Jālandhara, the Ocean's son, did after having made the gods flee in the battle, and after having put Viṣṇu in his own abode.

Nārada said:

2-8a. Having given gifts due to being pleased to the heroes like Śumbha, Jālandhara went to heaven, and having reached it saw that the trees constantly bore fruits by decorating men every-day with the shower of gold. It is the fruit of the horse-sacrifice. Those noble ones who give an elephant, a garment, gold, a cow, a girl (in marriage), sesamum-seeds, flowers, camphor, tām̐būla, musk and saffron, see Amarāvati. (They see Amarāvati) by giving a house (i.e. a shelter) in the rainy season, fire (i.e. warmth) in the cold season. They play upon all the musical instruments in Śiva's temple. Those who put up stalls where water is distributed to travellers in Caitra (see Amarāvati). In that city the swings with couches swing on their own. There s̐arikās, parrots, swans, wandering bees and cuckoos act as messengers and bring about the union with the dear.

8b-12. There are, O Rāma, (the celestial nymphs like) Rambhā, Menakā, Tilottamā, Suṣamā, Sundarī, Ghṛtācī, Pañjikasthalī, Sukeśī, Sumukhī, Rāmā, Mañjughoṣā and Mālinī; (so also) Mṛgodbhavā, Sukhadā, Dhanadaṁṣṭrā, Tilaprabhā, that cause (men) to receive the fruits of the Aśvamedha sacrifices, and give the fruits of the Rājasūya sacrifices. The celestial nymphs that were sinless, sported there in crores. The son of the Ocean established the demon Śumbha, (dear to him) like his own life in the heaven like this. Having come (back) from the heaven, and having consecrated Niśumbha as the heir-apparent, Jālandhara, due to his own might ruled for a couple of arbuda years (i.e. for two hundred million years).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

13-14. He fought with the gods in the battle with them. He was not defeated by the gods. What did the brave son of the Ocean do after that? Tell all that in detail to me who desire to listen to it.

Nārada said:

15-17. O king, listen properly to what the Ocean's son did: Having conquered the gods in the battle, he ruled without any trouble. Gandharvas like Citrasena waited upon the lord of the demons. The lord of the demons also enjoyed the shares in the sacrificial offerings. The mighty one snatched away all the wealth and also other (objects) after having vanquished (the gods).

18-26. O king, when the Ocean's son was ruling over the earth, no human being died, and nobody would go to hell. There was no other waste than (in) enjoyment. There was no unfortunate barren woman. There no ugly, distressed, wicked or notorious woman was seen. There was no widow, nor was there a poor man. Everywhere there were donors and no recipients. Meritorious persons gave their wealth to brāhmaṇas. In every house the women were endowed with beauty and youth. There were cow's milk, curd, and ghee. Men there were without old age. All were happy, there was nowhere bondage by means of fetters. Killing was not done by an arrow. Nobody harassed anybody else. Debt was not seen (to be incurred); O king, everywhere there were rich people. O king, the subjects were contented, and rich with all crops. In the

houses of men there was the milky juice which was taken out from plantains and sugarcanes and which was very sweet. A man listened to the beneficial words of a woman and a man. There was no one who robbed (people) passing along the way. The streams fall continuously from the sky, so they get mixed with Karmāra(?) ghee and with sugar and are heard to have fallen into the people's mouths just by recollecting the Ocean's son.

CHAPTER NINE

The Creation of a New Powerful Weapon by Śiva

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, what did Indra and other gods, vanquished by Jālandhara, do then, when the kingdom of the heaven was snatched (by him)?

Nārada said:

2-7. The gods, having abandoned heaven, met with a bad condition. They (had) neither ambrosia, nor (the portions in the offerings made at) sacrifices. They went to the place of the Self-born (Brahmā). In Brahmā's house they saw Brahmā, Para-meṣṭhin, who had engaged his mind through suspension of his breath in the Supreme Soul. All the careful gods praised him with true words. Then the lord who was pleased, said: "What should I do?" Then the gods again told Brahmā, all (the acts) of Jālandhara, and (about) their own defeat. Thinking for a moment, Brahmā along with the gods went to Kailāsa. They, full of surprise, remained by the side of Kailāsa; and the gods, led by Brahmā and Indra praised (Śiva): "Salutation to you, Bhava, Śarva, Nilagrīva. Salutation to you, Sthūla, Sūkṣma, Bahurūpa (having many forms)."

8-11a. Śiva, turning his face to all sides, and having heard (these) words, said to Nandin: "Quickly bring the gods (here)." Hearing the words of Śiva, Nandin quickly called the gods. The

gods having entered the inner apartment, with their eyes full of wonder, saw there, seated on a seat, Śiva who conferred happiness on the world, who was waited upon by crores of devout attendants who were greyish due to dust.

11b-15a. Having first, along with the gods, saluted him, the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) said: "Since this Indra had a malady he has foolishly come here. O great god, to whom those who seek his refuge, are dear, favour (us)." Then having heard the loud laughter of the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva), Brahmā said to the lord of gods: "See the condition of the residents of heaven." Then the lord of all, the highest god (Śiva) having known the desire of Brahmā's (i.e. in Brahmā's) mind, and having known Indra's insult for the sake of gods, and being affectionately requested by Pārvatī, spoke (these) words, O king:

15b-18. "How can I kill that enemy who is not killed by Viṣṇu? O grandsire, the weapons like the thunderbolt have been fashioned in olden times. That demon Jālandhara would not at all be killed with those weapons. Even I cannot kill him with weapons fashioned in olden times. Let gods fashion a weapon bearing my energy and strong." Having heard this reply of Śiva, Brahmā said to him: "You (please) fashion the great weapon. You know your own power."

19-23. Hearing these words of him, Śiva spoke to him: "O Brahman, with gods you discharge your lustre united with wrath." Then Brahmā, the teacher of the Brahmāstra (Brahmā's missile), discharged (his) lustre. Then Rudra (i.e. Śiva) himself discharged the lustre produced in his three eyes. All gods also angrily discharged a mass of lustres. In the meantime, Viṣṇu who was remembered by Śiva, came (there). Śiva, who was addressed by him, 'What should I do?' spoke to Viṣṇu: "O Viṣṇu, why was Jālandhara not killed by you in the war? How is it that leaving the gods you have gone to the Ocean of Milk, for lying there?"

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

24-25. O lord of gods, if I kill him, how (can I say) Lakṣmī is dear to me? Therefore, O you, husband of Pārvatī, you(should) kill Jālandhara in a battle.

Viṣṇu who was told by Śiva, 'Discharge your lustre due to anger', discharged the lustre of Viṣṇu (i.e. his own lustre) and all that increased. Seeing the lustre to have increased and to have become extensive, (Śiva) spoke to Viṣṇu:

Śiva said:

26-29. Please fashion my missile with this lustre.

Hearing those words of Śiva, Viśvakarman and others, looking at one another, thought: 'What should we do?' Seeing them to be silent, and knowing what was in their mind, Brahmā said: "The deities cannot bear your lustre which they are unable to look at. Who can curb your lustre?" Then jumping over the lustre, lord Śiva danced by roving in all directions with the hinder part of his left foot.

30-38. Then gods like Indra and others, seeing Śiva dancing over the lustre, joyfully sounded musical instruments. Since then, in dances roving in all directions is practised. Then due to the crushing caused by Śiva's dance, a disc was produced, which had three lakhs of spokes, and which was full of a crore of bones. Due to being crushed by the foot of Śiva, particles went out from the lustre. And with that Viśvakarman fashioned a missile and aeroplanes. O king, the ageless gods, seeing that Sudarśana disc, said, through fear, to the lord of gods: "Protect us, protect us." The earth received hardness due to the bright metals. The sheath that was fashioned by Viśvakarman was reduced to ash. With that weapon which was fashioned, Kāla, being burnt, fell on the ground. Then Śiva gave that disc into Brahmā's hand. The lord of Umā, Śiva, seeing that the beard (of Brahmā) was burnt by the masses of lustre from the disc, laughed, and quickly taking it (back) from Brahmā's hand, kept it under his arm-pit, as a poor man keeps a treasure. Then, the disc, remaining under the arm-pit of Śiva was not seen, as the fruit of the gift which is given by a great fool.

CHAPTER TEN

*Jālandhara's Messenger Rāhu Meets Śiva**Nārada said:*

1. After this, having gone to the Ocean's son, I told him: "O best among all heroes, Śiva has made a vow to kill you."

Jālandhara said:

2. O great sage, is there a collection of gems in the house of the Trident-holder? Tell me all about that. No war takes place without a desire (to get something).

Nārada said:

3-7. Ash is (applied) to his body; his bull (i.e. his vehicle) is old; there are serpents on his body; there is poison in his throat; in his hand there is a begging bowl. Gajānana and Ṣaḍānana (i.e. Kārtikeya) are his two sons. Such is his wealth. What is different (from this) you should know from me: (His wife is) the daughter of the lord of mountains. She is noble and has raised breasts. The lord, though he has burnt Cupid, is fascinated by her beauty. Maheśa (i.e. Śiva) has always a desire to amuse her. Śiva dances and sings and (thus) causes her to laugh. She is well-known as Pārvatī. She is the divine limit of beauty. O king, beautiful Vṛndā and these celestial nymphs do not have (i.e. are not equal to) even a sixteenth part of Pārvatī.

8-11. Speaking like this to the intolerant Jālandhara, I disappeared in a moment when all the demons were watching. Then that son of the Ocean sent Rāhu as his messenger. Reaching Kailāsa in a moment, he saw the abode of the god. In the meanwhile, Viṣṇu, taking leave of the fierce Śiva, went unnoticed and quickly to the Ocean of Milk for fear of (being charged with) treachery. Rāhu saw the extremely bright abode of Śiva. Looking at (i.e. thinking to) himself he, being very much amazed, said (to himself): 'What is this?'

12-13. Desiring to enter, he was stopped at the door by the doorkeepers. When, though prohibited, he tried (to enter) they

raised their weapons. Having turned away those attendants (of Śiva), Nandin said to Rāhu: “O you low fellow, who are you? Why have you come here? What is your mission? Tell (about) your mission, so that these fearful attendants would not kill you.”

Rāhu said:

14-17. I am Jālandhara’s messenger. You take me to Śiva. O doorkeeper, the object of the great king (Jālandhara) is not to be told to the intermediaries.

Having heard the words of the messenger, Nandin came to Nilalohita (i.e. Śiva). Having saluted Śaṅkara (after prostrating himself) like a staff, and standing before him, he said to him: “O great king, the son of Sīmhikā (i.e. Rāhu) is standing at the door with some mission. You may order whether he should go or come (to you).” The great god (i.e. Śiva) having heard the words of Nandin, quickly dismissed from the inner chamber, Pārvatī who had slept there and who was surrounded by her friends.

18-22. Then he said to his doorkeeper: “O Nandin, show in the messenger.” Then, holding the messenger by his hand, the very mighty Nandin brought him (in and) showed him Śiva (seated) in the midst of gods. Then Rāhu saw Śiva who had put on the sacred thread of a serpent, who was without goddess (Pārvatī), who was adorned with a crescent moon on his head, who was served by the group of serpents giving out breath (i.e. hissing), who was accompanied by all gods, (and) who was waited upon by crores of attendants. Knowing that the messenger had come, Śiva looked and said: “Speak (out).” Then Rāhu commenced speaking.

Rāhu said:

23-30. O lord, I have been sent by Jālandhara to you. O Śiva, having heard his words (i.e. his message) through my mouth, do quickly (what he tells you). O Girīśa (i.e. Śiva), you are practising penance. You are qualityless. You are without religious merit. You have neither a father nor a mother. You are without wealth or a family. This mighty-armed Jālandhara

enjoys the three worlds. You too are under his control. Therefore, do as (you are) told. How is it that you who are the ancient god, are lustful and ride a bull?

When he was speaking like this, the two sons (of Śiva) Kārtikeya and Gajānana came (there). At that time, the god of gods was massaging his body with his hands. Due to his hands being tossed about, Vāsuki fell on the ground. Then the serpent (i.e. Vāsuki) seized the tail of the mouse, the vehicle of Gajānana. Seeing his vehicle seized, he said: "Leave it, leave it." In the meanwhile, seeing the agitated vehicle, of a large note, of Skanda, Vāsuki ejected, through his fear, the tail of the mouse, which he had seized; and then mounting upon Śiva's body, he encircled his neck and remained there.

31-35. Due to its heat, the crescent moon remained in the forest of his matted hair. She (i.e. the crescent moon) then became wet, and bathed his body (with) ambrosia; the row of the skulls on Śiva's head was brought back to life. (And) it recited all the sacred texts in due order, which it had formerly studied. The heads, hearing recital (of the sacred text) done by one another, discussed it (i.e. started its discussion). "I am the first, I am before (you). I am the greatest, I am the creator. I am the protector." In this way they eagerly bewailed one another: "I did not give gifts; I did not enjoy (pleasures); I did not offer oblations into fire. Due to my mind seized with grief, I did not give wealth to a brāhmaṇa."

36-38. Then a great attendant of the lord, with a mass of twisted hair, appeared (there). He had three faces, three eyes, three tails and seven hands. He was the great (attendant) by name Kīrtimukha, having matted hair. Seeing him that row of the skulls remained as it were dead through fear. Then that attendant Kīrtimukha said in front of the lord Śiva, after saluting him: "O lord, I am very much hungry." Then Śaṅkara told him: "O, eat those who are killed in the battle."

39-43. That attendant thought for a moment; and not seeing the battle anywhere, went to eat Brahmā, but was warded off by Śiva. Then Kīrtimukha who was hungry and who was fully warded off, ate up all his own body. Seeing that rash act and the devotion of Kīrtimukha, the lord, being pleased, said to

him: "Always stay in my palace. He who, living in my house, has no thought about you, will quickly fall down." He who was addressed thus, vanished. At that time gods showered flowers on the head of Śiva.

44-51. Seeing such a wonder in the assembly of the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) Rāhu too, being amazed, again spoke to the lord of gods: "How do passions touch you who are restrained and a meditating saint? How are you honoured by the sense-organs? How are you reached by the objects of senses? You fully accept the worship of (i.e. offered by) the regents of the quarters like Brahmā etc. (But) you do not look (up) to any god; you do not worship any god. You are the lord; (then) how do you live in the world eating whatever is obtained by begging? O lord of the meditating saints, you are protecting beautiful Pārvatī. Give her to me. Now, along with your sons Kārtikeya and Gajānana, you, taking a begging bowl, go from house to house every day." In this way Rāhu spoke (words of) various types to the lord. The lord too, hearing them, did not give any reply. Leaving the lord who was silent, Rāhu said to Nandin: "You who have a hideous, round face are the minister and the general of the army (of Śiva). You deserve to (i.e. you should) teach him who has thus deviated from right conduct. Otherwise, due to (this) sin he will, struck in the battle, fall like Indra."

52-53. Hearing these words of him, Nandin respectfully spoke to the lord, and then understanding the view of the Trident-holder (i.e. Śiva) from the sign (of the knitting) of his eyebrows Nandin, the chief among the attendants (of Śiva) honoured Rāhu, and sent him (back). Then having gone to Jālandhara, Rāhu told his (i.e. Śiva's) account and (about) the charming form of Pārvatī.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Śiva's Attendants Fight the Demons Off

Nārada said:

1-4a. Then valorous Jālandhara, having heard the words of his messenger, called his entire army, and made a march (against Śiva). Then the sound of the armies that had gathered (there) was heard. It awakened the kinnaras resting, along with their wives, in the caves of Mandara. It made rise the elephants having echoes in the caves of Meru and Mandara. The flocks of lions lost their way ahead. Thus the din of the great army deafened the three worlds. Then, O king, in the seat of Jālandhara there was the sound of drums. Due to that great sound, dear to the brave, the high mountains trembled and the palaces shook.

4b-8a. From the interior of the seven oceans the daityas and dānavas (i.e. the demons) moved out. They being ready and endowed with various vehicles roared. The neighings of the horses and great sounds were (heard) outside and in front. The earth (as it were) pleased with the wheels (of the chariot) moved. With the herds of elephants that were driven the earth along with the forest was blocked up by the myriads of fierce (warriors) urged on by Jālandhara and remaining in the chariots. There were two thousand hundred millions of horses and one hundred millions of elephants. An army consisting of one lakh chariot-warriors shone (there) and ninety crore parārdhas of chief leaders were seen.

8b-13a. The huge army, covering the sun with umbrellas moved out. At places the lotus-ponds were yellowish like gold. At places blue lotuses appeared due to the peacocks' keeping off the sun. At places the clouds appeared to rise due to the masses of dust when he marched. At places due to the cloths of the banners the sky was full of banners and umbrellas; the quarters were full of chowries when the army of the demons moved on. Then the demon Jālandhara was eager to march. Putting the (missile called) Śakti, decorated with many gems, he came to great Viṣṇu, living in the Ocean, to inquire (i.e. to take his leave). Having saluted Viṣṇu, Jālandhara said these words: "O my sister's husband, what should I give you for enjoyment? Tell me (that)"

13b-16a. Hearing these words of Oceans's son, Viṣṇu, being delighted, said: "What should I do as desired by and dear to the Ocean's son?" Thus addressed, he, being delighted, quickly replied to Viṣṇu: "I am going to the battlefield. You live here happily in the Ocean." There he was given sacred grains by Lakṣmī, and was honoured by Viṣṇu. Moving out from Viṣṇu's place, he came to the Ocean to inquire (i.e. to take his leave).

16b-22. Having saluted the Ocean, he said: "O father, I am going away to conquer Śiva in the battle. Please allow me." Hearing the words of his son who was going to (march against) Śiva, the lord of oceans also said to him: "O son, leave that ascetic (alone). Enjoy the kingdom given by me, and leave the ascetic away. Your valour is very wonderful; there is no king like you. You have made the earth superior to heaven. The earth shines in your kingdom as in Vaikuṇṭha. The god, unconquerable by demons, whom you have brought (lives here) with Lakṣmī. O child, live by me. Leave alone that mendicant, Śiva." (Though) told like this by the Ocean, he (i.e. Jālandhara), having attachment for Pārvatī, disregarded his father's words, and came to his own soldiers. Vṛndā spoke to Jālandhara who was ready to fight.

Vṛndā said:

23-28. O lord of kings, you should not fight with the condemned meditating saint. Turning away your mind going to Pārvatī, look at (i.e. think of) her. Why do you long for Pārvatī? Is Pārvatī superior to me? The poor one is without any support. She is always attached to Śiva. She longs for a son. She is barren. So she is a doll. In vain was she praised by Nārada. Give up (thoughts about) her, and enjoy me."

Hearing these words of Vṛndā, the Ocean's son (i.e. Jālandhara) replied: "Without seeing Pārvatī's beauty my mind will not turn back. O Vṛndā, you look after the country and the capital. O angry woman, you should always remember me, if Śiva kills me." Hearing these words of her husband, Vṛndā, laughing, went, after getting into a palanquin, to the seat of Jālandhara.

Nārada said: ,

29-40. Then the very mighty son of the Ocean proceeded to

Kailāsa. He was surrounded by sixty thousand mahāpadma soldiers. In the meanwhile, Śiva, leaving Kailāsa, went, along with his attendants, his sons and his dear wife, to (that part of) Kailāsa to the north of the Mānasa (lake). Then on the first day Jālandhara reached Kailāsa. Setting his army there, he was eager to see Kailāsa. There the breezes to which the masses of the divine filaments and the pollen of mandāra (flowers) had resorted, and which were broken by the showers of the sprays of cold drops, blew. Charming breezes, high like the stout breasts of the siddha women, and rich with the honey of mandāra, blew there. Seeing there the planting of their feet by ladies bright and glossy like the aśoka(-flowers), the lord of the demons became full of the sexual desire. The gods there delighted at seeing their own reflections were pleased. There, the mandāra (trees) with their sprouts withered, shone everywhere, after having manifested the coitus of the kinnara lovers. There the groves of many trees were occupied by the attendants of Śambhu. They appeared to be as it were well sustained by king Cupid. There the swarms of bees intoxicated by the fragrance of sandal and musk appeared like the charcoals of the burnt Cupid, that were put out. There, I think, having seen the entire beauty of the charming ladies, the friend of (i.e. resembling) excellent beauty, musk gave up the amusement of its mind, and plunged into blackness. At places there were lotuses shining like excellent red chalk. At places there were buds moving from their stems resembling the cloveshoot. At places there were bracelets shining like rafts on the mountain-streams. At places there were bees bowing through the humility of the nicula (a kind of reed) blossoms. At places there were fresh mango blossoms, burst and affected by cuckoos. At places there were the strong roots of the śāli rice, resorted to by herds of deer. At places there were groves sanctified by the extremely beautiful young married divine ladies, which caused a change even in the minds of sages.

41-45. On seeing the abode of Śiva, having these qualities, and the beautiful Kailāsa, the abode of all gems, the demon who was extremely amazed, said to Śukra (the son of Bhṛgu): “O dear one, why do (people) like you call him a sage whose wife is (so beautiful) like that and whose house is so charming?” Not seeing Śiva there, he asked (Śukra): “O Śukra, where has Śiva

gone? How is it that he has gone due to my fear? (i.e. has he gone through my fear)?" Thus asked, Śukra said: "The great god, lord Śiva, has gone to that (part of the) great mountain to the north of Mānasa. Others cannot go there." Hearing these words of Śukra, the very mighty demon said:

Jālandhara said:

46-49. I shall go to the lord of gods. You go first, O Śukra.

Saying so he went where Śiva himself remained. The son of the Ocean saw that excellent (part of) the mountain to the north of the Mānasa (lake). Its height was sixty thousand yojanas. That (part of) the mountain called Mānasa was, O king, surrounded by the army of the demon (Jālandhara). Many lordly demons quickly went up the mountain. There was, all round, darkness due to the umbrellas. There was a tremor due to the sound of the musical instruments. The din of their army filled the heaven and the earth.

Nārada said:

50-60. Seeing the huge army that came there, the lord kept Pārvatī, surrounded by her friends, on a very high peak of the mountain. Lord Śiva was surrounded by all his attendants who were ready (to fight) and were maddened by the fighting (spirit), so also by pramathas (i.e. the goblins attending upon Śiva) numbering thirty thousand mahābjas. Śiva said to Nandin, the chief of the attendants: "You should kill the brave, great demon Jālandhara, in the battle. Being surrounded by brave (warriors) like Mahākāla and others you go (to the battlefield). In the battle, you should fight very bravely as long as my enemy is not conquered, O hero." Hearing these words of Śiva, he said to his charioteer: "O very intelligent Kākatuṇḍa, bring my chariot today (i.e. now)." Hearing the words of Nandin, he too brought the chariot. That chariot used in battles, to which thirty-two horses were yoked, which had sixteen wheels, which had sixty flags, which was thirty yojanas long, which was full of all weapons, came (there). Śiva ordered his two sons, Kārtikeya and Gajānana to protect Nandin's troops. They were ready with their vehicles. Nandin was surrounded by the attendants. Nandin,

having honoured the lord with words, got into his chariot, and went out to (fight with) the demons. On his head shone an umbrella (of the measure) of twelve yojanas. When that Nandin went out, the demons first climbed up the mountain. The fierce-looking demons, fell on the ground.

61-68. The demons, being struck by the attendants left the mountain (and went) far away. Then coming down like smoke from the mountain the attendants struck the very powerful demons with sharp weapons. Seeing the (mountain) filled with the divinities, the demon-soldiers blocked it up. Then a great war of the attendants took place with the demons. A fierce shower of arrows was (sent by) the demons and gods. Then, the very mighty Kākatuṇḍa and others, with fire-like faces, killed all the elephants in the battle, so also (they destroyed) chariots and (killed) horses and footsoldiers. With the loudly laughing and fearful heads of the hosts of very deceitful demons killed (in the battle), the sky was filled. So also with lions, with hair let loose, having tawny faces, fierce fangs and eyes, and cutting off trunks, shanks, thighs, waists and backs. Everywhere the earth was filled with trunks tawny due to blood. Then, a very great noise was made by the lordly demons who were running in chariots, and whose soldiers were knocked down, like that of the oceans roaring at the time of the end of a yuga (i.e. the end of the world).

CHAPTER TWELVE

Śiva Arrives on the Battlefield

Nārada said:

1-6a. Seeing the demon-army killed by the attendants led by Nandin, the demons Śumbha and others, getting angry, went to (fight with) the attendants (of Śiva). Then the great demon Śumbha fought with Nandin. Niśumbha (fought with) Mahākāla, and Kāla with Lokeśvara in the battle. Śailaroman fought with

Puṣpadanta, and Mahābala with Mālyavat. Due to the power of illusion, O king, there was a din on the battlefield. Bhayānaka ran to Caṇḍa, and Rāhu to Skanda (i.e. Kārtikeya). Sarparoman (ran) to Kūṣmāṇḍa, and Gharghara to Madana. Ketumukha went to kill Śubha, and Jambha (went to kill) Vināyaka. Pātāketu (rushed to kill) Hāsa, and Romakaṇṭaka (rushed to kill) Bhṛṅgiśa. The attendants of Rudra and the demons in crores fought with one another.

6b-19a When the lords of both of them were watching, the attendants and the demons, striking hard, struck (one another) with arrows. Nandin discharged those arrows as a great shower would (fall) on a mountain. Then he filled the face of Śumbha with arrows as wind fills the cave of Mandara with the masses of leaves. Kumbha left his bow, and ran to him (getting down) from the chariot. He uprooted a mountain and struck with it on the chest of Nandin, and having crushed his chariot in the battle, that mountain fell on the ground as a mountain would fall on coming in contact with the thunderbolt. He fainted for a moment, (then) regaining consciousness, he ran speedily. Mahākāla was struck on the chest by Niśumbha with a mallet. Coming (to him) he struck the demon on his crown with a mace. Ignoring that stroke, that very mighty Niśumbha also seized him by his feet and the very mighty one whirling him from his palm, threw him and roared. Drinking (i.e. inhaling) the air from his mouth (i.e. his breath), he, who had been tawny due to blood, roared. Puṣpadanta was struck on his face with a fist|by Śailaroman. He (i.e. Puṣpadanta) struck Śailaroman with a mace, and knocked him on the ground. Seeing him fallen on the ground, the very strong Giriketu struck with a mallet the very fierce Puṣpadanta. Then Puṣpadanta cut off Giriketu's head with a sword and ran taking with him the shield and the sword of Giriketu. (Giriketu's) head said to him, "Why do you go away, leaving me who desire to fight (with you)? Do you not feel ashamed of running when this body is deprived of the head?" Thus addressed by his head, the trunk of Giriketu seized Puṣpadanta by his feet, and cut (i.e. pierced) his belly with a sharp sword.

19b-29a. From the side a demon, very strong and having a hundred heads, went out. He had two hundred eyes and two hundred arms. His head, whirling round, came near his

trunk, O king. Seeing the head come, Puṣpadanta cut it off with his sword. Then (came) a demon named Bhūkampana, and a fearful demon by name Jvara. Then, O king, Puṣpadanta was crushed there by the two. That unbearable and very speedy Jvara troubled him. The attendant of Śiva (viz. Puṣpadanta) left the battle and trembling went to the mountain (Kailāsa). A great archer Kolāhala struck Mālyavat with three arrows on his shoulders, and Mālyavat (struck) the demon on his forehead. Kolāhala who was struck by Mālyavat with sharp weapons of various kinds, showing his dexterity, struck Mālyavat. That Mālyavat, the chief among the attendants, ignoring the pain caused by the weapon, took a huge rock and struck Kolāhala with it in the battle. From him Feverish Heat, named Jvalana came out. He was very fierce, had three heads, nine hands, nine feet, and was very tawny. That Feverish Heat deluded Mālyavat with his lustre. Mālyavat, being subdued, left the battle and went to the mountain. In the battle Caṇḍi was struck with a strong noose on his chest. His horse went out (of the battlefield); from him he was hurled into the ocean.

29b-38a. In the battle Kārtikeya hit Rāhu with sharp arrows. Having covered him with volleys of arrows, he quickly discharged (the missile called) Śakti. Seeing the Śakti, burning as it were with lustre, coming to him, Rāhu flew into the sky and quickly seized it with both his hands. Seizing that Śakti, and roaring loudly, Rāhu struck him (i.e. Kārtikeya) with that same Śakti. Struck with that Śakti on his chest, a river went out of his body. In that battle, the son of Mahādeva (i.e. Kārtikeya) was washed by it. Somehow the river was checked; but a flood similarly went to the river. The Ocean's son, having heard from Jvara, the harsh cries of the mass of the (enemy's) army, did not remember even that melodious skilful note of the male cuckoo. Barbara killed with a sword Dahana (i.e. Agni) who was covering him with arrows. Sarparoman struck Kūṣmāṇḍa on his head with a fist. Pātālaketu struck Hāsa with a mallet. Taking it out from his body, the elephant bent the mallet. Pātālaketu hit him on his trunk with the stroke of his fist. Romakaṇṭaka wounded the lordly Bhṛṅgin with his weapons. The lordly Bhṛṅgin also being frightened, quickly went to the mountain from the battlefield.

38b-45. The white Dhūmravarṇa suddenly fell into the mouth of Ketu. The demon, of a large body and a large mouth, swallowed the attendant. When he was swallowed in the battle by Ketu, there was a very loud wailing. With the sharp arrows of Jṛbha, the body of Vināyaka was pierced. He cut off the trunk of that Gajānana. Then the mouse (the vehicle of Gajānana) also pierced with arrows entered a cave. In the battle Vināyaka afflicted with the stroke lamented, and was agitated. (He lamented :) “O mother, O father, O brother, O mouse dear to me.” Hearing the cry of Gaṇeśa, the revered Pārvatī, coming (to Śiva) from another peak, said to Śiva at that time: “Gajānana is being killed by the demons. Kārtikeya also is knocked down. O Śiva, why are you sporting on the mountain. Protect your two sons and the attendants also. Today is the moment (i.e. the opportunity to use) the weapons like the trident always held by you.” Then hearing the words of Pārvatī, Śiva said to Vīrabhadra: “Quickly make ready ready my bull (i.e. Nandin).”

46-52. When this was said, he did (like that) at that time. He fastened a diadem to his horns, which was lustrous like the sun. Having fastened a hundred bells round his neck, he put two mirrors on his ears. On his shoulders a mass of bells (was placed), and large anklets (were tied) to his feet. A thousand chowries were tied round his tail, and into his mouth (were placed) eight nooses. Then that auspicious goddess Ambikā, with the eight nooses and holding a sword, sat there (i.e. on the back of the bull) near Śiva. All the weapons were put (there, on his back). The bull was ready. With the string of her own bells, Pārvatī adorned him. The goddess also put a mark (on his face) and spoke to him after honouring him: “O best among the bulls, you should never leave Śiva in the dangerous battle. You should come (back) with Śiva after having vanquished the enemies in the battle.” Hearing these words of the goddess, Śiva, adorned with his own ornaments, holding a thousand weapons, mounted upon his bull. With respect he spoke to that Pārvatī: “I am going to the battlefield.”

The lord said:

53-57. With a desire for your own forms, you can remain even alone; for the demons, having a bad intention about ladies,

have come. Therefore, O beautiful lady, you have to protect yourself.

Speaking thus, Śiva, mounted upon his bull, went to the battlefield. Śiva was surrounded by thirty thousand mahābja pramathas (i.e. the goblin-attendants of Śiva) O king; the brave Vīrabhadra quickly going with (i.e. after mounting) his lion, guarded the left side of the great lord. The archer Maṇibhadra, the killer of the enemies, with (i.e. seated in) a chariot, protected the right side of Śiva. Climbing down from the high lordly mountain, Śiva reached the battlefield with his attendants.

58-62a. Seeing the great lord seated on his bull, the demons roared. Then there was a great din of (i.e. produced by) the armies of the demons and the pramathas. O king, a terrible destruction of the two (armies) took place. Then all those—Nandin, Mahākāla, Kāla, Skanda, the very strong Mālyavat, Puṣpadanta, Vṛṣalin, Svarṇadantika. Caṇḍīṣa, Madana, Caṇḍa, Kūṣmāṇḍa, and Guptalomaka—who had formerly run away from the battle came to the dangerous battle. The very mighty demons fought before Śiva. A very fearful fight between the warriors—the attendants (of Śiva) and the demons—took place.

62b-64. Then having caused the army of the attendants to flee, the very mighty (demons) surrounded Śiva on all sides with showers (i.e. volleys) of arrows, with pikes, lances, maces, mallets, clubs tipped with iron, as the sense-organs surround the soul with the five objects of senses. Then Śiva with arrows that were very fierce, killed the demons in the battle, as Māgha quickly and that moment only destroys the sins by means of a bath (taken in that month).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Jālandhara Disguised as Śiva Goes to Pārvaṭī

Nārada said:

1-3. Then hearing the din of the demons on the battlefield, Jālandhara, seated in a chariot, came where Śiva was. Angrily and quickly he spoke to his charioteer Khaḍgaroman: "Send forth quickly the chariot to which a thousand horses are yoked. I shall bravely kill that ascetic, adorned with matted hair, sacred ash and bones. What is the power of the crippled one mounted on the bull in the battle with me?"

Nārada said:

4-6. Speaking like this to Khaḍgaroman the haughty (Jālandhara) took his fierce bow and quickly ran to (the battlefield) in his chariot. Virabhadra checked him who was coming (there) with sharp arrows. With his body made breathless, he covered him with arrows. Though (Virabhadra) the attendant of the lord of beings (i.e. Śiva) was equal to the gods, yet can the skulls attain similarity with the moon?

7-9. Maṇibhadra also pierced the Ocean's son (Jālandhara). He having killed Maṇibhadra by a noose said to the lord (i.e. Śiva): "O Mahādeva, if you have the practice in (wielding) weapons, then come to fight (with me). You strike me. In the battle I shall not strike you having matted hair." Him who was proudly speaking like this, Virabhadra, who was angry, covered with arrows, as the sun covers a lotus with his rays.

10-13. Then Maṇibhadra hit his army with a mace. O hero, striking a chariot after a chariot, a horse after a horse, an elephant after an elephant, he knocked them down on the earth. In a moment, the ground was tawny due to the mud-like blood and became difficult to walk over; and the chief attendants (of Śiva) struck down the demons from the mountain in the battle. The brave demons dropped dead on the ground. O king, the demons (thus) fell (on the ground) and the ground was full of (their) trunks, arms, heads, and the backs and trunks and thighs of the elephants.

Nārada said:

14-17. In this way he saw that Śiva was extremely difficult to be conquered in the battle. He also saw other signs in the world: A different lustre was (noticed) in the stars, the moon and all (objects). The sheath of the world was opened (*obscure*); and the lustre of the sun was quite different. O king, Jālandhara who was disappointed again thought: 'I have not seen that Pārvatī about whom Nārada told me much. Now how shall I see Pārvatī, seated on a perpetual place? First I shall go to see her, and after that I shall fight with Śiva.'

18-20a. Thinking like this with (i.e. in) his mind, the son of the Ocean spoke to demon Śumbha: "O brave one, O you, equal to me in heroism, in (the battle for) fierce victory, please fight after taking up a form similar to that of mine. The burden (i.e. the responsibility) of the camp and the army is (now) yours. I shall go to see that Pārvatī who has captivated my heart."

20b-25. Speaking like this, he took down from his body ornaments and gave them to him. He also gave him the armour, the weapons etc., so also the chariot along with the charioteer. Then, O king, the son of the Ocean, along with Durvāraṇa, left the army, and unnoticed he went to the secret cave of that (part of Kailāsa) mountain to the north of Mānasa and took up Śiva's form. Like that (i.e. like him) Durvāraṇa also had taken up the form like that of Nandin. Then the two, disguised as Śiva and Nandin, climbed up the mountain, on a peak of which Pārvatī along with her friends remained, O king. Seeing him who was resting upon Nandin's shoulder, coming (there) and pierced with arrows and seeing his garment smeared with blood, Pārvatī was amazed. Her friends like Jayā etc. being confused, went to him.

26-29. Going near Śiva (i.e. near Jālandhara who was disguised as Śiva), they, being very much afflicted, said to him: "O lord of gods, what has happened to you? By whom are you conquered in the battle? O lord how (is it that) you are distressed, and are weeping like an (ordinary) creature?" He who was thus addressed by them, gave separately (i.e. to each one of) them his ornaments. He slowly took down Vāsuki and others from his body. Seeing under his arm-pit, the heads of Gaṇeśa

and Kārtikeya that were cut off, Pārvatī wept (saying): “O Skanda, O Gaṇeśa, O Rudra.” Then all her friends, enfaciated through grief, wept.

30-38. At this time Nandin said to Jayā: “You (please) look after her. Maṇibhadra, Virabhadra, the brave Puṣpadanta, Dambhana, Dhūmatimira, and Kūṣmāṇḍa and others are killed in the battle. So also Caṇḍin, Bhṛṅgin, Kirīṭin, Mahākāla, Śṛṅkhalin, Caṇḍīṣa, Guptanetra, and Kāla and others are killed in the battle. O goddess, in the great battle I saw the heads of Gajānana and Kārtikeya whirling (round).” Saying so, he dropped them before her. Hearing these words of Nandin, and taking the heads of her sons, Pārvatī, saying, “O (my) son, O (my) son”, lamented loudly. (She said:) “O (Kārtikeya, the) enemy of Tāraka, how (is it that) you were killed by the Ocean’s son in the battle? You were consecrated by the gods as the general of their army when you were (just) three days old. O hero, how did you destroy (the demon) named Tāraka at that time? Did you fall on the ground because you were abandoned by Śiva? O son, I, who am luckless, have not seen the face of my daughter-in-law (i.e. your wife). O child, you have not enjoyed these pleasures which belong to the mundane existence. O dear Heramba, O Viḡhneśa, O Lambodara, O Gajānana, O my son, who knocked you honoured (even) by the siddhas, on the battle-field. How and by whom was your vehicle, the mouse, killed?”

39-43. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) who was lamenting like this, said to Śiva (i.e. to Jālandhara, who had disguised himself as Śiva) who was very much grieved: “O lord of gods, you are actually Rudra. You are Hara. Do not be afraid. Where has your bull gone? Is he killed by Jālandhara? What, dear to you whose body is wounded with arrows, should I do?” Then, on hearing the words of the goddess, Śiva, after heaving a sigh, said: “O darling, both your sons have been killed long back. Why do you lament in vain? O goddess, protect me now by giving me the contact of your body (i.e. by having sexual union with me).” Having heard these untimely and eager words of Śiva, Pārvatī said to the god: “You have not spoken proper words. O Śiva, the wise avoid sexual union when there is great grief, when fear is caused, at (the time of someone having) profound meditation, at (the time of) offering oblations, when

having severe fever, at (the time of) a śrāddha, at (the time of) a march, and in the vicinity of the elders and the old.

44-49. How do you solicit me who am afflicted with grief, troubled by (the grief due to) my son's death, weak, and languid with tears, and who am (mentally) sick?" Hearing these words of Bhavānī, that false Śiva (i.e. Jālandhara disguised as Śiva) who was fascinated by the beauty of Pārvatī, said with a selfish motive: "Those ladies (who) do not give (the pleasure of) sex to the afflicted men (i.e. their husbands) undoubtedly fall into the fierce Raurava (hell). O you beautiful lady, I am without my attendants, without my sons, and without intelligence. O you beautiful young lady, now I am without possessions and without everything. I am void of a good life. I have come here to ask you. Entering my house, I shall quickly cast my figure (i.e. kill myself). O Nandin, get up. We shall go to a holy place. Be before me (i.e. lead me). O dear wife, you go according to your desire. Give up your nature (of a royal wife)."

50-51. Hearing these words of the illusive Śiva, Pārvatī heaved a long sigh, and was paralysed by grief. When he was thus greatly agitated, she did not say anything for a moment. She who had fascinated the entire immobile and mobile world, was herself bewildered by him. I do not know (i.e. cannot conceive) the pain to the mind.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Viṣṇu Creates Illusion for Vṛndā

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, please tell me what happened after the illusive Śiva had (thus) bewildered Pārvatī.

Nārada said:

2-5a. The heart of Viṣṇu lying in the ocean was disturbed. All of a sudden, O best king, his eyes were full of tears. Seeing that sign of a great portent, the lord then getting up from the

bed of Śeṣa, looked at me and Vāyu, and thinking, 'What should be done (now)?' remembered (Garuḍa) the enemy of the serpents. He too, merely by being remembered, stood with his palms joined before the lord. Seeing before him (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, Viṣṇu said:

5b-9a. "O Suparṇa, go there where the battle is going on. Seeing whether the hero Jālandhara is killed or Śiva is deluded by him, quickly come (back) and tell everything to me. You alone are capable of seeing the battle between Jālandhara and the lord. Who else after knowing (what is going on) in the great battle would come (back) alive? At times the battle there was hard to be understood due to the showers of weapons and missiles. Going there (as fast) as the movement of an arrow, and with your body covered, come back after having observed the condition of Pārvatī."

9b-10. Lord Viṣṇu after having thought about removing the illusion caused by the demon, quickly gave a pill fully endowed with supernatural powers to Garuḍa. (He said to Garuḍa:) "O hero, due to this (pill) you will not be illusioned." Saying, "All right", he (i.e. Garuḍa) put it into his mouth.

11-17a. The bird (i.e. Garuḍa) thus urged by the lord went round Viṣṇu keeping him to his right, and he, of a wonderful speed, moved out, and having entered the sky, went (to the battlefield). Having gone there he saw unbearable terrible fight with the hosts of demons; but he did not know anything fully. Therefore, he flew speedily and went to (the region) Mānasotara, (a part of) the mountain, which was very high, inaccessible, and difficult to be reached even by gods. The lord of birds (though he tried) to see, could not see the place of Pārvatī. Having come there, (Garuḍa) the enemy of serpents heard a sound. After having gone near he saw the illusive lord of beings (i.e. Śiva). After having put into his mouth the pill, Garuḍa was not illusioned. He knew and understood that he was a demon and not Śiva. "Oh, (how) painful!" Saying so and weeping, he, having come (back) to the ocean, narrated the account to the enemy of Kaiṭabha (i.e. Viṣṇu):

17b-22. "O god, Jālandhara has imitated god Śiva. He, the sinful one, disguised (as Śiva) has deceived Pārvatī. Therefore, O Viṣṇu, if you are a god, (then now) go to the battlefield. O

lord of gods, (please) fight deceitfully with Jālandhara. I have seen his queen on the auspicious seat at Jālandhara. She was sporting by playing upon musical instruments and songs on the ground of the palace. She is more beautiful than Pārvatī and a hundred (nymphs like) Rambhā and Urvaśī. Now neither in the human world nor in the nether world is there a wife like her. Therefore, O Viṣṇu, she is fit to be associated with. What then can be said about (other) ladies. A man, who would touch her with his body would be blessed. And she is the wife of your wife's brother. Kidnap her who is dear to Lakṣmī. Do a good turn to Śiva and please yourself."

Nārada said:

23-27. Having heard the words of Garuḍa (Viṣṇu) dear to Lakṣmī, properly designed a remedy, and quickly sent away the bird. Having deceived Lakṣmī, and having covered her with a yellow garment (as she lay) on the bed, he went out with (i.e. after having taken up) another form and through his divine magical power Viṣṇu was fascinated by the love for Vṛndārikā. Seeing Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) going (after) having covered himself, O Yudhiṣṭhira, Śeṣa also came in another form to Viṣṇu, and devoutly said to him: "You (please) wait. Allow me (to go). O Viṣṇu, tell me what I should do, where I should go. (Tell me) the mission. It would be a pleasure (if) I shall always eat after seeing your face."

The lord said:

28-32. I shall after covering my body, kidnap the charming wife of Jālandhara for Śiva and for helping Pārvatī. O brother, come on. We shall go to the impassable forest for accomplishing the seduction of Vṛndā.

After he said so, they both went to the forest. There Viṣṇu and Śeṣa who had matted hair and bark-garments, put up a hermitage which was auspicious and gave the fruits of all desires (i.e. gave the desired objects). They had disciples and disciples' disciples, taking any form they liked of tigers, lions, boars, bears, monkeys and apes. Then in that forest, Viṣṇu

attracted Vṛndā with a spell. He, the killer of Madhu,⁷ caused torment in her heart.

33-38. In the meantime the queen had a terrible torment. She caused the chowries to be waved by divine ladies. The slim lady, repeatedly thinking about the arrival of her lover, and with her body smeared with sandal, quickly fainted. The queen saw a dream in the fourth watch on the fourteenth (night of the month), which caused fear, and indicated the fear of widowhood. (She saw) the head of Jālandhara, which was dry, was smeared with white ash, the eyes of which were drawn out by a vulture, and the tips of the hair were loose. Kālī whose face was fierce, complexion was dark, garments were tawny, mouth was red, who had held a skull in her hand was eating him. She saw a dream like this and herself mortified. The queen saw the demon having the qualities (i.e. signs) of destruction.

39-40. Then the wife of the demon-king awoke due to songs and (the sound of) the musical instruments of the bards, so also by continuous singing, eulogies, words, praises of the race recited by kinnaras. Then having given all of them who were tired, wealth as a result of her favour, she warded them off (i.e. dismissed them), called brāhmaṇas and told them about the dream that she had seen. The brāhmaṇas, who had mastered sacred texts, said, after having heard the dream:

The brāhmaṇas said:

41-47. O queen, it is a bad dream; it is very fierce; it is inconceivable and causes fear. Give gifts which would destroy the inconceivable fear, to brāhmaṇas. (Give them) cows, garments, gems, elephants and ornaments.

The brāhmaṇas who were pleased (with the gifts) sprinkled (with holy water) the king's wife. Though sprinkled (like that) Vṛndā was tormented with affliction. Dismissing the excellent brāhmaṇas, she then went to the palace. Even (after) remaining there, the lady saw her own city burning. Then being attracted by Viṣṇu due to her own acts, she could not, O king, remain in her house. So the queen went to a forest. The slim lady, having got into a chariot to which female mules were yoked and which

was driven by her friend Smaradūtī, she quickly reached an auspicious forest which was having many trees and was full of various groups of birds, which was endowed with a stream of flowers, was adorned with divine ladies. There only gentle breezes could enter and nothing else.

48-52. Seeing that forest, Vṛndā remembered her husband. 'Now shall I see the hero Jālandhara that has come in front of me?' She did not get pleasure there. So she, with the chariot brought by her friend, and fascinated by Viṣṇu's illusion, entered another forest. Then the fawn-eyed lady saw the forest which was crowded with trees, was blocked by large rocks, created fear, was full of the fear due to lions and tigers, was resorted to by wolves and serpents, in which the trees with their branches touching the sky filled the caves with darkness. Seeing the fearful forest, the lady of unsteady eyes was frightened. Vṛndā said to her friend Smaradūtī who was driving the chariot: "O Smaradūtī, quickly drive home my chariot."

Smaradūtī said:

53-57a. O friend, I do not know the direction. Where should I take the chariot? The tired female mules are proceeding; and here there is no path. Let the chariot driven by destiny go anywhere. Here some flesh-eater will devour (us); (and this will) not be falsified.

Speaking like this, she who was very wonderful, quickly drove the chariot. The chariot reached (the place) where there were delighted siddhas. The siddhas were seen there, and the forest was fearful. The wind was not strong there, nor was the sound of birds (heard there). There was no lustre, no light. There was no water. There were not (seen) quarters and sub-quarters.

57b-60. Even in the characteristic of the chariot that reached there a change took place. The female mules did not neigh. There was no sound of the felines of the wheels. The banners did not move. The bells did not tinkle. The great bells placed on the pillar of the flag did not make a sound. Seeing (things) like this, Vṛndā said to her friend: "O Smaradūtī, where

shall we go? The forest is full of the fear from tigers and lions. O friend, I did not have happiness in my house, in my kingdom, and in the forest."

Smaradūtī said:

61-66. O Queen, listen. In front (of us) see a very fearful mountain. Seeing (it) the female mules, perturbed by fear, do not go ahead.

Hearing those words of her the queen was frightened. Seeing the necklace round her neck, she quickly got up from the chariot. In the meanwhile there came a demon of a fierce form. He had three feet, five hands and seven eyes. He was extremely fearful. He was tawny; his eyes were like those of a tiger. His shoulders and his face were like those of a lion. His hair red like blood hung like the lord of birds. Seeing him, Vṛndā, having a (tender) body like the calyx of a lotus, was suddenly frightened. Having covered her eyes with her hands, she trembled like a plantain tree. Throwing the whip, the door-keeper said to the queen: "O Queen, protect me who am frightened. This (demon) runs to eat me."

67-71. In the meanwhile the demon reached the vicinity of the chariot. He tossed up the chariot and whirled it with the female mules (yoked to it). The queen fell on the ground like a female deer through the fear of a tiger. Smaradūtī was wounded (and lay) like an aśoka-creeper. Then the demon devoured all the female mules. He seized the queen by her hand as a lion seizes a female young deer. Then the demon spoke to her: "I have heard that your husband is killed by Śiva in the battle. If you want to live, then taking me as your husband live long and without fear from anywhere. Also drink sweet liquor along with good flesh." Hearing these words, the queen was as it were lifeless.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Vṛndā Goes to Heaven

Nārada said:

1-7. Then Viṣṇu wearing matted hair and bark-garments and the other one—his follower—having a fruit in his hand came (to Vṛndā). Seeing them, that fawn-eyed Smaradūtī wailed. Hearing her words (of wailing), the two said to her: “O auspicious lady, do not be afraid. We have come to protect you. How have you come to this fearful forest resorted to by the wicked?” Having comforted the slim lady like this, Viṣṇu said to the demon: “O you of a mean conduct, leave this soft-bodied and sweet-smiling lady. O fool, O you of a wicked conduct, what have you decided to do? You are out to eat the wealth of the three worlds. She is born as a result of the religious merit of the world. You are killing this ornament of the world. By killing Vṛndārikā now in the forest you will today render the world void of light and void of the pride of Cupid. Therefore, quickly leave her who is the deity of a comfortable palace.”

8-12. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the demon who got angry, said: “If you are capable, then free her today from my hand.” As soon as these words were uttered, Viṣṇu looked at him angrily. Leaving Vṛndā far away, he fell down after being reduced to ash. Then, she who was stupefied by the illusion of the lord of the world, said: “Who are you, the ocean of pity, who protected me here? O you treasure of austerity, with your sweet words you have removed by destroying the demon my physical and mental agony and torment. O dear ascetic, I shall practise penance in your hermitage.”

The ascetic said:

13-20. I am Bhāradvāja’s son, known as Devaśarman. Giving up all the pleasures, I have with this lad come to the fearful forest. I have many disciples going (anywhere) as they will, and also other disciples who can take any form they like. O auspicious one, if you desire to practise penance in my hermitage then come along. O queen, we shall go to another (forest) which is far away.

Speaking like this to the queen, Viṣṇu with a slow gait went into eastern direction to a forest full of ghosts and goblins, O king. Vṛndārikā, with her eyes full of tears went after him. Smaradūtī also, saying 'Wait for me', went after him. In the meanwhile a man of a sinful figure and of a wicked conduct spread out a nest. He, the chief of sinners, withdrew the net when it was full of creatures. Seeing the two ladies the hunter let loose the creatures after having fetched them. Smaradūtī said to her (i.e. to Vṛndā): "O Queen, he comes to eat me. May my friend hold me by the hand."

21-26. Having heard what she had said, Vṛndā saw the (man) with a loathsome face. Seeing him, she, dear to the Ocean's son, was shaken by gout due to fear. Being clearly alarmed, she, with Smaradūtī, ran into the forest. While running with her friend, she came to the ascetic's hermitage. In the ascetic's hermitage she saw wonderful things. (There) she saw birds with golden bodies and having many notes. She (there) saw a well rich in golden lotuses and a golden ground. The rivers were carrying milk. The trees were exuding honey. There was a store of sugar. There were also heaps of sweetmeats. All sweet eatables were there. There were many ornaments; and many divine weapons fell from the sky. The horses, being contented, played, jumped and fell there.

27-31a. In a small ascetic's hut Vṛndā saw a very handsome ascetic seated on a seat made of tiger-hide and illumining the three worlds. To him she said: "O lord, protect me from (this) sinner. What is the use of austerities, or religious merit, or silence or muttering prayers? O you whose wealth is your penance, there is no greater penance than the protection of those who are frightened." Thus she who was frightened and whose body was fatigued, spoke to him. Just then the wicked-souled catcher of all creatures arrived there. Queen Vṛndā who was afflicted with fear, embraced Viṣṇu at the neck. Like a creeper she clasped him with her arms in a manner in which the touch was pleasant. (He said to her:)

31b-35. "By means of your embrace the head of your husband will again be endowed with the entire body with excellences. O you beautiful lady, now go to the picture-room." She who was told by the sage (to go to) the picture-room, entered it. Having

got on a divine bed, she took the head of her husband, and being extremely lustful, and with her eyes closed when she drank its lower lip (i.e. kissed it), the form of Jālandhara appeared there, O king. The lord of the world was similar in figure to her husband, had a chest like that of him; his height was like that of him; his words were like those of him; his temperament was like that of him.

36-42a. Seeing her dear husband having the full form, she said: “O lord, I shall do what is dear to you. Tell me about your battle.” Hearing the words of Vṛndā, the deceptive son of the Ocean said: “O queen, listen as to how Śambhu fought with me. O dear one, the terrible Śiva cut off my head with a disc. Then due to your divine power and due to my mind having gone to you the head that was cut off was brought here, and due to the contact with your body it came back to life. O dear young lady, due to separation from me you have become distressed. Forgive me (this) unpleasant (act) that I left you and went to the battlefield.” With these other words he then reminded Vṛndā (of his acts). Then, queen Vṛndā who had all auspicious pleasures like tām̐būlas, diversions, garments and ornaments, who was very lustful, firmly embraced her dear husband and kissed him.

42b-46. God Viṣṇu looked upon the pleasure due to the fascination of Vṛndā as superior to (that derived from) salvation, and as giving greater delight than derived from Lakṣmī. Then Mādhava, Kṛṣṇa who was the royal swan in the well charming and shining due to her sports, lost (all) his longing for Lakṣmī due to the beauty of Vṛndā. In that forest, Vṛndā turned into the form of Tulasī. That (Tulasī) that was highly purifying arose from the sweat of Vṛndā. Having, for some days, enjoyed the pleasure due to the contact with Vṛndā’s body, (Viṣṇu) the lord of the world, thought about the mission of Śiva.

47-50. Once, after the sexual act was over, Vṛndā saw the ascetic (that is) Viṣṇu with his two hands thrown round her neck. Seeing him and freeing from the clasp of his hands her neck, she said: “How is it that in the guise of an ascetic you came to fascinate me?” Hearing her words, and consoling her, Viṣṇu said to her: “O Vṛndārikā, listen. Know me to be (Viṣṇu) pleasing to Lakṣmī. Your husband has gone to vanquish Śiva and bring Pārvatī. I am Śiva, and Śiva is me. We have (just)

remained separately. O sinless one, Jālandhara has been killed in the battle. Now resort to me.”

Nārada said:

51-54. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, her face was dejected. Then, O king, Vṛndārikā who was angry, replied: “Is it proper for you to have snatched the young wife of him who bound you in the battle, and released you at his father’s words, and were honoured with various gems? How can he who is the master of righteousness, dally with the wife of another (man)? The wise say that even the lord enjoys (the fruits of) his acts. Since you, an ascetic in disguise, deluded me, someone disguised as an ascetic will take (away) your young wife.”

55-59. Thus cursed Viṣṇu in a moment vanished. When Viṣṇu had left, that bed in the picture-room, those monkeys—all that disappeared. Seeing the forest desolate, Vṛndā went to her friend and told her about the trickery played by Viṣṇu. “I have abandoned the city. My kingdom has gone. (The existence) of my husband is doubtful. I am in the forest. Realising this, where should I, fashioned (thus) by fate, go? My seeing my dear (husband) was (just) a matter of my desires.” Vṛndā who was extremely afflicted, heaved a hot sigh and said: “I have, and you too, O Smaradūti, met with death.” Thus addressed by her, she said: “You are my very life.”

60-62. Hearing words spoken like that by her, Vṛndā, deciding that this should be done, abandoned her grief and went to a great lake, and with (its) water, she washed her body. Sitting in padmāsana on the bank and making her mind free from the objects of senses, she withered her body which was polluted due to the contact with (the body of) Viṣṇu. She, with her friend, fasted and practised very severe penance.

63-66. The host of the celestial nymphs came to Vṛndā from the world of gandharvas and said to her: “O auspicious one, go to heaven do not cast your body. This (your body) is the weapon of gandharvas; it conquers the three worlds; it is the best joy of Viṣṇu by which he was brought here; how (then) do you cast this (your) body which has obtained (i.e. fulfilled) the desires? Know that your husband is killed with an excellent arrow of Śiva. Be the ornament of heaven obtained through

religious merit. O angry lady, today quickly resort to the grove of the gods.” Hearing the sacred precept for young married ladies, the wife of the Ocean’s son said (these) words: “Lord (Viṣṇu), the great hero, left (Lakṣmī) the young wife of the lord of gods, and (coming) from heaven, honoured me, and I who was conquered by the god, was made a receptacle of pleasures. Being guileless I shall try to do that by which I shall obtain an immortal state.” Speaking like this, Vṛndā, along with her friend, dismissed the bebies of the celestial nymphs. Bound by the noose of love for her, they came and went every day.

67-72. Then Vṛndā, through practice of abstract meditation, burnt, with the fire of knowledge, the qualities, and having withdrawn her mind from the objects of senses, obtained the highest (position). Seeing Vṛndārikā there the great hosts of the celestial nymphs were pleased. With showers of flowers from the sky they showered her. Having made a heap of dry (pieces of) wood, Smaradūtī put on it the (dead) body of Vṛndā, kindled the fire and entered it. That round image of the particles of Vṛndā’s body was burnt. Collecting the remaining ashes, they threw them into Mandākinī. At the place where Vṛndā cast her body and went to heaven, was the Vṛndāvana, near the Govardhana mountain. The divine ladies (i.e. the celestial nymphs) went to heaven and told the divine ladies there. Having heard that, all the gods and others, with their minds delighted, gave up the fear of their enemy, the demon, and beat the furious drums. The group of attendants seated there obtained the charm of auspiciousness.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Jālandhara Gives up His Disguise

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Tell me in detail, O sage, how Jālandhara took up the form of Śiva, and what he did on seeing Pārvatī.

Nārada said:

2-8. O king, when that deceptive Śiva (i.e. Jālandhara disguised as Śiva) longed for Pārvatī, she got disturbed, and did not speak anything. 'It is not proper on the part of the lord (to ask for sea) who was obtained by me by penance and is not unwell.' Deciding like this, Pārvatī did not speak to him, O king. Seeing no prevention, she, even as he was seeing, got up, went out and saw Gaṅgā flowing in the sky. Thinking her to be fit for residence, Pārvatī went to practise penance. Then, thinking, 'Even formerly I secured the lord through penance. Now also (I shall secure him) like that', she went with her friends from there. O king, in front of her Pārvatī saw Mandākinī falling from the mountain into the northern part of Mānasa. She was flowing like a series of necklaces separated from the garland of the sky. When the flood of the water of Mandākinī was drawn from the heaven, she dropped like the stream of the flood of the sacred texts from Brahmā's mouth.

9-13a. On seeing that Gaṅgā she was delighted. Having, with her friend, bathed (in the water of Gaṅgā) and honoured her, she then placed her body (i.e. was seated) on the bank of the golden river. Being mutually afraid, they looked at one another. Pārvatī said to her friend Jayā: "O friend, taking up my form (i.e. disguised like me), quickly go to him. Know the truth: Whether he is Śiva or someone else. If he embraces you and kisses you, then know him to be the demon who has come after resorting to deception. If he talks to you about my well-being or otherwise, then undoubtedly he would be Śiva. (Then) come here and tell me".

13b-17. Thus ordered by the goddess Jayā went near (i.e. to) Śiva. Seeing her coming, he was very much afflicted by lust, took her to be Pārvatī and embraced her. Then Jālandhara quickly ejected his semen; and O descendant of Kuru, his organ speedily became small. She said to him: "O demon, you shall never be Rudra. You are of a little semen (i.e. you ejected quickly). You are of a wicked behaviour. I am not Pārvatī. I am her friend." Saying so and resorting to (i.e. taking up) her own form, she again spoke to him: "Due to this sin of yours, you are (i.e. will be) killed by Śiva." Knowing thus (i.e. his falsehood), she reached (the place where Pārvatī remained).

18-23. Going there she said to Pārvatī: “O goddess, this one is Jālandhara, and not your husband Śiva.” Then Śiva’s wife (Pārvatī) was afflicted with fear, and she quickly entered a lotus. In the lotuses her friends became female bees due to the fear of Jālandhara, O king. Meantime, her guards, not seeing her, the queen, who had gone to the forest, were afraid, and quickly came to the battlefield. Then they were asked by Śumbha. They, with nervousness, saluted him and for getting themselves exempted, they approached Viṣṇu, the lord of gods (*obscure*). Hearing that Vṛndā was kidnapped, he (i.e. Jālandhara) being afraid of Rudra, left the battle. Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, the two very speedy demons, who were sent by Śumbha, came to Mānasottara; and from behind a bush said to the demon who had taken up the form of (i.e. who was disguised as) Śiva:

24-28. “O best king, what is the use of that glory that has gone to a foreign country, which the enemies do not see (i.e. care for) and which is not enjoyed with the kinsmen. O lord, Śumbha has been vanquished; your army has been killed by Śiva in the battle. Come on, come on; fight; you will not obtain Pārvatī. How can a jackal secure a lioness? O king, how can darkness have the lustre of the sun? From the Jālandhara-pīṭha (i.e. your seat) Viṣṇu has taken away your queen. Such a news is heard. Therefore, fight. Having quickly vanquished Śiva in the battle, be the lord of all. Or (i.e. otherwise), being cut to pieces by the arrows of Śiva you will reach his place.”

29-33. Hearing these words of Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, Jālandhara, with his eyes red, angrily moved out from that mountain. Having cheered up Caṇḍa, and Muṇḍa, Jālandhara gave up the form (i.e. guise) of Śiva, and (while) going along the path, said to Durvāraṇa. “See, O Durvāraṇa, what now Viṣṇu has done there. Having resorted to deception, he has taken queen Vṛndā to his place. An intelligent person should never trust his son-in-law who lives in his house. A wise man should dismiss him after having given him (in marriage) his daughter. A man should never keep his son-in-law in his house. (For) he (i.e. the son-in-law) gradually takes (away) his wealth, wife etc.”

Durvāraṇa said:

34. The (fruit of an) act is had in the same way as it is

done, O king. You had come to kidnap Pārvatī (and) Viṣṇu took away your young wife.

Hearing his plain words, Jālandhara silently thought for a moment.

Jālandhara said:

35. Should I go to vanquish Śiva or the powerful Viṣṇu? When the two duties have come up, tell me which is more important.

Durvāraṇa said:

36-39. If you go to conquer Viṣṇu, Śiva will strike you from behind. The brave will strike (you). Śiva will not allow you to go. Therefore, having (first) conquered (Śiva), the lord of beings, and (then) having brought him under control, march against Viṣṇu, if you know his place. O hero, now quickly go to the very powerful demons. Wage a fierce battle which will mature well (i.e. give you good fruit) in heaven.

Having heard (these) words of Durvāraṇa Jālandhara went to fight with Śiva, the meditating sage.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Śukra is Confined by Kṛtyā inside Her Vulva

Nārada said :

1-5. Then Jālandhara saw the battlefield which was fierce due to the heaps of headless trunks, and which was inaccessible due to flow of blood and flesh and due to marrow, fat and bones. There, on the battlefield, the demon Jālandhara who was distressed due to his wife being kidnapped, saw Śiva, the lord of Pārvatī, who was mounted upon a bull, whose body was adorned with the hood of a fierce serpent, who was marked with the (crescent) moon on the mass of his matted hair, and whose body

was graced with the flame coming out of his eye. The Ocean's son saw him not fighting. Having quickly got into his chariot, the Ocean's son, getting angry, then said to Śumbha: "You have not killed the ascetic." Śumbha said to Jālandhara: "He has practised great (i.e. severe) austerities. Therefore, he cannot be killed. Śiva is invincible in the battle."

6-11. Having heard these words of Śumbha, the Ocean's son was violent with anger, and taking the Kalakedāra bow, he (i.e. Jālandhara) went to Śiva, surrounded by a thousand padma army of the demons. In the battle the dreadful (demon) discharged many arrows that were sharp, very large and that had iron props, as a cloud showers (water) on its arrival. In the battle, Śiva's attendants stopped the Ocean's son who was coming (to Śiva). Then (the demon) was angrily struck by Śiva with volleys of fearful arrows. By Śiva's arrows his armour was knocked down on the ground. He, even without the armour, looked like a mountain left by a cloud. The body of Jālandhara was again nailed by Śiva with arrows. From Jālandhara's body much blood flowed. By means of the stream of blood the entire earth was moistened.

12-17. Then the gods were frightened and the demons trembled. The brave pramathas left the battlefield and fled. A great form like that of a river spread everywhere. Then the Ocean's son said to Śiva: "You are the best among the archers. Now I shall do that by which you will perish." Speaking like this, he took up the Kalakedāra bow with the arrows and quickly filled (i.e. covered) Śiva with various kinds of arrows. On the battlefield Śiva with his body covered with crores (of arrows) shone like the sky with birds or a great mountain with trees. Seeing that Śiva was covered with those arrows discharged by the demon (Jālandhara), Virabhadra angrily ran to Jālandhara. The powerful and magnanimous (Virabhadra) troubled the Ocean's son.

18-23. Jālandhara, the brave son of the Ocean, who was angry, piercing (Virabhadra) with thousands of arrows reduced to pieces as small as the sesamum-seeds, with his arrows, (Virabhadra's) bow, arrows, chariot, umbrella and charioteer. Then Virabhadra, who was without his chariot, struck the Ocean's son with a mace. In the same way he (i.e. Jālandhara) too struck him with a mace and knocked him down on the ground. Seeing him fallen due to the stroke with mace, and very much bewildered, Maṇibhadra

then ran to Jālandhara in the battle. Seeing him who was very angry, coming (to him), the demon, son of the River (Gaṅgā) scattered his implements with his arrows. Then shaking off his bewilderment, he, roaring like a lion, got up. Then Virabhadra and the valourous Maṇibhadra angrily struck with two rocks the River's son remaining in the sky.

24-27. Seeing the two rocks to have fallen on his body, Virabhadra roared and struck the River's son (i.e. Jālandhara) with the blow of his fist. Maṇibhadra seized the Ocean's son by his feet and whirled him from his chariot. That was a great wonder. The very powerful king of the demons, though seized by Maṇibhadra, struck Maṇibhadra with the blows of his feet and knocked him down. That mighty-armed Jālandhara also (knocked down) Virabhadra with (the blow of) his fist. Then Nandikeśvara surrounded by attendants came (there).

28-35a. Seeing him coming Śumbha with his soldiers obstructed him. Then the attendants (of Śiva) and the demons came to one another fighting duels. In the battle Śumbha went to (fight with) Śilādaja, and Rāhu to (fight with) Mahākāla. Niśumbha ran to Kolāhala and Ketu to Kāla. Śailodara (ran) to Guha (i.e. Kārtikeya) and the very mighty Jambha (rushed) to Mālyavat. Mahāpārśva went to Caṇḍa and Caṇḍīśa to Roma-kaṇṭaka. Vikatāśya went to Bhṛṅgī and Urunetra to Gajānana. In this way the chiefs of the attendants went (to fight with) the lordly demons. Then Śilādaja, having an ape-like face, struck by the weapons and arrows of Śumbha, bruised him with great peaks of mountains. Śumbha, afflicted by that, struck Śilādaja with a śakti. Then in the battle Mahākāla struck that Rāhu with a śakti. He struck his chariot with a great rock. The brave Kolāhala was struck with a śakti by Niśumbha. Taking a śakti, he struck his chariot with the charioteer.

35b-41. The very angry demon, the lord of demons, who was without a chariot, struck Kolāhala with a sahasraphaṇin (a serpent-like weapon). Having struck him, he speedily went to another chariot. Struck with the phaṇicakra in the battle, he, in a moment, shook off his swoon, quickly got down from his chariot, took a sword and shield, and cut off everything including the chariot of Niśumbha. Again getting into his chariot, he struck the demon with arrows. The very strong Niśumbha too,

amazed at his valour, very angrily destroyed with a śakti his chariot with the horses. Kolāhala, the mighty one who was without his chariot, went running to Niśumbha and by chaining his arms rendered him who had a chariot, chariotless. Kāla seized Ketu's tail and whirled him into the sky. He too threw a rock. He (i.e. Kāla) quickly cut off the rock.

42-45. Seeing the rock pounded, he struck him (i.e. Ketu) with his fist. Kāla with his entire body bruised by Ketu, ran away through fear. In the same way Śailodara struck Kārtikeya on his chest with a mace. Kārtikeya also struck him with a śakti and knocked him down on the ground. Seeing the demon dead due to the stroke of the śakti, Kārtikeya roared. There was a surprise as when Krauñca was rent asunder. With volleys of arrows Mālyavat struck Jambha in the battle. Jambha too left him swooning after piercing him with sharp arrows.

46-51a. Then Mahāpārśva seized the chariot with volleys of arrows and rendering it horseless easily took it into the sky and knocked down the horseless chariot at Caṇḍa. Seeing the chariot without horses, Caṇḍa took up (i.e. mounted upon) an elephant. Caṇḍa struck with his mace Mahāpārśva attacking him. That very fierce demon, ignoring the blow of the mace, struck Caṇḍa with his fist and knocked him on the ground. The great demon Romakaṇṭha, struck by the weapon of Caṇḍīśa, seized Caṇḍīśa by the feet and dropped him on the top of chariot. All of a sudden he fell on the ground, and he of fearful eyes, went to (attack) him. Gajānana was struck with arrows by Urunetra in the battle. He struck him with his tusk in his chest and knocked him down on the ground.

51b-57. In a moment Urunetra became pacified, quickly came to the chariot, and, with a mallet, struck (Gajānana) on his head adorned with red lead. (Gajānana) the lord of (Śiva's) attendants struck the demon (Urunetra) on his chest with a spear having a sharp edge. From his mouth came out a great demon having nine heads and eighteen arms. O king, he too ran to (Gajānana) the son of Śiva. Gajānana was obstructed by Navaśīrṣa and Urunetra. Though his body was wounded, he angrily took an axe. With that the chief of the attendants (of Śiva) cut off their weapons in the battle. Seeing that Gajānana was obstructed by the two (demons), Senānī—Kārtikeya—quickly

came (there) and killed Navaśīrṣa. Having killed Navaśīrṣa in the battle, he ran to Urunetra. O king, with the blow of his (weapon called) śakti, Kārtikeya knocked him down. Jālandhara, seeing Kārtikeya, and surrounded by his army went to (attack) him.

58-62a. Śiva too through affection for his son and with his attendants (came there) to kill the demons. Then between the two armies a wonderful and very fierce battle took place. In the battle between Śiva and the Ocean's son the heaven and earth were as if lifeless. Then the angry Jālandhara, the lord of the demons, fixed a fierce arrow and with that arrow adorned all round with feathers numbering a thousand hundreds, struck Śiva on his forehead. It sank up to its feathered part into Śiva's head like the moon and like the sun in the evening in the autumn at the end of the summer.

62b-66. Then Śiva took up a great arrow which resembled fire, in whose speed there was wind (i.e. which was speedy like wind), at the head of which remained fire and the sun, at whose knots remained death; in the arrow goddess Dharā (the earth) remained. With that arrow Śiva quickly pierced the Ocean's son in his chest. Due to the stroke of the arrow, he, with his body wounded by that arrow, and wet with a stream of blood, fell down like a mountain struck by thunderbolt. At that time the demons wailed, and the pramathas (the goblin-attendants of Śiva) roared. Seeing the Ocean's son fainted, the demons obstructed Śiva. Some were eager to protect him, others stood around him.

67-70. While Jālandhara, the Ocean's son was in a swoon, Śiva struck the army of Jālandhara with arrows. After a long time Jālandhara gave up the swoon (i.e. regained consciousness), and, full of fear, saw his army killed (by Śiva) and dispersed on the battlefield; he mentally remembered his great preceptor, Śukra. Remembered by him, Śukra quickly came to Jālandhara. Wishing him well, Śukra said to the Ocean's son: "O great king, O mighty one, what mission of you should I do?"

Nārada said:

71. Hearing these words of Śukra, Jālandhara very much honoured Śukra, his preceptor, and saluting him said:

The king said:

72-76. O Śukra, bring back to life all these demons that are dead all around.

Thus addressed by the Ocean's son in the battle, he observed the army which measured twentyfive thousand yojanas and which was further and further crowded with the bodies and chariots of the demons piled up on earth up to ninetyfive yojanas. (He) then (saw) the earth as it were full of the bodies of the warriors and horses (and elephants). Having sprinkled the demons with charmed water, Śukra made them rise up. While Śiva tied firmly the mass of his matted hair with serpents, Śukra made the army rise up by means of a charm.

77-80. Śiva thought on seeing the demons that had come, as lions do on seeing tigers or lordly elephants do on seeing pigs: 'What has happened here? Somewhere he creates (i.e. brings back to life) the dead.' Thinking like this on the battlefield, Śiva saw on the battlefield, Śukra bringing back the demons to life and running faster (i.e. very fast). Then Śiva who was angry, made up his mind to kill Śukra. Requesting the Trident-holder (Śiva) in private, Śukra said to him: 'I am a brāhmaṇa. How do (i.e. can) you kill a brāhmaṇa skilled in all lores? O Śiva, you will incur (the sin of killing) a brāhmaṇa on killing me.'

81-84. Hearing these words of Śukra, Śiva gave up the trident. On remembering the former account, viz. the sticking of Brahmā's head (he thought:) 'A brāhmaṇa is not to be killed, even if he takes away one's life dear to one. But this (Śukra) who is bringing the demons back to life, must be fully curbed by me. Therefore, I shall quickly throw him leading the life of a demon, into the vulva of a woman.' From the third eye of Śiva who was thinking like this, a female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes, quickly (came out). She was naked, very fierce; she had let loose her hair; her belly was big. Her breasts were big and hanging; Her vulva, fangs and eyes were fearful.

85-89. Śiva, who was addressed by her, 'Order (me)', said to her: "O Kṛtyā, put quickly the wicked-minded preceptor of the demons into your vulva; and carry (i.e. keep) him in your vulva

till I kill Jālandhara. After the demon Jālandhara is killed, you take him out and release him." That deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes, who was thus told by Śiva, ran to Śukra. On seeing her the demon fell on the ground; and the demons fled. Shaking Śukra by seizing his hair, she embraced Śukra, and laughing, she held him in her vulva, O Jayanandana. Seeing his preceptor put by the deity into her vulva when Jālandhara fixed the arrows, she disappeared.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Jālandhara Is Killed

Śrī Nārada said:

1-8. Then Jālandhara said to Śiva: "O Śiva, protect yourself now. O Śiva, I shall today throw you there where Viṣṇu lives. Then, having dragged Brahmā, I shall throw him into the ocean. When all of you are seized (by me) I am then the lord of all." Having spoken like this, he entrusted the responsibility of the army on the demons Śumbha etc. The warriors like Niśumbha guarded the endless four-limbed army. Seeing all the excellent demons like Śumbha, Niśumbha, Pheṃkāra, Pheruṇḍa, Dhūmrālocana, Ketu, Biḍālajaṅgha, Rāhu, Durvāraṇa and Yama, so also Kālāsura, Lavaṇa, Bhūmiretas and the demon Andhaka, and Raktavīrya and others, Caṇḍin and Cāmuṇḍin, ready to fight in the battle, the attendants of Śiva like Vīrabhadra and others, confronted them in the battle, O king. Then a horrible, fierce and thrilling battle took place, in which even the principal demons, suffering from wounds, fell (down). O king, the attendants (of Śiva) struck with all weapons by Śumbha and others in the great war, fell and others fled.

9-12. The demons, having vanquished the attendants, confronted Śiva. They showered him with volleys of arrows, as the clouds shower the Meru mountain. Then Śiva, seated upon his bull (Nandin), drew his bow and struck with volleys of arrows the demons on the battlefield. The powerful one struck the

demons with arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. He quickly killed the remaining army on the battlefield with weapons and missiles. The battlefield was covered with elephants, men and horses that had fallen (in the battlefield).

13-18a. It appeared like the earth (covered) with mountains cut off by thunderbolt. Then the Ocean's son fashioned an illusory (form of) Gaurī that was endowed with the quality of beauty and adorned with all ornaments. Making an illusory (form of) Jayā the Ocean's son said: "Quickly go in front of Śiva, and quickly fascinate him on the battlefield." The illusory Jayā thus addressed, went (to Śiva). Having gone to the battlefield and with her hair let loose she wept. Asked by Śiva, she said: "From the mountain north of Mānasa your dear wife, Pārvatī, O god, has been kidnapped by the Ocean's son." Hearing these words of her, the bull-bannered (god Śiva) said to her: "O Jayā, you go to the bull (Nandin). The demons will kidnap you."

18b-24. Then, Jayā, mounting upon the bull (Nandin) and embracing Śiva, said: "O Hara, I (shall) go. I cannot live without Pārvatī." Taking the moon that had entered the matted hair of Śiva, she—the illusory form—quickly got down from the bull. Clasped by the illusory form, he went to the battlefield. Then hearing that Pārvatī was kidnapped, Śiva became worried. O king, encircled by the demon's illusion, he did not recognise himself. In the meanwhile, the Ocean's son surrounded by a great army, came after having put the illusory Pārvatī in his chariot to Śiva. In the same way, there was the sound of musical instruments in (i.e. declaring) the victory of Jālandhara, due to which the earth shook and the mountains echoed. The Ocean's son showed Pārvatī to Śiva. Rudra (i.e. Śiva) too saw his dear wife who was distressed due to separation (from him), who was helpless, who was slim and whose eyes were over-anxious, sitting in his enemy's chariot.

25-30a. She was again and again crying, "O lord, O dear Rudra." Śiva saw Pārvatī seated in the strong enemy's chariot like the sacred text remaining in the possession of a heretic. 'How shall I get (back) my beloved?' (Like this), Śāmbhu deluded by the demon's illusion lamented. 'O dear one, the demons deluded me. How have you been kidnapped?'

The Ocean's son, seeing Śiva bewildered with grief and delusion, laughed and uttered (these) words as kind (person would do). "You are without any authority. You are without sexual love. Though you are the lord, you have become miserable without Pārvatī. O Śiva, do not weep. I (shall) give you your dear wife. Having taken Pārvatī, I have spared you the fight."

30b-36. Speaking like this to Śiva, he got down Pārvatī from the chariot. Then he sent his army towards Śaṅkara. To take Pārvatī who was crying "Protect (me), protect (me)", Śiva too, along with (his) bull (Nandin), quickly ran towards his (i.e. Jālandhara's) army. When Śiva seized Pārvatī with his hand, the demon Śumbha quickly seized her and remained in the sky. The mighty Śiva discharged his spear to kill the demon Śumbha. Śumbha left her and she fell on the spear. She, beautiful in all limbs and weeping, when left, fell along with the spear in front of Śiva, and saying "All right" died (there only). Rudra, seeing the illusory Pārvatī dead, was full of grief and delusion, and wailing "O dear one", he fell in a swoon on the ground. Having regained consciousness (after) a moment, he cursed Śumbha and others on the battlefield: "Pārvatī will kill you."

Nārada said:

37-42. O king, in the previous age of Manu the demons Śumbha and others were knocked down by the goddess due to Śiva's curse. Having cursed them and having gone out he wailed, "O dear one, where have you gone after abandoning me, the distressed one, on the battlefield? Giving up attachment for me, I Śaṅkara, am made distressed by separation from you. O dear one, even Viṣṇu does not know me to be abandoned by you (i.e. does not know that you have left me). O goddess, in the fire-vessel of Dakṣa, you had offered your head. You were again obtained by me. (Then) how do you abandon me again? O you of a beautiful body, O Girijā, get up, get up. Communicate with me." In the meanwhile, Brahmā remaining in the group of deities, knowing that Śiva was deluded by the demon's illusion, came (there). He who was invisible, spoke to the wailing Śiva:

Brahmā said:

43-45. You are without grief, delusion, father and mother. You do not have pain, pleasure, son, a wife, or an enemy. You are not born of a father, nor will you be born (of a father). You are looked upon (like this) by the sages? (Then) whence this delusion? O lord, you are one; you have taken up various forms, as the sun is seen (to be many) in the waves of the water. Those who observe restraint, reach by means of meditation your feet, the great form, unintelligible, and quite indescribable. This your beloved is not distressed like you. O god, give up the illusion fashioned by Jālandhara. That Pārvatī has gone into the bud of a lotus. Fight; kill the multitude of enemies. Protect us.

46-52. Having heard these words of Brahmā, Śiva knew (the illusion). Knowing the demon's illusion, he threw a large rock (at the demons). With that he killed three hundred crores of demons. O king, then having very angrily mounted upon his bull (i.e. Nandin), Śiva took his Pināka bow and arrows. Then the son of the Ocean (i.e. Jālandhara), seeing Śiva, free from the illusion, manifested quickly another group of illusions which deluded the lord of gods, which was very wonderful, which was very powerful. Jālandhara turned into (one) having a crore of arms and fought Śiva with trees, weapons and missiles; and he, the Ocean's son, put the earth that was decorated with the red chalk into the intermediate space; and the Ocean's son made the earth adorned with many charming temples of deities, full of various (kinds of) flowers. Celestial nymphs, more lovely than Menakā danced there. Śambhu, forgot (to fight) and instantly abandoned the bow, and deluded by (the sound of) musical instruments and songs and by the tāṇḍava dance of the lord of demons, started, being mounted upon the bull.

53-60. Seeing Śiva seated on the bull deluded, the Ocean in an embodied form, to delude him, roared with tāṇḍava, songs, musical instruments, and dances. He, constantly being rejoiced, threw the beings into the ocean; "Where are all those deities? Where are the attendants led by Nandin? You who are respectable, are deluded by the demon's illusion. O lord Śambhu, why do you neglect (him)? Taking out the disc remaining in your belly, and fashioned for killing him only, O Maheśa, kill

Jālandhara with that in the battle.” By (i.e. on hearing) these words of Kṛṣṇa, and recollecting himself to be the lord, he quickly mounted upon the bull and came to the great battle. Seeing that Śiva coming, that angry demon Jālandhara surrounded by his entire army, stopped him. The form of Śiva, who was angry, (was one that) would destroy the creation. In his third eye there were fires and the demons were like moths. O king, seeing the lord’s form full of fierce flames, the demons like Śumbha, so also those like Rāhu seeing Śiva, were frightened and through fear they entered the nether world.

61-66. Seeing many soldiers killed in the great war, and seeing certain demonslike Śumbha that were spared, and (seeing a few) who had fled away, Jālandhara remained on the battlefield like a mountain. Seeing actually the true form of Rudra, he was delighted. Then Jālandhara laughed and said to Śiva: “Withdraw your (fierce) form with which you are burning (the world with) the mobile and the immobile. Give up your divine power and fight with a weapon.” Hearing these words of Jālandhara, Śiva then said (to him:) “O lord of demons, ask for a boon. I am pleased with your deed that you are fearless even after having seen such a (fierce) form. O demon, even the entire universe is not able to look at this form of me and at my lustre. (But) you are fearless in that respect.”

Nārada said:

67-71. Regarding this to be a favour of Śiva, Jālandhara, having no desire for the mundane existence, asked from him release as a boon in the form of absorption into him.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

O demon, this your divine body endowed with all pleasures and divine powers, and lovely due to Vṛndā and charming remaining here will meet with death here. Not knowing the highest soul that is one and immutable, for a while, how do you give it up? How do you desire salvation? Your dear queen Vṛndā has been taken away through divine power. Having known the nature of Brahman, she has reached that highest position. Now she is difficult to obtain, so also that position is

difficult to obtain. Ask for a boon in the worldly existence between heaven and salvation.

Jālandhara said:

72-75. O god, the position of salvation is obtained by a blessed one. Now I am blessed, since, struck by you I am seeing you.

Śiva said:

O demon, if you are eager to go to my place, a holy place, then (striking me) with strong arrows, quickly make me angry. Then, O sinless one, I shall kill you, (and) you will go to my place.

Hearing the words of the great god, Jālandhara said to Śiva: “I shall not first strike you who are adorable to the whole world.”

Nārada said:

76-81. Thus addressed, Śiva quickly struck the Ocean’s son with arrows and those arrows stuck to the Ocean’s son’s body shone as the bamboos blazing with fire shine on the skirt of Lohagiri. Jālandhara filled the body of Śiva with arrows. With those arrows Rudra shone like the sky full of birds. Then, O king, a duel took place between Jālandhara and god (Śiva). There is no other striker than Śiva. There is no other one than the Ocean’s son who bears (the strokes). With thousands of crores of mountains taken out from the cavity of the earth, the Ocean’s son filled the lord of Pārvatī in the battle. Then the demon (Jālandhara) was struck on his chest with a spear by Śiva. From his mouth fearful and yawning Jvara emerged. He having the face of a lion and a human figure was (called) Virajvara.

82-92. Seeing Jvara having a lion’s face, moving out of the demon’s body, (Śiva) made a ‘hum’ sound. From it a Śarabha¹ came out. He was knocked down by the Śarabha, sent out by

1. Śarabha: A fabulous animal said to have eight legs and be stronger than a lion.

Śiva. Seeing that Saṅkara, along with the lord of bulls (viz. Nandin) invincible, that Ocean's son speedily came near the bull. Seizing the bull by his tail, he whirled him into the sky. (That) mighty-armed Jālandhara threw him on the Himālaya mountain. Then Girijā's husband (i.e. Śiva) discharged the very fierce trident. Catching it with his hand near Śiva, the lord of the demons, the Ocean's son, mounted upon his chariot, took the bow (called) Kalakedāra, and filled with arrows Śiva standing on the earth. Śiva cut off his weapons and arrows and pounded with arrows his chariot which was ten yojanas extensive, along with the charioteer and horses. Jālandhara too, who was chariotless, ran to Śiva in the battle. A fierce, wonderful and thrilling battle took place between the two. Seeing it, the deities, through fear of the unexpected deluge, trembled. The two, of a fearful valour, shaking the earth by means of their foot(-steps) and making the sky tremble with the sounds struck each other with all missiles. Then seeing the great might of the lord of demons, Śiva, through his divine power, took a multitude of weapons. Then a demon, having a crore of arms and with eyes fearful due to the fangs, though without a weapon, quickly ran to Śiva.

93-99. On the battlefield he bound Śiva with the bond of his large arms. Then with a sword he cut off the jungle (i.e. multitude) of his hands. Rudra, overpowered by the arms of the Ocean's son, became dark blue. The Ocean's son easily fought with him. Though his hands were cut off, he fought as Rāhu (would fight) with his head. The River's son (Jālandhara) pleased Śiva with his fighting. Śiva who was pleased, said: "Ask for a difficult boon." Jālandhara too said to him: "Give me your position. Please do not insult me who am without arms and weapons. Quickly give me a divine power; otherwise I shall destroy you." Saying so, and being equipped with arms he struck him on his chest. Then, vomiting from his mouth the Sudarśana disc which he himself had formerly fashioned, he took it in his hand and angrily raised it. Its brilliance was like that of a crore of suns and it was swallowing (the world including) the mobile and the immobile.

100-106. With that disc the head of Jālandhara was cut off (by Śiva). Then that head flew into the sky to (the distance of) a hundred yojanas. O king, then it having a terrible mouth

with a hundred fangs, having eyes of heaven and earth, went, with the speed of a tiger to the house of Brahmā. Then again seeing the head in heaven Śiva ran to the head, from which blood was oozing and which was making a fearful sound. Then the quarters disappeared, and the sky (too) disappeared. The light of the luminaries was not there, and the earth trembled through fear. Rudra, with the disc, quickly cut off the head coming to him. Being cut into two it fell upon the Himālaya mountain. Then the pieces of Jālandhara's head quickly entered Śiva when all the beings were watching it.

107-112. That trunk of Jālandhara, red due to blood, danced. Again and again demons sprang up from his throat. They were repeatedly struck by Śiva with the disc. The entire earth was filled with the marrow of the Ocean's son. O king, due to the marrow only, Medinī (i.e. the earth) got that name. In the northern region of Kailāsa, where the blood of the excellent demon turned into a hill, the city (called) Śoṇitapura was (situated). Then seeing the heaps of flesh covering every place, the lord (i.e. Śiva) remembered his sixtyfour attendants. Due to the discerning recollection the goddesses also reached the vicinity of Śiva. With the palms of their hands folded they said: "O Śiva, what do (i.e. should) we do?"

Mahādeva said:

113-120. Together you who are permitted by me, should quickly eat the heaps of the demon's flesh which resemble mountains.

Brāhmī, Māheśvarī and Kaumārī so also Vaiṣṇavī and Vārāhī, and Māhendrī, (all) thus ordered by Śiva, and shining with their own attendants, looked at the heaps of flesh with a cruel eye, and in a moment they vanished. Then the weak body of Jālandhara was powerfully approached by śaktis. When his body was seized by them, from his body came out a lustre; it reached Śiva and in a moment it disappeared. That lustre resembling the sun's lustre, got merged into Śiva. Thus the enemy of gods met his destruction from Śiva. Maheśvara being pleased, said to them all: "Ask for a boon." Then all those female attendants asked the lord of the world: "Those men in the mortal worlds, who desire enjoyments and salvation and boons, will always worship the group of

your attendants (the Yoginīs) in their house. Due to your favour all that is desired by them will come about.”

Mahādeva said:

121-128. I am the giver of a boon to him on the earth, who-soever will every day devoutly worship your group. To my devotee or that of Viṣṇu who hates the group of Yoginīs, I shall be terrible and will take away his religious merit.

Thus were boons given to the Yoginīs in the battle. In the meanwhile Śiva remembered that Bhavānī (his wife) and his bull (Nandin). On just being remembered Pārvatī and the bull came there in a moment. Śiva's beloved (i.e. Pārvatī) came there along with her friends. Giving up her Bhrāmarī form, she mounted upon half the portion of (the body of) Hara. Then, O king, with Pārvatī, Śiva rejoiced. To the Yoginīs he said: “Drink the blood on the trunk of Jālandhara. Hearing it they were very much delighted. The Yoginīs, after (eating and) drinking the flesh, marrow and blood danced with joy. Then seeing their sport, Śiva was pleased; and taking up his Bhairava form, he drank it in the midst of them. The group of the Yoginīs were of sharp fangs and huge bodies.

129-132. Even today at (this) time they are seizing the flesh. Therefore, demon Jālandhara killed in battle, does not get up. Then there came the groups of deities like Brahmā. The sages, the Maruts and the gods praised the great lord (Śiva). The quarters were bright; fragrant breezes blew; showers of flowers fell from the sky. The drums also, that were beaten, produced sound above (i.e. in the sky) when he was consecrated. Then the earth was sprinkled with the continuous showers of honey by the swarms of bees going over it and humming sweetly, being blinded by the fragrance. In his assembly fell the shower of flowers dropped by gods.

133-136. When the Ocean's son was killed by Śiva with the strokes of the arrows, shower of flowers appeared (there), beautiful women danced and, yakṣas led by gods and kinnaras sang (songs). Śiva, having great fame due to his victory, and then being praised by groups of gods, siddhas and cāraṇas, went to his own mountain. From the mountain, Pārvatī also surroun-

ded by her friends, went to the Śveta mountain. The divine damsels waited upon her with a shower of flowers. Lord Śiva, the kind god, knowing (this) established the groups of gods in their own positions, and gave them his wealth. What more should be said when great pity would be shown by the lord? Or which other god is there who would bring under his control the earth on all sides? Gods having got (back) their kingdom, shone as before. Being the regents of quarters (again) they shared portions in sacrifices.

Nārada said:

137-142. O king, I have thus narrated in a sequence to you the very wonderful account of Jālandhara, hero of the world. Even now Viṣṇu being under his sway, does not leave the Milky Ocean. Know that everyone enjoys the fruit of his own act(s). To remove your grief I have told you this excellent account. As long as the body lasts, a man being influenced, experiences (the fruits of) his actions—pains and pleasures. O king, there is no greater refuge than knowledge. Even Kṛṣṇa and others when bound in a body have pleasure, pain etc. Then what can be said about others who are averse to detachment? Knowing that such is the course of acts, which is the strongest of all, be patient, wait for the arrival of auspicious acts again. At (the proper) time, you will, after vanquishing your enemies, regain your kingdom.

143-148. Having heard this account, (a man) is not overcome by griefs. Here (the four goals of human life, viz.) righteousness, material welfare, sensual enjoyments and salvation are properly told. A brāhmaṇa gets the auspicious knowledge leading to heaven, removing sins, destroying delusion, and a kṣatriya obtains a kingdom. Hearing (it) a vaiśya would obtain wealth, and a śūdra happiness. A weak king who is deprived of his kingdom but remains on the good path, again obtains his kingdom by hearing it every day. O King, after hearing this, the good do not like to hear anything else, as a man does not like to hear the harsh crying of crows after hearing the sweet notes of cuckoos. Having heard this guileless account, he who is dear to the hearts of the good, should please the reader (of this

account) by (giving him) gold, sesamum-seeds, garments etc. and land. When he is pleased, he would get the (desired) fruit.

149-155. When the reader—the preceptor—is honoured, the deities also would be pleased. He should give gifts of food and honour brāhmaṇas. He, being prosperous with sons and grandsons, is always victorious. He who listens to this excellent account, is born in Viṣṇu's world. O king, those best men who, under this pretext, listen to the cause of the rise of Tulasī, have no sin anywhere. By listening to or telling this auspicious, sin-removing greatness of Tulasī (a man) undoubtedly attains salvation. By seeing Tulasī destroying sins, planted in one's house, the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder perishes. There is no doubt about this. (A man) should worship Viṣṇu with Tulasī (leaves) in Kārtika and Māgha. Viṣṇu's worship in Vaiśākha is especially laid down. Even by once going round it, all the sin goes (away). Those śūdras who are always engaged in (giving) gifts, are purified within (due) time. Their bodies also become worthy of worshipping deities. Those devotees of Viṣṇu, now very rare in this Kali age, have gone far away from sins.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

A Description of Śrīśaila

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Nārada, where is that charming mountain Śrīśaila? Which is the holy place there? Which god is worshipped there? Tell me now in which direction it is said to lie in the world.

Nārada said :

2-9. O king, listen; I shall describe the best mountain Śrīśaila, hearing about which people are free from such sins as killing a child. The grove on the mountain is charming and is resorted to by sages. It is full of many trees and creepers adorned with various kinds of flowers. It is resounding with the notes of

swans and cuckoos. The mountain grove is made fragrant with śrī trees, kapittha trees, śirīṣa and rāja trees. So also with pāri-jātaka flowers and with kadambas and udumbaras, with many fragrant flowers. It is very much resorted to by all the wives of the sages with their disciples. Some are engaged in studies and some in lectures. Some there have raised their hands; others are standing on their toes. Some are engrossed in meditation upon Śiva; others are devoted to Viṣṇu. Some are not eating anything; some are given to eating leaves. Some eat bulbs, roots and fruits; others have observed the vow of silence. Some are standing on one foot; some are sitting in the Padmāsana¹ posture. Some, eating no food, have practised very difficult penance.

10-13. There are auspicious hermitages and various beautiful rivers. There are many natural ponds and many tanks. O great king, all around is indeed seen the mountain, on which, O king, Mallikārjuna always remains. On top of the mountain is the charming peak, on merely seeing which peak (one gets) salvation. There is no doubt about it. Resorting to (i.e. in) the south stands the best mountain. Here is very beautiful Pātālagaṅgā.

14-18. Merely by bathing there (i.e. in it) a man is free from great sins. On seeing the peak of Śrīśaila, on dying at Vārāṇasī and on drinking water at Kedāra certainly there is no rebirth. It is a great place of the ascetics and meditating saints. Therefore, with every effort one should see it. This is Vijñānadeva (god of wisdom). He destroys great sins. There is the charming city Siddhapura giving divine pleasures, in which celestial damsels sing and rejoice. Therefore, this best mountain gives joy on seeing it. Those men who desire salvation, should see it.

1. Padmāsana: A particular posture in religious meditation. In it the left foot is placed on the right thigh. Then the right foot is placed on the left thigh.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Story of Sagara

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-5. O best divine sage, hear about the very auspicious Hari-dvāra. Gaṅgā flows there (i.e. by it); and it is said to be the best holy place. There gods, sages and men dwell. (So also) there god Viṣṇu himself always takes resort (i.e. lives). O child, this great holy place came about in ancient days. On merely seeing it sin goes away. Here due to special religious merit Gaṅgā has become very holy. Due to her touching Viṣṇu's feet she has the water of (i.e. coming from) the feet of Viṣṇu. O wise one, Bhagīratha brought her along the path. The magnanimous one (thus) emancipated his ancestors.

Nārada said:

6-9a. O god, who is the Bhagīratha of great penance to whom you have referred, who brought the holy (water) for the good of the people? The holy place on Gaṅgā is very auspicious and destroys all sins. All people say like this that it is the best holy place. He who, even from (a distance of) hundreds of yojanas would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's world. How did he bring it? What (was his) act? Tell that, O you of a good vow.

Mahādeva said:

9b-16. Who brought Gaṅgā, how he brought it at the very beautiful Gaṅgādvāra—all that I shall tell you in due order. Formerly there lived Hariścandra, (the only one) observing truth in the three worlds. He had a son, Rohita, solely devoted to Viṣṇu. He too had a son, called Vṛka, most righteous and established on a good path. In his family was born his son Subāhu. His son was Gara by name. He was extremely righteous. Some time, for (some) reason, the king became extremely unhappy due to fate. For religious reasons he was not censured in his country. Taking his family he went to Bhārgava's hermitage. Through compassion he was then protected by Bhārgava there. O brāhmaṇa, there a son named Sagara was born to him.

Looked after by Bhārgava, he then grew in the holy hermitage. He performed all (sacraments like) thread-ceremony of (i.e. befitting) a kṣatriya. He learnt (the use of) weapons and studied the Vedas.

17-24. Having received the missile of (i.e. presided over by) Agni, king Sagara moved on the earth and killed Tālajaṅghas with Haihayas. He, of a great penance, also killed Pāradas with Śakas.

Nārada said:

O Śaṅkara, tell in detail the greatness of Sagara. The very powerful great king of the solar dyansty is well-known.

Mahādeva said:

Due to a calamity of (i.e. befalling) Gara, his kingdom was taken away by Haihayas, Tālajaṅghas and Śakas, O Nārada. These tribes—Yavanas, Pāradas, Kāmbojas and Śakas (showed) valour. That king Gara whose kingdom was snatched, then went to a forest. The distressed one followed by his wife, died (there). His auspicious wife was pregnant and observing a vow. Formerly, he with his wife had chosen (i.e. gone to) Bhārgava with a desire for a son. She, having arranged the funeral pyre of her husband in the forest, wept. Aurva (the family preceptor) prevented Gara's wife, O Nārada. He told her about that son (of her) most righteous, good and dear (to all).

25-28. When she was told about the son, she refrained from dying. Then after two months he rose (i.e. was born) in Aurva's hermitage. Aurva performed his sacraments like the birth-rite. O great sage, thread-ceremony etc. took place there. Due to his contact with Aurva, he studied everything like Veda etc. Having taught him Vedas and sacred texts, he taught him (the use of) the missile of (i.e. presided over by) Agni, difficult to bear even for gods, O glorious one. He was endowed with that power of spiritual life in the battle.

29-36. Being angry, he quickly killed Haihayas with his might. He captivated them and obtained fame in the (three) worlds. Then those Śakas with Yavanas, so also Kāmbojas and Pallavas, being struck by him, sought the shelter of Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha, the very lustrous one, having made an agreement kept

away king Sagara after granting them protection from fear. Sagara, keeping his pledge and the preceptor's words, struck them righteously, and made them deformed. He half-shaved the heads of Śakas and sent them away. He completely shaved the heads of Yavanas and also of Kāmbojas. Pāradas are clean-shaved; Pallavas keep moustache. Having thus vanquished all he collected religious merit. Having conquered this earth, the all-righteous victorious king quickly prepared for (the performance of) a horse-sacrifice. His horse, moving near the south-east ocean, was taken away near the shore and was taken into the (interior of the) earth.

37-42. Then through his sons he got that region dug up everywhere. They digging there did not find the horse in the great ocean. They who were in a hurry, saw there an ancient man—the ancient man was Kapila, the lord of the worlds. The fire produced from the eyes of him getting awake, burnt sixty thousand of them; (only) four of them remained (unburnt). O brāhmaṇa, (the four) continuing his family (were:) Hṛṣiketu, Suketu, the other one Dharmaratha, and the brave Pañcajana. The revered lord Viṣṇu himself gave him five boons: (continuation of) family, salvation, good fame, ocean and son. Due to that act he got the state of ocean. He obtained that sacrificial horse from the ocean. He, of a great fame, performed a hundred horse sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

The Greatness of Haridvāra

Nārada said:

1. O you master of knowledge, tell (me) how those very mighty, brave, valorous sons of Sagara, sixty thousand in number, were born.

The lord of Pārvatī said:

2-8. Sagara had two wives whose sins were burnt by penance. Aurva, the best sage, being pleased, granted them boons: One

(queen) chose sixty thousand powerful sons. The (other) one, having the boon, asked for one son supporting the family. Then in a gourd one gave birth to many brave sons. They were brought up in due course by the nurses. The boys enhanced love when the pitchers were filled with ghee. For the magnanimous ones the cows were milked. The noble ones grew due to that milk only. One son by name Pañcajana became the king. Then there was the powerful (son) of Pañcajana named Amśumat. Dilīpa was his son, and his son was Bhagīratha. He, of a good vow, brought (to the earth) the greatest river, Gaṅgā. Having brought her to the ocean, he made her his daughter.

Nārada said:

9. How did he bring Gaṅgā? What (kind of) penance did he practise? Tell me all that. O you treasure of kindness, you are of a good vow.

Mahādeva said:

10-16. For the well-being of his ancestors he went to the Himālaya mountain. Having gone there he practised penance for a myriad years. That first god who is untinged, was pleased (with him). This Gaṅgā given by him came (here) from the sky. There god Viśveśvara always remains. Seeing Gaṅgā coming, he seized that Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā). He held her in the mass of his matted hair for a myriad years. Due to the prowess of the lord Gaṅgā did not move out of it. Then he (i.e. the king) thought: 'Where has my mother gone?' Having thought like this through meditation (he knew): 'The lord has seized her.' Then that king Bhagīratha went to Kailāsa. O best sage, having gone there, he practised a severe penance. Then he propitiated (me). I gave him the river. Having given up (i.e. plucked) one hair, the river was given (to him).

17-23a. Taking Gaṅgā, he went to the nether world where his ancestors stood (dead). Then the first name of Gaṅgā was said to be Alakanandā. When she went (i.e. flowed) to Haridvāra, she came to be called Viṣṇupādodakī. That is an excellent holy place which is not easily accessible even to gods. Those men who bathe at that holy place, and especially after seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu go round (the image) keeping (it) to their right,

do not experience grief. There are many heaps of sins like (those of) killing a brāhmaṇa etc. All those perish on always seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu. Once I had gone to Haridvāra, the place of Viṣṇu. Due to the prowess of that holy place, I became of the form of Viṣṇu. Those best men who go (to this holy place), go to Viṣṇu. Those human beings—men and women, have four arms everywhere. Merely by seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu they all go to Vaikuṇṭha.

23b-28. For me also that holy place Haridvāra is a superior holy place. It is the principal holy place among the holy places. It gives the four goals (of human life). In the Kali-age it gives religious merit to men, and gives salvation and material welfare also. There the clear (water of) Gaṅgā always flows. This auspicious, excellent, account of Haridvāra is told (by me). Eternal fruit is (obtained) by those who listen to it. A learned man, merely by seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu obtains that fruit which is obtained when a horse-sacrifice is performed or when a thousand cows (are given). O brāhmaṇa, many sins of this kind—all of them—perish due to just seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

An Eulogy of Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Prayāga

Mahādeva said:

1-5. O best sage, I shall narrate the importance of Gaṅgā, as it has been told, by just listening to which sin perishes at that moment only. He who would utter (the name) 'Gaṅgā' even from (a distance of) hundreds of yojanas, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O Nārada, the river has risen from the lotus-like feet (of Viṣṇu), is well-known by the name Gaṅgā, and she destroys large heaps of sins. (There are other rivers like) Narmadā, Sarayū, so also the river Vetravatī, Tāpī, Payoṣṇī, Candrā, Vipāsā, Karmanāśinī, Puṣyā, Pūrṇā, Dīpā, Vidīpā and Sūryatejasā.

6-10. A man obtains that fruit which he certainly gets by giving a thousand bulls in a moment by seeing Gaṅgā. This Gaṅgā is especially very meritorious for those who have killed brāhmaṇas. Gaṅgā smites the sins of those who are connected with (i.e. who have fallen into) a hell. O sinless one, a man obtains that fruit just by seeing Gaṅgā which is (obtained) at the time of the lunar eclipse or the solar eclipse. O dear one, as the darkness goes away at the time of sunrise, similarly the sin (of a man) perishes due to the prowess of Gaṅgā. This (Gaṅgā) is always honoured in the world. She is pure. She destroys sins. She is always of the nature of auspiciousness. She was formerly produced by Viṣṇu. She is of a divine form. She is the mother. She is said to be the purifier of the helpless.

11-14. As Viṣṇu is (the best) of the gods, so is Gaṅgā the best river (among the rivers). For those men who regularly bathe in (the month of) Māgha, there is no grief for three hundred kalpas. There is no doubt that having bathed and drunk (water at the holy place by which) Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī flow, a man enjoys salvation.

Mahādeva said:

O lord, the talk which I affectionately do about you is your praise. What I eat is an offering to you. That I go is (due to) my being sent by you. That I sleep quickly at the pair of your lotus-like feet may be (treated as) my prostration (before you) in the manner of a staff. O lord, may you, the lord of the universe be pleased with whatever I do. This is that water of Yamunā, by seeing which, by saluting which, or by holding which on the head, men are freed.

15-18. O you daughter of the Sun, O you great river, men are overpowered by the dangers like poverty, diseases, death, due to the mundane existence, till they do not see your very blue water and hold it on their heads. Today that Gaṅgā, the recollection of which even from (the distance of) a lakh of yojanas instantly cuts off the streams of sins, overcomes the row of sins, the utterance of whose name purifies the world, will luckily come within (our) sight. The path of the divine river is reached with a delighted mind eager to see her. (Even) the first creator went to this divine river. It is not a great wonder that a

bath, offering of sandhyā, a libation of water as the śrāddha ceremony, worship of gods, a śrāddha-ceremony, feeding the brāhmaṇas—all this becomes perfect (in this river) and gives delight to the lord. O Gaṅgā, you are Brahman turned into goddess (Gaṅgā); you give great delight. Accept my materials of worship. Remove my sin. My salutation to you.

19-21. O Bhāgīrathī, O glorious goddess, I salute you who carry the water which is righteousness in a liquid form, which is the essence of the nectar (flowing) from the lotus-like feet of the enemy of Mura, which is a boat of (i.e. helping to cross) the ocean of grief, which is a flight of steps leading to heaven and lauded by men and gods, which removes all sins, which has excellent merits, (and) which is lustrous. O Gaṅgā, O you heavenly river, O you who emancipate the people plunged in the ocean of sins, O you who have destroyed the mass of darkness (of sins) by means of the spotless lustre of your rising waves, O you, who purify the world, O goddess, purify (me) who am overcome with the fear of sins, who am a recipient of your favour; O mother, O you who give shelter to him who has sought it, protect me who am frightened. O (my) heart, O my friend, why do you trouble? I am alarmed due to the fear of (falling into) hell. 'Why do you fear?' Thus are the words heard of (i.e. uttered by) a sinner in the hell. Do not be afraid. If I have secured her who competes with the mountain (i.e. mass) of sins, then listen to my course (i.e. the course I shall have). How then will I have hell? What else do I have (as) righteousness or wealth?

22-23. In it (i.e. in the water of Gaṅgā) bathing is said to be the experience of joy due to the praise of the lord of all and others; seeing it the divine women are delighted due to the possibility of meeting gods and their lord. O daughter of Jahnu, those who engaged in curbs and restraints bathe in your water, clearly obtain godhead. Even those who do bad deeds (also secure godhead). In this (matter), the Vedas are the authority. O (my) intellect, may you have good thoughts like this. O (my) mind, well-being to you. O (my) feet, may you two be always remaining at the place (of the lord). May the eyes see well. O (my) speech, O you dear to me like my own life, may you, with the body of your virtues manifested, obtain the nourishment of

beings, so that through all of you I obtained (i.e. would obtain) the agreeable, incomparable merit due to the holy place.

24-32. O best sacred place Prayāga, the ornament of the three rivers, viz. Śrī Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī, O lord of all, favour me. Take me up (to heaven). With your lustre destroy the darkness of ten kinds. O you lord of speech, O lord of pious men, that lord of the holy places, viz. Prayāga, whose white and blue bank the gods like Indra, the best among the learned resort to for the destruction of their sins is victorious. That lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, where the divine river (i.e. Gaṅgā) having had confluence with Yamunā, shakes off the three torments of the people like the one relating to the self, is victorious. That lord of the holy places, viz. Prayāga, where the sacred fig tree, of a dark colour¹, covers (the place) with its darkish shadow, and cuts off (i.e. removes) the dark (i.e. great) fatigue of the people when it is seen, is victorious. That lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, the portion of religious merit, which Brahmā and others resort to after abandoning their act, and where Yama will cast his staff, is victorious. That lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, resorting to which gods and divine sages—deities among men—do not care for heaven and the best kingdom on the earth, is victorious. It is well-known that (the holy place, Prayāga) destroys sins and that discerning takes place by the splendour of its name. That is the lord of holy places, viz. Prayāga, which holds all around the charming beauty of the chowries, where the white and black excellent rivers (i.e. Gaṅgā and Yamunā) meet, where the primitive fig tree exceedingly shines like an umbrella, is victorious. That lord of the holy places, viz. Prayāga, where at the confluence² of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī (that is underground) they take those who bathe there to the position of Brahmā merely by means of their offering sacrifice with sacred rice grains is victorious.

33-35. (That is the holy place Prayāga to go) where many persons of good words pass a crore of lives saying, 'I (shall) go,

1. Śyāma: Name of a sacred fig-tree at Allahabad on the bank of Yamunā.

2. Trivenī: The place near Prayāga where Gaṅgā joins Yamunā and receives underground Sarasvatī.

I (shall) go'. Excellent years of those who long for the fixed one may pass there. He who cannot be described by words, and who is reached through lakhs of fortunate (occurrences), becomes ours (i.e. favours us) at Prayāga. Prayāga where sacrifices move (i.e. take place constantly) and which is marked by confluence (of the three rivers) becomes the guest of our sight (only) through good luck. Brahmā and others, after having properly and fully thought about the fruit of (sacrifices like) the horse-sacrifice, have prescribed this dear Prayāga for those men who long for heaven, who are worried as to how to reach the position of gods by means of hymns of the eulogy of the glory and hymns of praise (of gods), and who are unable to perform sacrifices in the Kali age. I have not performed the sandhyā (prayer) due to faults like carelessness and impatience. Let the sandhyā of me who am performing it here be accomplished for my entire life. Elsewhere also he, meditated upon in a penance where his greatness is loudly proclaimed by the distant people with love continuously gives the desired position without any expectation.

36-37. I salute in my heart that Prayāga which is surrounded by the confluence of the three rivers, the rich dust of which is incomparable, which is the lord of holy places, which shines with the presence of several (rivers), which itself is an excellent deity. Have we practised good penance, have we performed sacrifices, have we given various kinds of gifts to worthy recipients, have we worshipped gods, have we resorted to a good holy place, have we honoured a group of good brāhmaṇas, due to which we have reached that capital of Śiva which gives happiness?

38-41. Due to my good fortune of many existences I have had (i.e. reached) the city of Śiva, which destroys all sins, which is full of all wonders, and which is a boat to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. I have received the fruit of a good birth. (My) family is made pure. My soul is purified. (Thus) everything for me has been done. What else is there that stands above all? Since what is said, viz. 'A living man sees a lakh of good things' is not false, I have physically reached Kāśī with my transitory sight. The counting and worship of the sacred places and phalluses of the lord (found) in Kāśī, the divine land, cannot be done even by gods. With my hands joined, I

salute the ancient pious (places), which are secret or open here (i.e. in Kāśī). O men, what is the use of the fear from the multitude of sins, what is the use of the joy due to innumerable meritorious deeds done (by you), what is the use of the pride due to the study of the lores, what is the use of dejection due to the fault of dullness, what is the use of the pride due to prosperity, what is the use of being tormented due to poverty, if the lord of the universe is seen after bathing in the water of Śrī Maṇikarnikā?

42-49. Since that city of Gadādhara, which though it has little (worldly) affluence, (though) it is small, is not reached even by desires, is not the object of even a dream, but which is reached by means of the power rich with enthusiasm, which is accompanied by the attachment of the mind and the practicability of which is possibly manifest, instantly gives salvation. I think that it is not my act, it is not the strength of the acquisition of an ancestor, it is not the unmoving authority of my kinsmen; how then can it be numbness or torment (which has brought me here)? Reaching Gaṅgā, Prayāga, Yamunā, Kāśī difficult to reach, on the coming of a good occasion—for that the favour of Śārādā, giving a great fruit, is triumphant. I salute that Gadādhara who is actually present in Gayā, and who even though remembered from a distance at the time of a śrāddha, gives salvation to the manes. A man with a potsherd and pitiable words, after having come from a remote place and after having trodden the path that is difficult to cross, and that is crowded with hostile (factors like) mean tigers, hyenas, thorns and snakes, should first solicit the immutable one; (for) O you rich Gadādhara living in water, he longs to see you every day. How do you, pleasing the deities and the universe by showing yourself as a result of the śrāddha at Gayā, resort, like an indifferent (person) to this apathy? O Gadādhara, I have performed the śrāddha through your favour. O god, (now) allow me to go home. The eulogy of the four deities gives the wealth of heaven. A man should recite it at the time of śrāddha. A man should recite it at the time of bathing every day. Due to the listening to it, reciting it and muttering it the bath is equal to the bath at all holy places. O brāhmaṇa. the sins due to (one's) deeds perish by listening to the praise of Prayāga, Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Importance of Tulasī

Mahādeva said:

1-5a. O Nārada, listen. I shall tell you the importance of Tulasī, having heard which a man is free from sin from his birth to his death. Everything of Tulasī including leaves, flowers, fruits, roots, branches, skin, and stem is purifying, so also the clay (where) Tulasī-plant grows. Those whose bodies are burnt with the Tulasī-wood (are free from sins), so also he on whose dead body the Tulasī-wood is placed and who (i.e. whose dead body) is cremated after doing so, is freed from sins. He who at the time has (heard) the narration (of the virtues) or the recollection of Viṣṇu, and who is cremated with the Tulasī-wood is not reborn.

5b-11a. If among hundred (pieces of any other kind of) wood, there is (just) one (piece) of Tulasī-wood (in the funeral pyre), the man would have salvation just at the time of cremation—even if he has committed a crore of sins. By being sprinkled with the water of Gaṅgā, religious merit becomes meritorious. (Pieces of) wood become meritorious (when) mixed with Tulasī-wood. As long as the funeral pyre mixed with Tulasī-wood is burning, all his sins committed during crores of kalpas are burnt. Seeing (the dead body of) a man being burnt with the Tulasī-wood, Viṣṇu's messengers take him (to Viṣṇu's world) and not Yama's servants. Freed from thousands of crores of existences, he goes to Viṣṇu. On those men seated in aeroplanes, who (i.e. whose dead bodies) are burnt with Tulasī-wood, gods drop handfuls of flowers. All the celestial damsels sing and singers sing songs.

11b-21. Seeing him, Viṣṇu, along with Śiva, is pleased. Taking him by his hand and physically taking him to his house Viṣṇu would clean all his sins in the presence of gods after having celebrated a great festival along with cries of victory. The sin of men is burnt in the fire-chamber or crematory when the fire of Tulasī-wood is burning with clarified butter. Those men who perform a sacrifice with the fire of Tulasī-wood, would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice for every sesamum-

seed that is offered (into the fire). A man who offers the incense of a (piece of) Tulasī-wood to Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit similar to that of a hundred sacrifices (or that of the gift) of a hundred cows. That food which a man cooks as an offering of eatables to the deity with the fire made from Tulasī-wood, is indeed offered to Viṣṇu. O lord, he who offers one lamp (lighted from) the Tulasī-wood to Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit of the religious merit earned by (the offering of) thousands of lakhs of lamps. There is no devotee seen on the earth like him who offers the sandal (-like paste) of Tulasī-wood to Kṛṣṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, he becomes fit for the favour of Viṣṇu. Having devoutly smeared Viṣṇu with the sandal(-like paste) obtained from Tulasī-wood in the Kali-age, he always enjoys in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. He who with his body smeared with the paste from Tulasī-wood, worships Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit of having given a hundred cows in one day—(a fruit) of the worship offered for a hundred days.

22-27. Listen (i.e. note that), the fruit of the religious merit remains as long as the sandal(-like paste) from the Tulasī-wood, used for smearing the image of Viṣṇu, remains in the temple. The same fruit as the religious merit a man would obtain by giving eight prasthas of sesamum-seeds, is obtained by the favour of Viṣṇu. If a man gives (i.e. puts) a Tulasī-leaf on the piṇḍa offered to the manes, then for every leaf (that is thus offered) the manes are contented for a hundred years. A man should especially bathe with (i.e. after applying to his body) the clay at the root of Tulasī. As long as the clay is on the body, he has bathed at a holy place. When a man worships with the shoot of it (i.e. Tulasī), he has performed the worship with many flowers (and it lasts) as long as the moon and the sun (shine in the sky). All that sin like (that due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa perishes by touching or seeing (the plant) when there is a garden of Tulasī (-plants) in one's house. Even by seeing it, O Nārada, all that (sin) perishes.

Mahādeva said:

28-33. Now I shall tell you something else. Listen (to it) with a concentrated mind (i.e. attentively). O best of the divine sages, I have not told it to anyone (else). In whichever house, village or grove there would be the Tulasī(-plant), Viṣṇu, the

lord of the world, being pleased, would stay there. In that house where there is a Tulasī(-plant) there is no poverty, no (hostile) action due to (i.e. from) the kinsmen, no grief, no fear, and no disease. Everywhere Tulasī(-plant) is auspicious, and especially so in a sacred place. Due to its being planted on the earth, it is always in the vicinity of that god (i.e. Viṣṇu). When Tulasī is planted (by men) they eternally get Viṣṇu's position. When Tulasī is devoutly worshipped, Viṣṇu pacifies portents, fearful diseases and many ill-omens. Wherever the wind goes (i.e. the breezes blow) after taking the fragrance of Tulasī, (all) the ten quarters are (thereby) purified, so also the aggregate of beings of four kinds.

34-46. O best sage, the deities, Śiva, Viṣṇu always reside in that house in which there is the clay (taken from) the root of the Tulasī(-plant). At its root is Brahmā. In the middle is god Viṣṇu. Rudra stays in the sprout. Therefore, Tulasī is purifying. All that sprinkling himself with water which a man does at the time of the sandhyā (prayer) is snatched by demons, and gives (i.e. takes) him (to) hell. He who carries on his head the water dropping from the Tulasī-leaf obtains the fruit of (having bathed in) Gaṅgā and would get the fruit of a gift of a hundred cows. If he especially plants a Tulasī(-plant) in the temple of Śiva, he would stay in heaven for as many yugas as is the number of the seeds (of Tulasī). Formerly goddess Pārvatī had planted a hundred Tulasī-trees (i.e. plants) on the Himālaya for Śaṅkara. I bow down to Tulasī. A man should plant (a Tulasī-plant) on a pārvan day (i.e. the day of the four changes of the moon), on (any other) occasion or in Śrāvaṇa, or on a Saṅkrānti-day. Tulasī gives great religious merit. A poor man who worships Tulasī daily would be rich. The image of Viṣṇu, bringing about every kind of success, gives fame also. Viṣṇu is present there where there is a Śālagrāma stone. Bath and (giving) gifts there is hundred times superior to (doing so) at Vārāṇasī. The religious merit is a crore of times superior to (a visit to) Kurukṣetra, Prayāga, and Naimiṣāraṇya. All that religious merit which can be had at Vārāṇasī, would be (secured) there where the mark of the form of Śālagrāma is present. By means of the worship of a Śālagrāma stone, a man would quickly destroy all that sin due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa etc.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

The Importance of Prayāga

Mahādeva said:

1-8a. I shall tell you, as I have heard, the greatness of Prayāga where live people who are intent upon giving large gifts and practise meritorious acts. That holy place (called Prayāga) where (i.e. by which) Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī are (flowing) is the best and is inaccessible even to gods. Such (a holy place) was never there (in the past) nor will be there (in the future). The excellent, holy place called Prayāga is best among all the holy places as the Sun is among the planets or the Moon among the stars. O learned one, he who would bathe in the morning at Prayāga, is free from great sins, and goes to the highest position. A man desiring absence of poverty should give something (to a brāhmaṇa at Prayāga). There is no doubt that a man who after going would bathe there, becomes rich and lives a long life. A man who sees the undecaying fig-tree there, (his sin due to his having committed) the murder of a brāhmaṇa perishes. That fig-tree is called *Akṣaya-vaṭa* and is (i.e. will be) seen even at the end of the kalpa.

8b-13. Since Viṣṇu lies on its leaf, it is known to be immutable. Men dear to Viṣṇu, worship (the lord) there. A man should get it worshipped (i.e. should worship it) after having covered it with a thread. The god called Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) always stays there happily. One should see (the image of) him. One then is freed from great sins. Gods, sages, and men having resorted to their own places, always stay there everywhere. A man who has killed a cow, or who is a cāṇḍāla, who is wicked or of a wicked mind, or who has murdered a child, so also who is not learned, dying there becomes one having four hands and lives in Vaikuṇṭha for a long time.

14-19a. O best among the divine sages, listen. A man who bathes at Prayāga during the month of Māgha, has no (limit to the) number of fruits (that he obtains). We hear that *āpaḥ* (i.e. waters) is said to be *nārāḥ* (i.e. waters—*āpaḥ* and *nārāḥ* are synonyms) in the entire world. Therefore, he is called Nārāyaṇa. He gives pleasures and salvation to those who have bathed

there. As the Sun is best among the planets, the Moon among the stars, similarly Māgha is the best in (i.e. for) all acts. When in Māgha the Sun is in the Capricornus sign, a bath in the morning, even in the clear water of a very small puddle, gives heaven even to the sinners. O learned one, such an opportunity is rare in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. He too who has made an effort (to bathe) here at Prayāga and would bathe (every day) for three days or five or seven days would grow like the Moon in his family, O best brāhmaṇa.

19b-23. The mobile and immobile living beings, so also human beings and others, go soon to Vaikuṇṭha after having resorted to the holy place of Prayāga. Those sages like Vasiṣṭha and like Sanaka also repeatedly resort to the holy place of Prayāga. There, in the excellent holy place of Prayāga, all (gods like) Viṣṇu, Rudra and Indra live. They recommend giving gifts here, so also observing restraints. After having bathed there and drunk (water) there, there is no rebirth.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

A Three-night Tulasī Vow

Nārada said:

1. Like this, I have, through your favour, heard the greatness of Tulasī. Now tell me the vow of Tulasī (lasting for) three days.

Sadāśiva said:

2-9. O very intelligent brāhmaṇa, listen to this ancient vow, having heard which (a man) gets freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. Formerly in the Raibhyantara kalpa there was a king (named) Prajāpati. His well-known and very chaste wife was Candrarūpā. She practised this vow giving the fruits of all desires. Her vow, giving (the fruit of) righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyment lasted for three nights. The life of those who have listened to the Tulasī-vow is fruitful.

O Nārada, on the ninth of the bright fortnight of Kārtika, a man should observe restraint, be pious, control his senses and sleep on the (bare) ground. Intending to practise the Tulasī-vow, he, being pure and with his mind controlled, should, as a rule, sleep in the vicinity of a Tulasī-grove. Then at mid-day, he, having bathed in the pure water in a river etc., should duly gratify (with oblations) the manes and deities. He should get fashioned (a) golden (image of) Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. He, desiring his welfare, should not be dishonest as regards wealth. Then he should get fashioned a pair of garments. The garments should be yellow or white. He should duly commence the propitiatory rite for the nine planets.

10-14. Having put an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manes, he (then) should offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu. Having on the twelfth day carefully worshipped the lord of gods, he should duly place a pure pitcher without any bruise with five jewels and with leaves and herbs. On it, in a vessel, he should place (the image of) Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. He should put it at the root of Tulasī to the accompaniment of Vedic and Purāṇic hymns. He should sprinkle the grove of Tulasī with water only. He should bathe the god of gods, the best one in the world, with the five¹ sweet things (viz. milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey) (and to the accompaniment of this hymn of solicitation): 'May that lord of gods, the divine one, who is of endless forms, who is of the form of the entire universe, who in the water sustains the creation of the world, who through his Māyā creates the world, be pleased with me'.

15. This is the hymn of solicitation. 'Come on, O Acyuta, O lord of gods, O mass of lustre, O lord of the world. You always remove the darkness. Protect me from the ocean of the mundane existence.'

16. This is the invocatory hymn. Good bath is (given to him) with the five sweet things and with sandal mixed with water, so also with the water of Gaṅgā and other (rivers). 'May Ananta (i.e. Viṣṇu thus) bathed, be pleased.'

1. Pañcāmṛta: A collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd, and honey.

17. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of bathing the image of the deity. 'O god, I have devoutly offered you the smearing with sandal, agaru, camphor and saffron etc. With Lakṣmī, accept it.'

18. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of smearing (the image). 'O Nārāyaṇa, salutation to you, the protector (of me) from the ocean of hell. O you lord of the three worlds, I offer you two auspicious garments.'

19. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of (offering) the garments. 'O Dāmodara, my salutation to you. Protect me from the ocean of the worldly existence. I have offered you the sacred thread. O Puruṣottama, (please) accept it.'

20. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of (offering) the sacred thread. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of offering flowers.

21. 'O lord, I have offered you fragrant flowers like those of mālatī etc. O lord of gods, accept them with love.'

22. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of offering of eatables. 'O lord of gods, accept the betel nuts, the nāga-leaves along with camphor. (Please) accept the tāmbūla.'

23. This is the hymn (to be recited) at the time of offering a tāmbūla. Having devoutly offered incense, agaru mixed with guggula (a particular fragrant gum resin) he should offer the worship thus. He should use a lamp with (i.e. burning due to) ghee.

24-27. O best among sages, he, being controlled, should prepare various kinds of lamps in front of Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa in the vicinity of the Tulasī-grove, and should offer materials of worship to the god holding the disc. On the ninth he should offer the best materials of worship with a coconut for (obtaining) a son; on the tenth he should offer a citron fruit for the accomplishment of religious merit and sensual enjoyment. On the eleventh he should worship the twin deity with a pomegranate. (This would) always destroy his poverty.

28-29. Covering with a piece of cloth, a full plate of metal and a basket full of seven (kinds of) grains and betel nuts, he should offer it to the god to the accompaniment of this (i.e. the following) hymn. O Nārada, listen with a concentrated mind. 'O god, you, with Tulasī, (please) accept this material of worship

always accompanied by a conch, offered by me. O lord of gods, my salutation to you.'

30-35. This is the hymn (to be offered) at the time of offering materials of worship. Having thus worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, along with Lakṣmī, he should solicit the lord of gods for the fulfilment (of the vow). (He should say): 'O god, I, being free from sensual desires and anger, have fasted by means of this vow. O lord of gods, you alone are my refuge. O god Janārdana, let all that which in (i.e. while practising) this vow I have done (i.e. left) incomplete, be complete through your favour. Salutation to you, O lotus-eyed one; salutation to you who lie in water. O Keśava, through your favour I have practised the vow. O Keśava, O you who destroy the darkness of ignorance, being favourably disposed to me due to this vow, be one who would give me the sight of knowledge.' Then at night (he should) keep awake, should sing songs, read (religious) books along with those who know sounds and art of dancing and with very auspicious and meritorious accounts.

36-43. When it is daybreak, and when the bright sun has arisen, he should devoutly invite brāhmaṇas and offer a śrāddha in the manner of Viṣṇu's devotee. Having fed them, as they like, with sweetened milk and ghee, and having given them tām̐būlas, flowers, sandal etc. along with presents, so also sacred threads, garments, garlands and sandal, he should feed three (brāhmaṇa-)couples (and give them) garments, ornaments and saffron. He should also fill baskets according to his capacity with coconuts, cooked foods, garments and various kinds of fruits. He should make his preceptor and his wife put on the garments and divine ornaments (offered to them). He should worship (them) with sandal and flowers. He should also give a milch-cow along with articles of household use and with presents and garments. Listen to me who am telling you. All that religious merit which men obtain after bathing in all holy places is obtained by them through the favour of the lord of gods. Having enjoyed many pleasures and charming desired objects, he, through Viṣṇu's favour, obtains Viṣṇu's position in the end.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Gift of Food Praised

Nārada said:

1. Tell me all that: Which things a man desirous of giving (gifts) to brāhmaṇas excellent in merit, should give in this world?

Mahādeva said:

2-6. Having known the truth in the world, listen, O you best among the divine sages. They praise food like this. Everything is settled in food. Therefore, men particularly desire to give food. There was no gift nor there will be a gift like food. The whole world consisting of the immobile and the mobile, is sustained by means of food. In the world food causes vigour. Life depends upon food only. A man desiring his own welfare, should even by troubling his family give eatable food to a magnanimous brāhmaṇa. O Nārada, he who would give food to a brāhmaṇa who asks for it and who is afflicted, is the best among the wise. He should look for his own well-being.

7-15. A wise man who is of a good character, who is free from jealousy, who, after abandoning his anger, gives food to a householder—a brāhmaṇa—who is tired, who is on the road (i.e. who is travelling), who has come at the time (of eating food), obtains happiness that is there in heaven and on the earth. He should not censure the guest. He should never hate him. He should offer food to a brāhmaṇa knowing the Vedas. That gift is superior. He who would give food to a brāhmaṇa who is tired, who is not seen before, and who is travelling, so also to him who is afflicted, would obtain full (merit of) righteousness. The religious merit of that man who would please the manes, gods, brāhmaṇas and guests with foods, is unlimited, O great sage. He who, even after having committed a very great sin, gives food to a suppliant, especially to a brāhmaṇa, is freed from sins. Gift given to brāhmaṇas is inexhaustible (in merit); (gift of) food to a śūdra gives a great fruit. Offering food to a śūdra and to a brāhmaṇa is superior (to any other gift). He should not ask (the brāhmaṇa about his) family, the school of the Vedas to which he belongs, or about his study (of the Vedas).

He should give food (thinking that) here is a brāhmaṇa that seeks (food), so also to a beggarly brāhmaṇa. For a man who gives food, auspicious trees full of the fruits of all desires, are (fruitful) in this world and in heaven he is full of joy.

16-21. O great sage, know those worlds which are (reached by him) by means of giving food. For the magnanimous ones (who give food) aeroplanes of many shapes and forms and endowed with (the fulfilment of) various desires, shine in heaven. (They enjoy) auspicious, golden wells and lakes everywhere. (They rejoice with) sounding vehicles and thousands of pearls. They see mountains full of food. There are (for them) garments and ornaments. There are (for them) rivers flowing with milk and mountains of ghee. There are (for them) palaces shining with white colour, beds bright like gold. They desire, therefore, to give food. So a man should give food. Those worlds are (reached) by the meritorious. Offering food gives great fruit. Therefore, in this world men should especially give food.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Constructing Tanks, Planting Trees etc.

Mahādeva said:

1-8a. Giving water is the best (gift); it is always the best of the gifts. Therefore, a man should get constructed oblong reservoirs of water, wells and tanks. Wells dug for giving water destroy half the sin of a person of bad deeds, who is (later) always engrossed in good deeds. He from the reservoir of water dug by whom cows, brāhmaṇas, and good men always drink water, emancipates his family. (He too emancipates his family) in whose reservoir remains water in summer, which is never obtained in an inaccessible place and a place risky and difficult (to reach). I shall (now) tell you which are said to be the merits of the tanks that are constructed. He who has (constructed) a tank is honoured everywhere in the three worlds. The establishment of tanks is like a friendly house, increasing friends and

friendship, producing fame and the best. A tank, which is well-constructed in a country, in a sacred place, and which is a great resort, is, the wise say, the fruit of *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (worldly prosperity) and *kāma* (sensual enjoyment). (While constructing) a tank, one should have in view the four kinds of beings.

8b-18a. All the tanks lead to excellent virtue. Gods, men, gandharvas, manes, snakes, demons and immobile beings resort to a tank. He in whose tank there is water in the rainy season, gets the fruit of maintaining the sacred fire. There is no doubt about it. He in whose (tank) there is water in the winter season, obtains the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows. There is no doubt. If there is water in his tank in the spring and summer seasons, the wise say, (he gets) the fruit of the Atirātra and horse-sacrifice. Now listen to the merits of planting trees. He who plants them would emancipate both the families (of his father and of his mother), O great sage. Therefore, a man should plant trees. There is no doubt that these trees become (his) sons and grandsons. He too, when he dies, obtains inexhaustible worlds. The trees worship all the hosts of gods with flowers, the manes with leaves, and all guests with their shadow. Kinnaras, serpents, demons, gods, gandharvas, men, so also hosts of sages resort to trees. They, having flowers and fruits, gratify human beings in this world. Here and in the other world, they are the legal sons.

18b-26. Those brāhmaṇas who (construct) tanks, who plant trees and who have performed sacrifices, do not go away from heaven, so also others who tell the truth. Truth alone is the highest Brahman. Truth alone is the highest penance. Truth alone is the greatest sacrifice. Truth alone is the greatest knowledge. Truth is awake among gods; and truth is the highest position. Penance, sacrifices, religious merit, so also worship of deities and guests, the first precept, knowledge—all this is settled in truth. Truth is sacrifice; so also it is charity. It is the hymns. It is goddess Sarasvatī. Truth is practising a vow. Omkāra also is truth. Wind moves due to truth. The sun shines due to truth. Fire burns because of truth. Heaven exists on account of truth. Worship of all gods, bathing at all holy places, are said to be truth. (A truthful man) undoubtedly obtains everything in

the world. If a thousand horse sacrifices and truth are compared, truth certainly is superior to all (kinds of) sacrifices. Gods, manes and sages are pleased by means of truth. They say, truth is the highest duty. They say, truth is the highest position.

27-31. They say, truth is the supreme Brahman; therefore I am explaining truth to you. The sages who were devoted to truth, who were engrossed in practising truth, practised very severe penance, secured divine faculties, and from this world went to heaven in aeroplanes accompanied by beautiful celestial damsels. Always truth should be spoken. There is nothing superior to truth. Men with devoted minds should bathe in a deep, large, divine, holy place or a pure lake. That bath is said to be great. Those men who do not tell lies for their own sake, or for the sake of others, or for the sake of their sons, go to heaven. Vedas, sacrifices, also hymns always abide in brāhmaṇas. They do not become manifest in those who have abandoned truth. Therefore, a man should practise truth.

Nārada said:

32. Tell me specifically the fruit of austerities again.

Mahādeva said:

Of all the castes brāhmaṇas have the power of penance.

33-38. I shall explain to you the meditation with penance, which brings about (i.e. fulfils) all desires, and which is very difficult to practise for brāhmaṇas. Listen to me when I am telling it. Penance is said to be the highest. (A man) gets (his desired) fruit by means of penance. He who is always engrossed in penance, rejoices along with deities. (A man) obtains heaven by means of penance. Glory is obtained by means of penance. (A man) obtains salvation by means of penance. He gets a great (thing) by means of penance. Knowledge, proficiency, wealth, good fortune, (good) form—all this which a man desires mentally, he obtains. Those who have not practised penance never go to Brahmā's world. A man obtains (i.e. succeeds in) all that undertaking here and in the next world taking up which he practises penance. A man who is a drunkard, a man who cohabits with another's wife, a man who kills a

brāhmaṇa, a man who molests his preceptor's wife, crosses over all this (i.e. destroys sins due to these) by means of penance and is totally free.

39-46. Even the lord of gods Śiva, ancient Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Agni, Indra, and others who are endowed with penance, also eightysix thousand sages, abstaining from sexual intercourse, rejoice along with deities in heaven on account of penance. By means of penance a kingdom is secured. Formerly Indra, the lord of all, protected all by means of penance and granted their request. The gods—the Sun and Moon—engaged in the welfare of the entire world, shine because of penance only; so also the stars and the planets. He, eating (i.e. subsisting on) wild roots and fruits in the forest, obtains everything and gets every pleasure through penance. O sage, he who first studies Vedas—that (study of the Vedas) is equal to penance. By reciting the chapter the best brāhmaṇa gets double the fruit of the religious merit which he gets by teaching it. O great sage, as the world is without light without the Moon and the Sun, so also (it is lightless) without Purāṇa. Therefore, it should be reflected upon. He who practised penance, has knowledge from sacred texts, enlightens the people.

47-59. Therefore, a preceptor is most venerable of all the worthy recipients (of gifts); the knower of Purāṇas is the best recipient. Since he saves (a man) from falling, he is called a *pātra* (i.e. a worthy recipient). Those who give wealth, grains, gold, and various garments to a worthy recipient go to (i.e. obtain) the best position. Listen to the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who gives cows, buffaloes, splendid elephants and horses to the chief (brāhmaṇa). He would obtain the fruit of the horse-sacrifice inexhaustible in all worlds. He who gives him (i.e. the brāhmaṇa reading the Purāṇa), a splendid (piece of) land that is tilled and fertile, emancipates ten preceding and ten succeeding members of his family; and in a divine aeroplane he goes to Viṣṇu's world. Gods are not so much pleased with sacrifices, with sprinklings (of water), with offerings, worships with flowers as they are with the books (of Purāṇas) being read. One who would arrange (the reading of) a religious book in the temple of Viṣṇu, or of the goddess, or of Śambhu, or of Gaṇeśa, so also of the Sun, obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice or a horse-sacrifice. The reading of a book (containing stories from) Mahābhārata or Purāṇa is

excellent. He obtains all desired objects and breaks through the world of the Sun. Having broken through the Sun's world, he goes to the world of Brahmā; having lived there for hundreds of kalpas he becomes a king on the earth. He who would read Jaya (i.e. Mahābhārata) before a deity obtains the fruit which is declared to be the fruit of a thousand horse-sacrifices. Therefore, with all efforts, the auspicious reading of a book (containing stories) from Mahābhārata and Purāṇas should be done in Viṣṇu's temple. There is nothing else (except this) that delights Viṣṇu or other residents of heaven.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Merit Coming From Exposition of a Sacred Text

Mahādeva said:

1-2. In this case also they relate an old historical account, a Purāṇa, which is highly meritorious, removes all sins, and is auspicious. O divine sage, Brahmā's son (Sanat-)Kumāra, having saluted the grandsire of the worlds, narrated this account to me.

Sanatkumāra said:

3-9a. I went to see Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). With joy and great devotion he honoured me with words and asked me (to be seated) on a comfortable seat. I who was seated there, saw a great wonder: Dharma, the lord, himself hastily got up from his seat, O best among gods, on seeing a man who had come there in an aeroplane which was golden, the altar in which was made of lapis lazuli, which was beautiful due to gems and pearls, and was charming on account of a mass of small bells. Having taken him by his right hand, he honoured him with materials of worship. Dharma (i.e. Yama), the lord of gods, having smelt him on his head, and having seated him before him, and having honoured him said these words to him: "Welcome to you, O you who know what is right. I am pleased on seeing

you. Be (seated) near me; and give me some knowledge. You will again go to the place where Brahmā is settled.”

9b-16. When this was said, another man, seated in an excellent aeroplane came to the place when the lord, Dharmarāja was (seated). He, while he was in the aeroplane (itself), was honoured (by Dharma) who bowed (to him) with respect; and he himself gently spoke to him as he had spoken to the former man. “What deed has he done due to which you are very much pleased? I have a curiosity about this since you yourself honoured him. Then with amazement you also honoured the other man. I think that the two have done auspicious deeds, as the best ones (came in) an aeroplane, and as you honour them for religious merit. Your religious merit is such that Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others always worship you. Tell me, O omniscient one, which deed they did, due to which they obtained (this) divine fruit.” Hearing those (words of me), he said to me: “Listen to the deed done by these two. O you very intelligent one, listen, due to having performed which worthy deed they have come here.”

Dharma said:

17-23. There is on the earth a well-known city named Vaidiśa. A king known as Dharāpāla lived there. Formerly, some time, the goddess angrily cursed her attendant: “Since no other woman than me was married by my husband, you will turn into a jackal for twelve years.” That jackal, thus addressed (by her), roamed on the surface of the earth. The Mountain’s daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) had told him: “O son, the curse of (i.e. pronounced upon) you will come to an end at the well-known confluence of Vetasī and Vetravatī. He, having fasted there at the holy place, cast his life. Being turned into a divine form, he went into the proximity of Viṣṇu. King Dharāpāla, seeing the great wonder there constructed a Viṣṇu temple and then cast his life at the holy place. Being turned into a divine form he installed (the image) of that lord in that city, and appointed all men to look after him (i.e. the image).

24-33a. The auspicious temple of Viṣṇu in that town is always full of (i.e. crowded with) people. The very intelligent king, full of modesty, having honoured the host of brāhmaṇas,

and especially the (public) reader of Mahābhārata and Purāṇa, who was the best among the brāhmaṇas and greatest due to his learning, so also having worshipped the book (i.e. the Purāṇa text) in due order with flowers etc., said to the reader: "This temple of Viṣṇu before you is constructed (by me). O best brāhmaṇa, this multitude of people of the four castes desiring to listen to it, is (present) here. (Please) read the book (i.e. the Purāṇa text) for one year after taking (money for) excellent livelihood. After that I shall (also) give you another hundred golden niṣkas after the year is over for my well-being, O best brāhmaṇa." Thus he started there the reading of the book. O best sage, after the year was over, and due to the shortening of his life, he went to Kāladharma (i.e. to Yama). Viṣṇu and I sent his aeroplane (i.e. the aeroplane for him) from heaven. This is the fruit of the deeds. He had heard the auspicious, great Padma Purāṇa, entitled 'an account', which is auspicious, pure, and which destroys sins. All gods are not so much pleased with offerings like those of sandal and flowers as they are with the listening to the Purāṇa.

33b-42. All gods will not be so much gratified with all the gifts of objects like gold and jewels or of garments or of villages and towns, as by listening to the religious discourse. O best sage, I have also in the same way a great love for listening to historical accounts (i.e. Mahābhārata) and Purāṇa, which brings about (i.e. fulfils) all desires. O best sage, I very much like the giving of the daughter (in marriage). But I do not like it so much as the reading of a book (i.e. a Purāṇa-text). What is the use of talking much? Nothing else gives me joy except the auspicious account. This is declared to be a secret. O brāhmaṇa, the other best man that had come here, had come due to company. Having listened to a religious text with faith, devotion is created (in his mind) for the highest soul. O best sage, this brāhmaṇa, having gone round the magnanimous reader (of the Purāṇa) keeping him to his right, gave him a māṣaka of gold. Due to his mind overpowered by grief he did not make any other gift at any time. But there is no doubt that he got the fruit due to his having made a gift to a worthy recipient. O great sage, I have told (you) this deed of the two.

Mahādeva said:

43. Those wise men who listen to the greatness of this religious merit never face a calamity in existence after existence.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The Importance of Gopīcandana

Mahādeva said:

1-13a. Now I shall tell you something else: the importance of (the sandal called) gopīcandana as I saw and heard about it, O best divine sage. A brāhmaṇa, or a vaiśya, or a śūdra, whose body is smeared with gopīcandana is free from the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt that he who puts a mark of gopīcandana (on his body) is free from the sins like drinking etc. A Viṣṇu's devotee, exclusively devoted to Viṣṇu, with his body smeared with gopīcandana, is free from all sins; so also (he is free from sins) due to the water of Gaṅgā. A śūdra or a brāhmaṇa who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or who is a drunkard, so also (a brāhmaṇa) who has stolen gold, who has molested his preceptor's wife, is instantly freed from sins committed during hundreds of existences. Twelve marks are prescribed for all devotees of Viṣṇu; they should be put especially by brāhmaṇas (who are Viṣṇu's devotees) and who desire welfare. It should be of the form of a staff on the forehead; of the form of a lotus on the chest. (It should be) like (the form of) a reed-leaf on the shoulder-blade. The other one should be like the form of a lamp. On the right shoulder-blade there should be four marks like those of wheel above and two ring-like marks below. One of the two (should be of the form of) a conch. He should have two (marks) in the middle, so also on the sides. On the left (shoulder-blade there should also be) a mark of a disc and (marks of) two maces (drawn) separately. On the forehead (there should be the mark of) a mace, so also of a seal-ring on the chest. There should be three beautiful marks and two (marks

of) conches in the middle. On the chest, on the side above the breast, (there should be the marks of) a mace and lotuses as on the arms. At the root of the ear there should be three or four (marks of discs) and two below (it). He should put one (mark) out of other marks.

13b-21a. Following the wise he should put on the mark of his sect. He should put it as he likes, since there is no rule about it. By means of just putting a mark (all) upto a cāṇḍāla are purified. I look upon the reviler of the devotees of Viṣṇu as a greater (sinner) than a cāṇḍāla. He (i.e. a cāṇḍāla) should be looked upon like Viṣṇu. No doubt should be raised in this matter. None (else) should be known to be similar to a brāhmaṇa who is Viṣṇu's devotee and who is devoted to the meditation on Viṣṇu. He would (himself) be Viṣṇu in the world. A brāhmaṇa having (the marks of) a conch and a disc (on his body), and devoted to the study of the Vedas, is (alone) said to be Viṣṇu in the Veda. A brāhmaṇa who has the mark of (i.e. made with) a disc, purifies those brāhmaṇas who purify by their presence the persons who sit in the same row to dine with them. He who is devoted to him is freed from great sins, O brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt that a brāhmaṇa, after having worn the garland of Tulasī-wood, would enjoy salvation. Since a brāhmaṇa is of the form of Viṣṇu, he is said to be Viṣṇu's devotee in this world. He who has a mark of gopīcandana (on his body) at the time of his death gets into an aeroplane and goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

21b-26. O Nārada, I shall tell you that those best men who put on the mark of gopīcandana never meet with a calamity. A man who puts (the mark of) a conch and (that of) a disc on his right hand and particularly on the left hand also is freed from great sins. There is no doubt that those who are seen to have indulged in drinking, to have killed women and children, to have practised illicit intercourse, get freed just on seeing the devotees (of Viṣṇu), O brāhmaṇa. How can (one find) devotees of Viṣṇu in this mundane existence of little worth? I have surely become a devotee of Viṣṇu through the favour of Viṣṇu's devotion. There is no doubt that dwelling here in Kāśī and muttering 'Rāma, Rāma', he becomes Śiva due to the contact with that religious merit.

CHAPTER THIRTY

The Greatness of the Vow of Lamp

Nārada said:

1-2. O Śiva, tell me the importance of the vow, the best among all vows, the excellent rite of the lamp called Sāṁvat-sara, by (doing) which all other vows are undoubtedly practised, all desires are satisfied and all sin would perish.

Mahādeva said :

3-8a. O divine sage, I shall tell you the secret which destroys sins, and listening to which he who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or a cow or a friend, (so also) he who has molested his preceptor's wife, who has been a traitor, who has been cruel, obtains eternal salvation, and having emancipated a hundred families goes to Viṣṇu's world. I shall (now) tell (you) that excellent vow of the lamp lasting for a year, so also the mode of practising it and its greatness. On the auspicious eleventh day of the first month of Mārgaśīrṣa, a man, free from anger and having restrained himself, should, after having got up in the early part of the day, bathe at the holy places on the confluence of rivers or in tanks and rivers or in his (own) house.

8b-10. (He should then recite this hymn :) 'I have taken bath at all the sacred places. Always give me that bath (only).' This is the hymn to be recited at the time of bathing. He, having gratified gods and men, having muttered (the hymns) and with his senses controlled, should worship the lord, the god Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa. Having bathed (the image of the deity) with pañcāmṛta and then with sandal and water (he should say): 'God of gods, O lord of the world, you have bathed with Lakṣmī. Emancipate me, O chief of gods, from this fearful bondage of the worldly existence.'

11-15. After that he should devoutly worship Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī by means of Vaidika, so also Paurāṇic hymns. (Then) with the words: 'Therefore, O god, sandal etc. (is offered)' or with the man-composed (hymn like) 'Salutation to Matsya (i.e. the Fish-incarnation), to god, to Kūrmadeva (i.e. the Tortoise-incarnation), Varāhadeva (i.e. the Boar-incarnation), to Narasimha-

deva (i.e. to the Narasimha-incarnation), to Buddhadeva, so also salutation to Kalki' he should worship (the lord). 'Salutation to god Rāma, to you god Viṣṇu; salutation to you the soul of all', with this he should worship his head. There are (also other) names like Keśava etc. He may worship Viṣṇu with them. 'O god of gods, this is the divine sap. It is fragrant and has perfume and is pure. This is incense. Salutation to you. Accept it'.

16-17. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering incense. 'The lamp destroys darkness. The lamp gives lustre. Therefore, may Viṣṇu be pleased by this offering of the lamp.' This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering the lamp. 'O god of gods, O lord of the world, this is an offering of eatables like food etc. Along with Lakṣmī accept it which is the excellent and best nectar.'

18-19. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering eatables. Having thus meditated upon Viṣṇu, and having taken water with a fruit, his hand or a conch, he should then devoutly offer materials of worship. 'May all that sin which I committed during a thousand existences, perish due to your favour, O Viṣṇu.'

20-24. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of offering materials of worship. Then in front of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu he should take a new white pitcher full of ghee or oil. On it he should put a vessel made of copper or of clay. In that vessel he should offer a wick having nine threads. Having put the pitcher very steadily, he should light the lamp. Then being pure and having worshipped the deity, he should resolve with (the recital of) this hymn in chambers having no breeze, O divine sage: 'This Kāma (i.e. Cupid) shines as the only emperor of what there was and what there will be. I have employed this lamp for a year. O Viṣṇu, may the unceasing sacred fire please you.'

25-28a. Then having curbed his senses and being intent on sacred knowledge, he should not talk to sinful and heretical persons. At night he should keep awake, should have songs and (should keep awake) with dancing, musical instruments etc., so also auspicious texts, various accounts and fasts. Then in the morning, after having performed the rites of the morning, he should devoutly feed brāhmaṇas and worship them according to

his capacity. Having himself broken the fast, he should salute them and dismiss them.

28b-31a. In this way (he should be) of a firm vow for day and night. The lamp should be of (the weight of) one pala of gold or half of it. The wick is said to be made of silver. It should be of the weight of two palas, or more than that by half a pala. A devout man, desiring the gate to salvation, should prepare the pitcher full of ghee and along with the copper vessel; so also he should fashion with gold (the image of) the deity Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa according to his capacity.

31b-36a. Then the wise one should invite best brāhmaṇas. The best alternative is (to invite) twelve (brāhmaṇas). As the middle alternative (he should invite) six (brāhmaṇas). Or he should employ three or (even) one brāhmaṇa who would perform the rite (for him). Having honoured a brāhmaṇa with his wife, who is calm, who performs rites, who especially knows historical accounts and Purāṇas, who is conversant with religion, and having worshipped devoutly Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa as before with the lamp-wicks placed in the copper-vessel and with the pitcher full of ghee, he should give (these things) to a brāhmaṇa after having meditated upon the highest Viṣṇu to the accompaniment of this hymn, O divine sage.

36b-39. I (shall) tell you the hymn: 'O sinless one, I have offered this lamp, since it destroys sins in this mundane existence pervaded by the darkness of ignorance, since it gives knowledge and gives salvation.' This is the hymn (to be recited at the time of offering) the lamp. Having given presents with devotion to the brāhmaṇa, he should then feed the brāhmaṇas with ghee, sweetened milk and sweetmeats. Then he should cover the brāhmaṇa with his wife with garments, and should give him a bed with furniture and a cow with a calf.

40-45. He should give them presents according to his wealth. Similarly he should honour his friends, kinsmen and relatives. Thus he should celebrate a great festival at the time of the end of the vow of the lamp. Then he should dismiss (the deity) and having saluted (it) he should apologise. Men, when they do thus, obtain that fruit—that religious merit—of the lamp maintained for a year which they would get by the Saṁkrānti-rites. By means of observing the vow of the lamp maintained for a year

men get the same religious merit as is obtained by monthly rites. When the lamp is maintained for a year, a man gets that fruit which he obtains by vows of giving gifts and vows of abstract meditation, according to their number.

46-47. A man who offers a lamp to the deity gets the same fruit which a learned man would obtain by means of gifts of cows, land, gold and especially of houses. The giver of a lamp gets brilliance; the giver of a lamp gets inexhaustible wealth; the giver of a lamp obtains knowledge; the giver of a lamp gets supreme happiness. There is no doubt that by offering a lamp a man secures good fortune, very pure knowledge, health and great prosperity.

48-49. A man who offers a lamp would obtain a lovely wife having all (auspicious) marks, sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, and undying progeny. A brāhmaṇa (who offers a lamp) would obtain great knowledge, a kṣatriya (who offers a lamp) would obtain excellent kingdom, a vaiśya (offering a lamp would obtain) all (kinds of) wealth and beasts, and a śūdra (offering a lamp would obtain) happiness.

50-55a. A maiden (offering a lamp) obtains a husband endowed with all (auspicious) marks, a long life, and many sons and grandsons. A young woman (offering a lamp) will never experience widowhood. She does not get (i.e. suffer from) separation (from her husband) due to the prowess of the gift of a lamp. Maladies and diseases do not take place due to the gift of a lamp. A man who is frightened, becomes free from fear, and one that is bound gets freed from the bondage. There is no doubt that one devoted to the vow of (offering) a lamp is freed from the sins of (i.e. due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc., for there is the statement of Brahmā to this effect.

55b-61. He who has constantly kept burning a lamp before Viṣṇu, has undoubtedly practised the vows like Cāndrāyaṇa and Kṛcchra. Those who having worshipped Viṣṇu, maintained the lamp for a year, are blessed, are magnanimous, and have obtained the fruit of their existence. Those also who see the wick of the lamp here, go to the highest place, difficult to be obtained even by gods; and those who put, according to their capacity, oil and wick into the lamp, go to the highest position. Those also who are unable to light the lamp that is going out, and inform

others, enjoy the same fruit. He too who begging little oil only for (maintaining) the lamp, keeps the lamp for Viṣṇu, also obtains religious merit. (Even) a mean man who sees the lamp being lighted, and has the palms of his hands joined (in honour) of Viṣṇu, would obtain (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's world.

62-63. He who would give an idea (to others) to light a lamp (in honour of Viṣṇu), (or) he who himself would do so, is free from all sins, and would obtain (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's world. In this case also they narrate an ancient account, merely by hearing which a man is free from all sins.

64-72. On the charming bank of Sarasvatī there was (a hermitage) known as Siddhāśrama. Formerly a brāhmaṇa named Kapila, a knower of the Vedas, lived there. He was engrossed in (the practice of) vows and fasts. He was poor and was learned. He maintained his family by begging. He propitiated Viṣṇu by means of vows, fasts and restraints. Having duly worshipped Viṣṇu, he always lighted the lamp. Having taken oil, having worshipped Viṣṇu in his own house, he would light the lamp with great devotion for pleasing Viṣṇu. When (that) magnanimous Kapila was getting along like this, a cat with sharp teeth would always eat mice. He (i.e. the cat) came there day and night to eat mice. He always remained meditating for getting a prey in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. He ate many mice in the house of the brāhmaṇa. Intent upon meditation, he would eat those mice that came there to (drink) the oil and to take away the wick. When this was going on like this, after some time had elapsed, that pure brāhmaṇa Kapila along with his wife fasted and worshipped Viṣṇu in his house on an Ekādaśī (day).

73-81. Engaged in praising (Viṣṇu) and dancing (in front of his image) he kept awake. When it was midnight, the brāhmaṇa was overcome with sleep. The cat having sharp teeth and going quickly came there; and always remaining in a corner of the house he ate up the eatables offered to the deity. He saw a small female mouse that had come there to drink the oil, and that was used to take away the wick in the dim light. He jumped and attacked her with his foot. Then she entered a hole. Due to (the contact with) her foot the lamp became very bright. The oil-pot was bent and there was good light. The brāhmaṇa too abandoning his stupefying sleep got up. The cat that ate mice,

also kept awake during that night. Then when it had dawned, the brāhmaṇa, having performed his daily rites, broke the fast along with his relatives. That magnanimous Kapila who was going along like this had sons and grandsons. He obtained wealth, grains, excellent health, great prosperity and abundant riches. Having broken through the auspicious orb of the sun, so also of the moon, Kapila came to (secure) salvation through the prowess of the vow of the lamp.

82-84. He got joined (i.e. he merged) in the form of a lustre into the highest soul. The female mouse also died in the hole in (course of) time. Getting into an excellent aeroplane, she went to the world of Viṣṇu. The cat too died after (some) time and went to heaven. Having got into an excellent aeroplane waited upon and surrounded by celestial nymphs, accompanied by hosts of vidyādhara, being praised with auspicious cries of victory by serpents he went to the world of Viṣṇu.

85-91a. Having enjoyed many pleasures for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas he became a king on the earth by name Sudharman who was religious-minded, who worshipped gods and brāhmaṇas, who was handsome, who was fortunate and who was very mighty and brave. His wife, most dear to him, was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, was devoted to her husband, and was of a good character. Her name was Rūpasundarī. She was the most beautiful among all ladies. Many sons and many daughters were born (to them). When the couple was thus enjoying (in each other's company) with love, the month of Kārtika opening Viṣṇu's eyes (i.e. making him awake) arrived. During that (month) lamps are lighted by those who are devoted to Viṣṇu. So also those devotees of Viṣṇu who are afraid of the worldly existence practise vows like Kṛcchra and Cāndrāyana and restraints.

91b-94. When the Prabodhini (Ekādaśī) arrived, the king said to the queen: "O good one, in the lotus from the navel of Viṣṇu it is the auspicious Prabodhini. With my senses controlled through fast, I shall today worship (Viṣṇu). Having bathed in the holy place of Puṣkara, I shall worship the imperishable lord of gods having lotus-like eyes, along with Lakṣmī." Having heard these desired words, she who was engaged in the well-

being of her husband and who smiled charmingly, said (these) secret words to her husband:

Rūpasundarī said:

95-100a. O king, desire is also produced in my heart. I too have a desire for form and beauty. I desire to go with you to the best sacred place, Puṣkara.

Then the king, along with her, and with groups of elephants, horses and chariots and with family-priests came to Puṣkara. Then having bathed (there) he, meditating (on Viṣṇu) and gratifying manes and deities, worshipped the imperishable lord of gods, the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu). There, in the very charming temple, full of rows of lights everywhere, he saw the cat drawn (in a picture). Seeing that, the king remembering his former deeds and existence, looked at the lotus-like face of his beloved, and smiled.

Rūpasundarī said:

100b-101a. O lord, why did you smile after looking at my face?

Seeing the fruit of his former deed, he said (to her):

The king said:

101b-103. O queen, formerly (i.e. in the previous existence) I was a cat in the house of a brāhmaṇa. There I ate hundreds and thousands of mice. Since, even under a pretext, I guarded the lamp in front of Viṣṇu, I got, O Queen, fruit of that deed. Having reached Viṣṇu's world, I have now obtained the kingdom.

Rūpasundarī said:

104-108. I too had the recollection of my former deeds and existence. I too was a small female mouse in the house of the brāhmaṇa. On the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika, when the light had become dim, I went out of the hole to snatch the wick. Seeing (the image of) the god Viṣṇu worshipped with flowers, and the brāhmaṇa overcome with sleep, I then dragged the wick. When you, taking an opportunity to seize me, got up, I

saw you and ran into the hole. With the foot of me who was entering (the hole) the wick of the lamp spread out, the oil-pot also bent down and I was happy.

109-115. O lord of great kings, since I brightened the lamp at that time, I have now secured excellent beauty; you are my husband, (I have obtained) kingdom, sons and (great) happiness like that. Due to my brightening the lamp I secured knowledge which is extremely difficult to obtain. Therefore, with all efforts and with great devotion, we have especially practised the vow of the lamp. So we have received the fruit of the deed, viz. the riches like the kingdom etc. We remembered our former existence and so also all our sins have perished. Therefore, men have practised with all efforts and proper rites and hymns the vow of the lamp which is auspicious and resembles the Sun, the Moon and stars.

Hearing this, O divine sage, the king full of faith properly practised the vow of the lamp with his wife. Having practised the vow of the lamp at the holy palce of Puṣkara, the two obtained the great salvation difficult to be obtained by gods and demons.

116-120. Those men who on the earth listen to this greatness (of the vow) of the lamp, are free from all sins, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. And those men or those women who being intent upon it, devoutly practise it are all free from sins and go to ancient Brahman. O learned one, I have told you about this vow of the lamp which gives salvation, which gives all happiness, which is virtuous, and which is a great vow. Diseases of the eye, so also maladies and (other) diseases of the body perish in a moment, when it is practised. O brāhmaṇa, there is no poverty, no grief, no delusion, no illusion. Prosperity comes to the house in every existence.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

*The Vow of Janmāṣṭamī**Nārada Said:*

1. O god of gods, O lord of the world, O you who grant fearlessness to your devotees, having favoured me tell me about the vow (of Janmāṣṭamī), O Mahādeva.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

2-12a. Formerly there was king Hariścandra who was a sovereign emperor. Brahmā pleased with him gave him an auspicious city which satisfied all desires, which was full of all gems, which was divine and lustrous like the young sun. Having stayed in it, the king righteously protected the earth with seven islands, as a father protects his legitimate son. The king having great wealth and corn, and having sons and daughters, and being very proud protected that auspicious kingdom. Nobody before (him) had such a kingdom anywhere (in the world). No other men also ever got into such an aeroplane (as he did). ‘Of which act (of mine) is this the fruit that I am (enjoying) like the lord of gods?’ Being engrossed in thinking like this, the excellent king seated in an excellent aeroplane saw the Meru, the best of mountains. The magnanimous one, as it were the other sun, was there. The king, having seen on the excellent mountain, on the golden strip of the mountain, Sanatkumāra, the brāhmaṇic sage, exclusively devoted to abstract meditation, got down with a desire to ask him about the wonder. Being delighted, he saluted his feet. He too greeted him. The king, who was seated comfortably, asked the best sage: “O lord, the wealth like the one that I possess, is difficult to obtain in the world. Due to which deed would it be obtained? Who was I in the former existence? If I deserve favour from you then tell me the truth.”

Sanatkumāra said:

12b-20. O king, listen. I shall tell you the cause of your former behaviour, having practised which you were specially favoured. In your previous existence you were a good, pure vaiśya who spoke the truth. You gave up your duty; therefore

you were abandoned by your kinsmen. That you (i.e. you reduced to that condition), weak (i.e. unable) to maintain yourself, abandoned your relatives and went out, followed by your wife, to serve someone. But at that time (every man) was oppressed by famine, (so) nobody gave you a job. Then in a forest you saw a lake with the lotuses blooming. Then you had a thought: 'Let us take the lotuses.' Saying so, and taking them at every step they resorted to in the auspicious, meritorious city named Vārāṇasī. Then nobody purchased the lotuses. Somebody went out from the temple and stood in the courtyard. Entering that place he heard the sound of musical instruments. 'In which place (i.e. from which place) is the sound of the musical instruments being heard?' When he asked like this and was told that it was the sound from a musical instrument, he went ahead a (little) distance. There was king Indradyumna, the well-known king of Kāśī.

21-30. His well-known daughter was Candrāvati by name, who was virtuous. The noble one had fasted on the auspicious day—the eighth day (of the month)—the day of the birth anniversary (of Kṛṣṇa). That vaiśya came there where she, the one, remained. His mind was pleased, and great joy came there. At that place you saw the sacred rite in honour of the deity, where lord Viṣṇu is worshipped along with the Sun. You and your wife worshipped him devoutly with flowers. The other made a heap of flowers there. Seeing that she, who was amazed, said: "Oh, who has made this worship?" Knowing all her act you also had protected all that. Then, she, being pleased, gave you much wealth. You did not accept the wealth. You were invited to a meal. You did not take the wealth or the meal at that time. The Sun, along with Viṣṇu, was duly worshipped. Then in the morning, you, always being looked after by her, having produced familiarity with them all, went out as you liked. This (then) is the good deed done by you in the previous existence. According to (the fruit of) your deeds, you died. Due to that great religious merit, an aeroplane came at that time. O king, you are enjoying the fruit of the deed which you did in the former existence.

Hariścandra said:

31. If I deserve to be favoured by you then tell me in what manner and in which month that day (of Aṣṭamī) is to be celebrated.

Sanatkumāra said:

32-40. Listen attentively, O king, to what is being told to you by me. If in the month of Śrāvaṇa on the eighth of the dark half Rohiṇī is seen (in the sky) then that day is named Jayantī (day). O great king, it would be the cause for existence again and again. I shall narrate to you the manner of (observing) it as I was told by Brahmā, doing (i.e. observing) which a man being free from sins, goes to Viṣṇu's world. Then having fasted and then bathed with (water) with black sesamum-seeds, he should instal a scratchless pitcher with five jewels. Kātyāyana said that these five jewels, viz. diamonds, pearls, lapis lazuli, topaz and sapphires are recommended. On it he should place a golden pot with (auspicious) marks. In it he should place the golden (image of) Yaśodā, Nanda's wife, giving a suck to her son and with a smile on her face. As his capacity is (i.e. permits), he should get fashioned a golden (image of the) god, sucking one breast of the mother, and touching the other with his hand, and looking at the mother with love and pleasing her again and again. If he has the capacity he should have the image (weighing) just two niṣkas, or of iron (weighing) three (niṣkas) or of gold also.

41-45. In the same way, he should fashion a golden (image of) Rohiṇī and a silver one of the Moon. The (image of the) Moon should be of the size of a thumb only, and (that of) Rohiṇī (should be of the size of) four fingers. He should place ear-rings on the ears and a neck ornament round the neck (of the image). Having done so, he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) along with (that of) his mother with milk etc. and smear them with sandal. He should cover (the image) with a white garment, and decorate it with garlands of flowers. Along with offerings of eatables and various varieties of fruits, he should put a lamp there decorated with an arbour of flowers. The devoted one should make the wise ones sing, dance and

play on musical instruments. Having done the rite according to his wealth, he should worship his teacher and should then bring the worship to an end.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

A Gift of Land Is the Best

Mahādeva said:

1-9. Seeing the Śatakratu completed and accomplished with excellent presents, Indra, in whose mind a thought had arisen, asked Bṛhaspati: “O you glorious one, O you of a great penance, tell me about that inexhaustible and very valuable gift by means of which a man gets happiness everywhere.” Thus addressed by Indra, that family priest (of the gods), the god of gods and the very wise Bṛhaspati said: “O Indra, he who gives the gift of gold, or of a cow, or of (a piece of) land, becomes free from all sins. All (this) viz. gold, silver, a garment, a gem, a jewel would be (said to be) given by him who gives (a piece of) land. By giving land that is tilled with a plough, that contains seeds and is shining with corn, a man is honoured in heaven as long as there is the light cast by the sun. That sin, whichever a man overpowered by his livelihood commits, is purified by the gift of land of the measure of a *gocarma*. *Danḍa* is of the measure of ten cubits. Thirty *danḍas* make a *vartana*. Ten such (*vartanas*) make a *gocarma*. This is the definition of *brahmagocarma*. That land where a thousand cows that have calved young calves and that are with bulls, remain uncontrolled, is known as *gocarma*.

10-14. He should give it to a brāhmaṇa endowed with virtues, possessing penance, and with his senses controlled. He would get its infinite fruit as long as the earth begirt by the ocean remains. As a drop of oil fallen into water spreads, in the same way, O Indra, the gift of (a piece of) land spreads in every grain. As the seeds scattered on the earth grow, similarly the desires accompanied by the gift of land, grow (i.e. become fruitful). The givers of food are always happy. One who gives a

garment would be handsome. That man who gives (a piece of) land repeatedly gives all.

15-17. O Indra, as a milch-cow feeds her calf by sending out milk, in the same way the land that is given (to a brāhmaṇa) feeds the giver of it. A conch, an auspicious seat, an umbrella, excellent horses and fine elephants (*obscure*). The fruit of the religious merit of the gift of land is heaven, O Indra. The Sun, Varuṇa, Fire, Brahmā, the Moon, Hutāśana (i.e. fire), the lord with the trident in his hand greet the giver of land. His manes clap (with delight) and the grandsires describe (his gift), 'In our family the giver of land is born. He will emancipate us.'

18-20. The three are said to be superior gifts: cows, land and knowledge. These lift (a man) from hell by means of muttering, sowing seed and milking. O brāhmaṇa, if they are taken up by the learned they help to cross a calamity. Those that give garments, go (to heaven with their bodies) covered. Those who do not give garments go naked. The givers of food go with gratification. Those who do not give food go hungry.

21-25a. All the manes frightened due to the fear of (falling into) hell say: 'That (our) son who will go to Gayā will be our emancipator.' Many sons should be desired, so that at least one of them would go to Gayā. He would perform the horse-sacrifice, or would give a 'nīla' bull. That bull which is red in colour, whitish at the tip of its tail, white at the hoofs and tail, is called 'nīla'. By means of the water which the 'nīla' bull, of a whitish tail, splashes, the manes are gratified for sixty thousand years; and by means of the mud which is on the horns, the family is emancipated; and his manes obtain (i.e. go to) the very bright world of Soma (i.e. the Moon).

25b-30a. It was (reached) by king Dilīpa, Nṛga and Nahuṣa; but none of the other kings reached it. Many kings like Sagara, gave (the gift of) land. Whenever he gave (the gift of) land he got its fruit (just) then. That (gift of land) destroys the sin (of one) who kills a brāhmaṇa, who murders a woman, who kills a child, who is fallen, or the killer of thousands of cows. He who takes away the land given by him or by someone else, becomes an insect in the feces, and is roasted along with his manes. The giver of land remains in heaven for sixty thousand years; and the one who strikes him (soliciting land) and who consents to (the

suppliant being struck) would go to (and live in) hell for that much period.

30b-37. None else is more meritorious or a greater sinner than the giver of land or the snatcher of it (respectively). They remain above (i.e. in heaven) and below (in hell) till the deluge. The first child of Fire is gold; the earth is (the child) of Viṣṇu; the cows are the Sun's daughters. He would obtain an unending fruit of (these gifts); so also he who would give gold, or a cow or (a piece of) land. He who receives (a piece of) land, he who gives it, both are meritorious, and certainly go to heaven. Those who snatch (a piece of) land or those who have caused (others) to snatch it unjustly would destroy their family (upto) the seventh member (i.e. descendant). He, a dull one and covered by (i.e. full of) ignorance, who snatches or causes someone else to snatch (a piece of land), is bound by the nooses of Varuṇa and is born in the stocks of lower animals. The gifts are censured along with the tears that are shed. The family up to three descendants perishes when the land of a brāhmaṇa is taken away. One who snatches (a piece of) land is not purified (even) by (digging) a thousand wells and tanks, or by performing a hundred horse-sacrifices, or by giving a crore of cows.

38-39. Whatever good deed is done, whatever gift is given, whatever penance is practised, whatever study is done, whatever is meritorious perishes by taking away (the portion of) the border (of a piece of land) of the measure of half a finger. He who oppresses (i.e. snatches) a (pasture)—a sacred land of cows, (a portion of) the road in the village, or (a portion of) cremation ground goes to hell (and remains there) till deluge.

40-44. A man kills five (members of his family) if he tells a lie with regard to his daughter, kills ten if he lies about a cow, kills a hundred if he tells a lie about a horse, and (kills) a thousand by telling a lie about a man. The liar with regard to gold kills those that are born and those that are not (i.e. are yet to be) born. He kills (i.e. destroys) everything by lying about land. (Therefore) do not tell a lie pertaining to land. Even if the life is on the point of departing, a man should not show interest in a brāhmaṇa's wealth. Those that are (duly) burnt with fire (after their death) go up. The one who is burnt by (the curse of) a brāhmaṇa, does not go up. Those who are burnt by fire, go up;

so also those who are scorched up by the sun; so also those who are struck by the sceptre of the king or by the curse of a brāhmaṇa. The limbs nourished by a brāhmaṇa's wealth, repeatedly waste away as the heat wastes away due to sand.

45-49a. A man who snatches the wealth of a brāhmaṇa goes to (the) Raurava (hell). Poison is not called poison; (but) a brāhmaṇa's wealth is called poison. Poison kills one(only), (but snatching) a brāhmaṇa's wealth kills one's sons and grandsons. A man may digest iron-powder, or stone-powder, or (even) poison. But which man will digest a brāhmaṇa's wealth in the three worlds? That wealth which through (snatching of) a brāhmaṇa's wealth gives happiness or which through (snatching away) the wealth belonging to (the temple of) a deity gives joy, leads to the destruction of the family and to that of oneself. A brāhmaṇa's wealth, the murder of a brāhmaṇa, the wealth of a poor man, the gold of the preceptor or friend would trouble a man even while (he is) living in heaven.

49b-53a. O best god, that (wealth) which is given to a brāhmaṇa who is contented, who is modest, who is accompanied by the essence of everything, who is endowed with Vedic studies, penance, knowledge and control of senses, is inexhaustible. As milk, curd, ghee or honey put in an unbaked pot splits due to the weakness of the pot, but the pot does not perish, similarly, an ignorant man who receives a cow, gold, a garment, food, land and sesamum-seeds, becomes reduced to ash like wood.

53b-61a. He who would construct a new lake or would get an old one dug up, emancipates his entire family and is honoured in heaven. Wells, tanks, lakes or (trees etc.) growing in gardens, if improved again, give a pearl-like fruit. O Indra, he who has water (to give to others) in (even) the summer season, would never meet with a difficulty, a danger or an evil. O best god, water remaining on the earth (even) for a day, would emancipate seven members preceding (and succeeding) him. The man (offering a lamp) would be of a strong body by means of the light of the lamp. By giving presents he obtains memory and intelligence. He who, even after having done a sinful act, would give to a deserving person, especially a brāhmaṇa, is not smeared with sins. He who does not report when (a piece of) land, cows, or a servant are forcibly snatched is called the killer of a brāh-

maṇa. He who, when a marriage is about to take place, or at the time of a sacrifice or gift, creates obstacle through delusion, becomes an insect after death.

61b-71. Wealth becomes fruitful by giving (a portion of it); life becomes fruitful by saving (another) life. Harmlessness gets (as) its fruit handsomeness, prosperity and good health. A man gets (the fruit of) worship by eating fruits and roots. Heaven is obtained through truthfulness. Due to fasting oneself unto death one gets kingdom and obtains happiness everywhere. O Indra, an embodied one who roams about as a religious mendicant, who goes on well while in initiation, who bathes thrice a day, drinks (i.e. inhales) air (only) obtains the (fruit of a) sacrifice. He should bathe every day, be diligent and be endowed with the sandhyā (prayer), Vedas and muttering. The harmless one goes to splendour, the indestructible heaven. One who enters fire is certainly honoured in Brahmā's world. By giving up tastes he obtains beasts and sons. He who fasts, lives in heaven for a long time. He who always sleeps on the (bare) ground, obtains desired position. He who takes up the posture of the brave, who sleeps like a brave man and occupies the position of a brave man has all inexhaustible worlds reached according to his desire. O Indra, having observed a fast, taken initiation and having bathed for twelve years he goes above the position of the brave. He practises purifying righteousness and is honoured in heaven." Of the men who read (this) view of Bṛhaspati, four things grow: life, knowledge, glory and power.

Nārada said:

O king, all the sacred rules told by Bṛhaspati to Indra were told by great god (Maheśa) to me, his devotee.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

*A Hymn to Śani as a Remover of Trouble**Nārada said:*

1. O best god, tell me how the oppression caused by Saturn goes away (i.e. is removed). A living being is freed by that which is heard from your mouth.

Mahādeva said:

2-11. O divine sage, listen to the account. By that you will be free from bondage. This Saturn is the lord of Planets and the great lord of all. This divinity is well-known. He is a great Planet of the form of death. He is having matted hair; is having hair like diamond pins; he is fearful to the demons. O lord, in this world his account is not well-known. I have especially guarded it and have not told it to anyone. Formerly in Raghu's family there was a very famous king, Daśaratha by name. He was a sovereign emperor and a great hero. Knowing Saturn to be near Kṛttikā the astrologers informed him: Now Saturn will go piercing Rohiṇī (i.e. will pass through Rohiṇī); the piercing of the cart(-like shape of the constellation Rohiṇī) is very fierce and fearful to the gods and demons; for twelve years there will be a very great (i.e. severe) famine. Having heard these words, the king held consultation with his ministers: "What is the fearful (calamity) that has come?" Seeing the world, the citizens and the peasants distressed, people everywhere said: "The end of the world has come. Regions with cities, villages have been frightened all around." The devout king asked brāhmaṇas led by Vasiṣṭha: "O best brāhmaṇas, tell me what measure (should) be (adopted) now?"

Vasiṣṭha said:

12-18. This is the star of Prajāpati. When it is pierced, where (i.e. how) will the subjects remain? This conjunction cannot be averted (even) by Brahmā and Śakra etc.

Thinking in his mind about a rash act, he took up his divine bow along with divine weapons, quickly^१ got into

his chariot and went to the group of stars (i.e. to the sky), numbering a lakh, and remaining over the Sun, and (covering a region) of a yojana and a quarter, and dwelling on the back of Rohiṇī. Formerly king Daśaratha, shining with great jewels and bright with a diadem and a crown looked bright in his golden, divine chariot which was decorated with gems and jewels, to which horses having the colour of swans were yoked, and which had a banner (fluttering) high. At that time he shone in the sky like another sun. Having fully (drawn) his bow up to the ear he fixed a missile that would destroy (everything). Saturn, having seen that destructive missile causing fear to gods and demons, laughed through its fear and said these words:

Saturn said:

19-20. O lord of kings, your valour is great and causes fear to the enemies. O king, gods, demons, human beings, siddhas, vidyādhara, serpents, when looked at by me, are reduced to ash. O lord of kings, I am pleased with your penance and valour. Ask for a boon—whatever you desire in your mind. I shall grant it.

Daśaratha said:

21-24. You should never pierce Rohiṇī and go (i.e. you should never pass through Rohiṇī), as long as the rivers, the oceans, the Moons, the Sun and the earth remain. I have, O Sauri, solicited (what I want). I do not desire any other boon from you.

Granting him an eternal boon, Śani said: “Let it be so”. Again being pleased, he said: “O you of a good vow, ask for a boon.” With a pleased mind he (the king) then solicited another boon from Saturn. (He said): “O Sun’s son, you should never pierce (i.e. pass through) the cart (i.e. Rohiṇī). Never cause a famine (lasting) for twelve years’.

Saturn said:

25-27. There shall never be a famine (lasting) for twelve years. This fame of yours will spread in the three worlds.

The king, having obtained a couple of boons, and thrilling (with joy) kept his bow on the chariot, and with palms of his hands joined he meditated upon goddess Sarasvatī and Vināyaka, the chief of (Śiva's) attendants. (Then) king Daśaratha recited this hymn of praise of Saturn:

Daśaratha said:

28-38. My homage to Kṛṣṇa, Nīla (i.e. the dark one), to Śitikaṇṭhanibha (i.e. one who resembles Śiva), to Kālāgnirūpa (i.e. of the form of the destructive fire), to Kṛtānta (i.e. Death). My obeisance to Nirmāṃsadeha (i.e. having no i.e. very little flesh in his body), to Dīrghaśmasrujāta (i.e. having long moustache and beard), to Viśālanetra (i.e. having big eyes), to you having thin belly and fearful figure. My homage to Puṣkalagātra (i.e. having a large body), to Sthūlaroman (i.e. having thick hair), to Dīrgha (i.e. long), to Śuṣka (i.e. dry); salutation to you having death-like fangs. Salutation to Koṭarākṣa (i.e. having hollow-like senses), Durnirīkṣya (i.e. difficult to be looked at); Salutation to Ghora (i.e. fearful), to Raudra (i.e. fierce), to Bhīṣaṇa (i.e. terrible), to Kapālin (i.e. wearing skulls); homage to Sarvabhakṣa (i.e. one consuming everything), to you, O Valimukha (i.e. to you who have wrinkles on your face); salutation to you, O Sun's son, to you, O Bhāskari (i.e. the Sun's son), to Bhayada (i.e. causing fear); homage to you, O Adhodṛṣṭi (i.e. (looking down), to you, O Samvartaka (i.e. fire of destruction), to Mandagati (i.e. moving slowly), salutation to Nistriṃśa (i.e. pitiless), to you whose body is burnt by penance, to you who are always engaged in abstract meditation; constant homage to Kṣudhārta (i.e. oppressed with hunger), to Atṛpta (i.e. not content); salutation to you, the eye of knowledge, to the son of Kaśyapa's son. When you are pleased, you give a kingdom; when you are angry you take it away in a moment.

Thus praised, that very powerful king of Planets, viz. Saturn, the son of the Sun, was thrilled (with joy) and again said these words (to Daśaratha): "O you best king of a good vow, with this hymn of praise of (i.e. recited by) you, I am pleased. Ask for your desired boon. I shall grant it, O descendant of Raghu."

Daśaratha said:

39. O Sauri (i.e. Sun's son), from today you are not to cause any trouble to anyone—gods, demons, men, beasts, birds and serpents.

Śani said:

40-51. Grahas (i.e. Planets) are (so called) since they seize (a being). They are said to cause trouble. I (shall) tell you about something proper which is solicited and cannot be given. A man who will recite once or twice this hymn of praise recited by you, will be free from trouble (just) at the moment. In the fourth existence in the end, I, having gone to death, would give death to gods, demons, human beings, siddhas, vidyādhara and goblins. On the other hand, I shall never trouble him who with faith, becomes pure and calm, worships my iron image with Śamī-leaves, and who would offer as present iron mixed with beans, rice, sesamum-seeds, and would give a black cow, a bull to a brāhmaṇa, and would, especially on my day (i.e. Saturday) worship (me) with this hymn, and would, with the palms of his hands joined, recite the hymn (in my honour) after having worshipped me. I shall always protect him and (keep away) the trouble from a Planet during the Planet's influence, in the sign of Zodiac in which a person is born, in the Planet's aspect or in the middle of it. By doing this only, the world would be free from trouble. Thus, O descendant of Raghu, I have skilfully granted you a boon.

Having obtained three boons, king Daśaratha regarded himself as successful and saluted Śani. Permitted by Śani, he speedily got into his chariot and went to his place. Then the king had obtained bliss. That man who having got up in the morning on a Saturday, would recite this hymn of praise, so also the man who devoutly listens to this hymn of praise when it is being recited, is freed from a sin, and is honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Account of Trispr̥śā

Nārada said:

1. O lord, especially narrate to me the vow called Trispr̥śā, by hearing which people are free from the bondage of their acts (just) at (that) moment.

Mahādeva said:

2-12a. Listen to the great vow called Trispr̥śā of the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. It puts to an end all streams of sins. It destroys great unhappiness. It gives the desired objects to those who desire them, and gives salvation to those who have no desire. O brāhmaṇa, listen to that vow called Trispr̥śā from me who am narrating it. Viṣṇu is directly worshipped in the Kali age by him who, O great sage, always narrates the (account of) Trispr̥śā. All the sin would not come to an end by the repetition of the name of a deity accompanied with burnt offerings. (But) there is no doubt that it gets exhausted merely by uttering the name of Trispr̥śā. O best brāhmaṇa, if Trispr̥śā is not observed, salvation does not take place even by reading sacred texts, Purāṇas and other (works), (performing) sacrifices, (visits to) crores of sacred places, (observing) many multitudes of vows, worshipping deities. This date (*tithi*) sacred to Viṣṇu is noted by the god of gods for (securing) salvation. For brāhmaṇas, especially in the Kali age, the Sāṅkhya is difficult to understand; so also there is lack of control over the senses, and there is no stability of the mind. Trispr̥śā gives salvation to those who are attached to sensual objects, who are without meditation and lack retentive memory. The Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) formerly narrated it to me and Brahmā and to those who had bowed down (to him) in the Milky Ocean. I have granted salvation even to those, except the Sāṅkhyas, who, even though attached to sensual objects observe the Trispr̥śā vow. Trispr̥śā gives salvation to those who are attached to sensual pleasures.

12b-18. O great sage, it (i.e. the vow of Trispr̥śā) has been observed even by many groups of sages. If Trispr̥śā takes place in the bright half of Kārtika with the Moon or Mercury, it

destroys crores of sins. The skull of Brahmā fell on the ground just at that moment from the hand of the great lord (i.e. Śiva), possessing (the sin of) murder and observing a fast on that day. The goddess Gaṅgā was freed from the streams of crores of sins in the Kali age, due to the advice of Viṣṇu and fasting on the Trisṛṣā day. O great sage, the sin of eight murders that formerly took place in the case of Bahuvīrya, was removed by means of Bhṛgu's advice and fasting on Trisṛṣā. O best brāhmaṇa, Śatāyudha had killed a brāhmaṇa in a forest. He was free from (the sin of) murder of the brāhmaṇa due to fasting on Trisṛṣā. Due to the advice of Jīva, (the sin due to) the killing of Namuci (committed) by Indra vanished on account of fasting on Trisṛṣā, O best among the principal sages.

19-23. O best brāhmaṇa, sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. perish by means of fasting on Trisṛṣā. Then what can be said about other sins? O best brāhmaṇa, if (the vow of) Trisṛṣā is not observed, then salvation is not possible at Gayā, at Kāśī, at Gomatī or near Kṛṣṇa. Eternal salvation takes place by dying at Prayāga or at Gomatī or near Kṛṣṇa, (so also) merely by bathing at Gomatī. By fasting on Trisṛṣā salvation takes place even at home in the case of him who indulges in (objects of) senses and is full of sensual pleasures. Even for one who has turned away from sensual objects salvation is difficult according to the Sāṃkhya(-path). Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, observe the Trisṛṣā which gives salvation.

Nārada said:

24. O best god, what kind of vow is the great vow called Trisṛṣā, which gives salvation to brāhmaṇas, and which you told me about now.

Mahādeva said:

25. O brāhmaṇa, formerly Viṣṇu told Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) about (the vow of) Trisṛṣā through compassion (for her) on the bank of Prācī Sarasvatī.

Jāhnavī said:

26-27. O Viṣṇu, in this Kali age many (people) possessing the streams of crores of sins like those of the murder of a

brāhmaṇa, bathe in my water. Due to the blemishes of hundreds of sins of them, my body is made turbid. O god having Garuḍa as your banner, how will that sin of me go away?

Prācī Mādhava said:

28-35. I shall undoubtedly tell you. O daughter, do not weep. My place is the Śyāma Vata; and Prācī Devī, daughter of Brahmā, flows in front of me. Looking at the chief goddess, every day bathe there. By that you will be purified. There is no doubt that I stay along with hundreds of holy places and gods there where there is Prācī, Brahmā's daughter. My place is pure and dear (to me). It destroys (the sin of) crores of murders. Since you are dearer to me than my (own) life, I, being pleased, have given it to you. O Jāhnavī, by my order thousands of crores of holy places always remain in the water of Prācī Sarasvatī. O daughter, Brahmā's daughter Prācī removes all sins on bathing once (only) in front of me (in her water). (She removes) sins due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, killing a cow or a śūdra woman, snatching the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, not honouring one's mother and father, using a vehicle, deceiving one's preceptor, or eating what is prohibited. O best river, bathe (there). You will be free from sins.

Jāhnavī said:

36. O lord of gods, I cannot come every day. O Viṣṇu, tell me now how (my) sins will perish.

Prācī Mādhava said:

37-40. O Jāhnavī, since you have risen from my feet, I shall tell you something else if you are unable to come (here) every day. You should observe (the vow of) the auspicious Trisṛṣā, which is superior to (a bath in) Sarasvatī, which is superior to hundreds of crores of sacred places, which is superior to crores of sacrifices, which is superior to vows and gifts, which is superior to muttering (of hymns) and sacrifices, and which gives the four goals, which is superior to (the practices laid down in) the Sāṃkhya-Yoga (path). When it comes (i.e. falls) in a month, during either the bright or the dark half, it should be observed, O best river. When it is observed, one is free from a sin.

Jāhnavī said:

41-42. O god Viṣṇu, tell me how that Trisr̥ṣā, about whose greatness of this kind you told me now, is. O lord, tell me if the day on which the three dates, viz. tenth, eleventh and twelfth combine would be the Trisr̥ṣā day, or if it is different.

Kṛṣṇa said:

43-54. O goddess, that Trisr̥ṣā which you mentioned is demonish. With care it is to be avoided as the husband who is without any livelihood (i.e. a job). It is said to be of the demons and destroys life and vigour. With care it should be avoided like a woman in her menses. My day especially in conjunction with the tenth day should be avoided like her who, having abandoned her own caste, has gone to lower castes. As ignorant people are polluted due to the contact with a woman in her menses, similarly my day in conjunction with the tenth is censurable for men. Trisr̥ṣā, if properly fasted on, destroys (the sin) of a hundred murders. That day on which the three days viz. the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth fall, should be known as Trisr̥ṣā and not one in conjunction with the tenth. A man, having gone through an expiation after having committed a fault, would be free. O divine river, I do not forgive the fault due to being pierced by the tenth. He who has observed the Ekādaśī-vow (on the day) mixed with the tenth has taken the *halāhala* poison or has taken poison. Thinking like this, he should not observe (a fast on) my day in conjunction with the tenth. The religious merit or the progeny of him (who does so) perishes. He would cause (the members of) his family to drop from heaven and takes (them) to (hells) like Raurava. Having purified one's body, one should observe (the vow on) my day. The day when there is increase (in its duration) should be avoided except piercing of (i.e. being mixed with another day) and combined with Śravaṇa etc. The merit of those who fast on the Ekādaśī day perishes. This is especially so in the case of the increase in its duration and when a doubt has arisen. Dvādaśī (-fast) should be observed. It is dear to him.

Jāhnavī said:

55. O lord of the world, according to your words (i.e. as you have told me) I shall observe (the vow of) Trispr̥ṣā. By your behest I shall be free from all sins.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

56-57. Go (back) to your own place. You should never entertain fear. O goddess, O best river, sin shall never come to you. Those who, after having worshipped Mādhava, pay homage to the lord of the world, go to (i.e. obtain) the highest position.

Jāhnavī said:

58. O Brahman, tell me the manner (in which the vow is to be observed). I (shall) do it with everything (I have). I shall propitiate the lord of gods, Dāmodara, Anāmaya.

Prācī Mādhava said:

59-65a. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you the manner of (i.e. in which) Trispr̥ṣā (should be observed), even by hearing which a man is freed from sins, O best river. According to the capacity of one's wealth, a golden image of me (weighing) a pala, half of it, or half of the latter, should be fashioned. A pot of copper should be made and should be filled with sesamum-seeds. A white pitcher containing water and with five gems, should be wrapped with garlands of flowers, and made fragrant with the incense of agaru. Then after having bathed (the image of) Viṣṇu and having smeared (it with sandal) one should put (it in the vessel). Then with a pair of garments (the image) should be seated and the worship should be done with hymns and by reciting (passages from) the Purāṇas, so also with white, seasonal flowers and tender Tulasī-leaves. One should offer an umbrella along with sandals to Viṣṇu, so also pleasing articles of food and very many fruits. One should offer a new, strong sacred thread along with an upper garment.

65b-77. One should also cause to be given a beautiful, long and strong bamboo-staff. Having duly and devoutly worshipped the feet (of the image saying) 'to Dāmodara', its knees (saying) 'to Mādhava', its private part (saying) 'to Kāmapradā', its waist

(saying) 'to Vāmanamūrti', its navel (saying) 'to Padmanābha', its belly (saying) 'to Viśvayoni', its heart (saying) 'to Jñānagamyā', its throat (saying) 'to Vaikuṇṭhagāmin', its arms (saying) 'to Sahasrabāhu', its eyes (saying) 'to Yogarūpin', one should make a respectful offering. (Taking) a white coconut placed on a conch and wrapped with threads in both his hands, (he should say), "O Janārdana, if, by just being remembered you remove sins and bad dreams and evil omens seen by the mind, then, O god, protect me from the fear of hell due to fear and calamity, so also of this and the next world; accept (this) respectful offering. Salutation to you. O Dāmodara, always look favourably at me." One should then offer incense, lamp and wave a light and should revolve a lotus over the head of Viṣṇu. Having performed this rite, one should then worship his own preceptor. One should give (the preceptor) gold, garments, and a dress with a turban, so also shoes, an umbrella, a ring and a water-pot, so also a meal, a tāmbūla, seven (kinds of) corn, and a gift. Having properly worshipped the preceptor, the lord of gods, one should keep awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, with dance and music, according to the sacred precepts. At the close of the night one having duly made a respectful offering to the deity, and having performed the rites like bathing, one should eat along with brāhmaṇas.

Śiva said:

78-87. O brāhmaṇa, having heard this account of Trisṛṣā which is wonderful and thrilling, one gets the religious merit due to bath in the Gaṅgā. By fasting on Trisṛṣā one gets the fruit of thousands of Aśvamedha sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices. Along with all the sides like that of one's father, that of one's mother, and that of one's own one is freed, and one is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu. By fasting on Trisṛṣā one gets the same religious merit as is obtained by (visiting) crores of holy places and crores of sacred places. O best brāhmaṇa, all those—brāhmaṇas, evil-minded kṣatriyas, vaiśyas or those born as śūdras, so also persons of other castes—come to (i.e. obtain) salvation after having left the earth. This is the king-hymn among the hymns as would be (the hymn of) twelve letters. Of vows (it is the chief) for him who has observed it. It was first observed by Brahmā, then was observed by royal sages. Then,

O child, what can be said about others? Trisṛṣā gives salvation. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who devoutly observes this Trisṛṣā vow. He who observes the Trisṛṣā (vow) gets that fruit which is obtained by bathing in Gaṅgā at Vārāṇasī for thousands of the periods of Manu. A man who observes the vow of Trisṛṣā obtains that fruit obtained by means of bathing in Prācī and Yamunā for crores of years.

88-95. A man who observes the Trisṛṣā vow gets that fruit which is obtained by (bathing during) crores of solar eclipses at Kurukṣetra, or by (giving) hundreds of bhāras of gold. By means of just one fast thousands of crores of sins and hundreds of (sins due to) murders are quickly reduced to ash. That vow of Trisṛṣā gives salvation to those who have not got it. Hundreds of (persons committing) great sins desire salvation, O brāhmaṇic sage. Kṛṣṇa himself told (this vow) in front of (i.e. to) Pārāśarya. He who, even though bound by streams of sins, shows this Vaiṣṇava (Purāṇa) after writing it to a brāhmaṇa, obtains salvation. (This vow) is secured, O wise one, by means of religious merit (collected during) hundreds of ages of Manu. Trisṛṣā is difficult to be secured by men. It is not easily had in the world. The fruit of the existence of those mean men, so also their life, who, having had (i.e. having known the day of) Trisṛṣā, do not observe it, is fruitless. Those who have, after having (come to know the day of) Trisṛṣā, observed it (even) once have overcome (being reduced to) the state of a goblin without Śrāddha or without sons.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

The Vow of Unmilani

Mahādeva said:

1-9. Hereafter I shall narrate to you the excellent (vow of) the Unmilani (Ekādaśī), having just heard about which a man is free from the bondage of the worldly existence. A sinner is

free from his sins and is honoured in heaven. His deities and manes would obtain a good position. A student gets knowledge and would have all his desires (fulfilled) by means of the vow of that (Ekādaśī). There is no doubt about that. He is honoured in heaven. There only he secures his position, and is honoured in the world of Śiva (also). Therefore, O king, do honour the devotees of Viṣṇu. O king, those who always serve the devotees of Viṣṇu (obtain good position). Do not punish them. O king, a king takes food after they have taken it. They alone have worshipped Viṣṇu who have devoutly honoured (Viṣṇu's devotees). O king, having daily held the Śālagrāma stone on the head, every day very devoutly wear it round your neck. O king, devoutly partake of the remnant of the incense of (i.e. offered to) Viṣṇu. O king, you always inform the devotees on waving the light before the idol. Having devoutly turned water from the conch round the head of (the idol of) Viṣṇu, you bear it on your head and the remaining you give to Viṣṇu's devotees.

10-17a. O brāhmaṇa, having every day offered eatables with all ingredients (to Viṣṇu) you eat them. Food offered to Viṣṇu is eaten along with (i.e. in the company of) Viṣṇu's devotees. Every day devoutly praise him with (the hymn containing) his thousand names. Offer a light and respectful offering and sing and dance. O best king, worship him deserving worship with śyāmā shoots. O child, it is very difficult (to get an opportunity) to worship (the deity) with śyāmā shoots. The religious merit due to the worship performed with dūrvā sprouts is equal to (the one obtained by) the gift of the earth. Therefore, in this world, on this earth, there is nothing like dūrvā. He who desires absorption into Viṣṇu should worship (Viṣṇu) with dūrvā. You may not worship (him) especially with barley (grains) or sacred rice grains, O best king. Dvādaśī-vow which is observed in every fortnight destroys great sins, O great king. It always gives salvation, happiness and also (long) life.

17b-25a. This vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu is said to give salvation to Viṣṇu's devotees. It gives happiness to the householders and salvation to the ascetics. It cures all diseases etc., it is pure and it purifies the body. O king, do not observe it merely by words. Observe the tenth without penetration by another day and by keeping awake. Worship Viṣṇu every day with heaps of Tulaśi-

leaves, O best king. The gopīcandana leaf (i.e. a mark) put on the head purifies all the people, O best king. Therefore, put it made from gopīcandana (on your head). All those who have applied the mark—the killer of a brāhmaṇa, he who has stolen gold, a drunkard, he who has approached one (i.e. a woman) who should not be approached, and he who has told lies—obtain salvation. Put around your neck a garland—pre-eminent, disjoined and even—garland made of Dhātrī-fruits and of Tulaśī-leaves. You worship it daily with the Śālagrāma stone having come up in Dvārakā. It gives the fruit of enjoyment and salvation.

25b-28. You read before Viṣṇu the Purāṇa called Padma, so also the account of Pahrāda, king of demons. O King, noting carefully the sacred texts, you keep away those men who observe the day (in honour) of Viṣṇu along with the proximate day. The king in that country in which the day (in honour) of Viṣṇu is observed along with its proximate day is smeared with sin and becomes a resident of hell. Abandoning the proximate (day) of four kinds and having observed a fast on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, a man, after having emancipated a crore (members of) his family, is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven.

Gautama said:

29-32a. O king, listen to the great vow called Vaiṣṇava, hearing which all sinners obtain salvation just at that moment. I have not told anyone (else) the religious merit due to Dvādaśī. O great king, you are a devotee of Viṣṇu and a follower of Viṣṇu among men. (Therefore) listen to that very secret vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu. Formerly, due to my devotion Viṣṇu who was very much pleased, told me about (the vow called) Unmīlanī.

32b-38. O king, I shall tell you (about) it. That day on which the Ekādaśī lasts for the day and night and for a ghaṭikā on the next day, should be known as Unmīlanī, and it is especially dear to Viṣṇu. All the holy places and sacred places that are there in the three worlds can be compared only with a croreth part of the merit of Unmīlanī, so also sacrifices and austerities. There was nothing and will be nothing like Unmīlanī. (Even) Prayāga, Kurukṣetra, Puṣkara, the mountains Himālaya, Meru, Gandhamādana, Nīla, Niṣadha, Vindhya, (the forest) Naimiṣa, (the rivers) Godāvarī, Kāverī, Candrabhāgā, Vedikā, Tāpī,

Payoṣṇī, Kṣiprā, Candanā, Carmaṇvatī, Sarayū, Candrabhāgā, Gaṇḍikā, Gomatī, Vipāśā, and the great river called Śoṇa, are not like Unmīlanī.

39-50. O King, what is the use of saying (these things) again and again? There is nothing superior to Unmīlanī, and none greater than Viṣṇu. The heaps of the groups of sins of those who have, on obtaining the Unmīlanī (day), worshipped Viṣṇu, fall at that moment only. O king, Viṣṇu should be carefully worshipped with the name of that month in which Unmīlanī day would fall. A silver (image of) Viṣṇu, giving it the name of the month, and of a universal form, should be fashioned according to one's capacity and with faith and devotion. A pitcher should be made (ready) containing pure water, and five jewels, and sandal, flowers and sacred grains, and adorned with a chaplet and a garland. A vessel should be made (ready) containing water and filled with wheat, with many gems and adored with many kinds of sandal, with the fragrance of jasmine flowers and adored with jasmine flowers. It should be carefully filled with rice called śveta. O royal sage, he should give (to a brāhmaṇa) a pair of garments, a sacred thread with an upper garment, a pair of shoes, and an umbrella (to be held) over his head. (So also he should give) food, a water-pot, seven kinds of corn along with sesamum-seeds, (also) silver, cotton, sweetened milk, and the image of Viṣṇu. Or a cow along with her calf and ornaments, and having golden horns, silver hoops and red back should be given. Or he should give the representation of a cow having bell metal udders and a jewelled tail, to his preceptor. He should devoutly give a furnished bed to a good (brāhmaṇa). He should offer incense, lamp, articles of food, fruits, leaves to the deity.

51-56a. The great devotees should worship Viṣṇu with Tulaśī-leaves and seasonal flowers, and with the hymn. (He should touch his) feet, with (i.e. uttering) the name of the month. (He should touch his) knees (saying 'My homage) to him of the form of Viṣṇu'. (He should touch his) private parts (saying 'My homage) to Guhyapati (i.e. the lord of secrets)'. (He should touch his) waist (saying 'My homage) to Pītavāsas' (i.e. to him who has put on a yellow garment)'. (He should touch his) navel (saying 'My homage) to Brahmamūrtibhṛt (i.e. one who holds Brahmā's form)'. (He should touch his) belly (saying 'My

homage) to Viśvayoni (i.e. the source of all)'. (He should touch his) heart (saying 'My homage) to Jñānagamyā (i.e. to him who is reached through knowledge)'. (He should touch his) throat (saying 'My homage) to Vaiṣṇavamūrti (i.e. to him of the form of Vaiṣṇava)'. (He should touch his) forehead (saying 'My homage) to Ūrdhvaga (i.e. to him who goes up)'. (He should touch his arm (saying 'My homage) to Dakṣāntakārin (i.e. to him who destroyed Dakṣa)'. (He should touch his) head (saying, 'My homage) to Sureśa (i.e. the lord of gods)'. He should touch his) entire body (saying 'My homage) to Sarvamūrti (i.e. to the universal form)'. With (i.e. uttering) his name he should devoutly worship all (Viṣṇu's) weapons. With coconuts etc. he should offer an oblation. He should make a respectful offering after putting water over the conch, after wrapping it with a thread, and with sandal, flowers and sacred grains.

56b-62a. (He should say): 'O Devadeva (i.e. god of gods), O Mahādeva (i.e. great god), O Śrī Keśava, Janārdana, Subrahmaṇya, my salutation to you who increase the heap of religious merit. Emancipate me from the ocean of the mundane existence full of grief, infatuation and great sin. I have not done any good deed even during hundreds of crores of existences. Yet, O great master, emancipate me from the ocean of the worldly existence. O lord of gods, by means of this vow emancipate my ancestors who have gone to evil stocks, who have been overpowered by sinful death, or those who will be or who were born from the world of the goblins. I am tired. The devotion of me who am dependent on you is faithful. I have devoutly made a respectful offering (to you). O Gadādhara, (please) accept it'. Having made a respectful offering with incense, lamp etc. due to Viṣṇu, he should please Viṣṇu with hymns of praise, by waving light in front (of his image), songs and dances.

62b-68. He should please his teacher with (gifts of) garments, (other) gifts, gifts of cows and meals. He should do (these) in such a way as the preceptor would be pleased; since the Creator has created the preceptor for emancipating the people, he should carefully honour the preceptor. He who always destroys what is harmful and shows what is beneficial and he who knows all righteous acts and worldly prosperity should be known to be the preceptor. Without practising guile about wealth he should

present it to the preceptor. O king, it becomes complete on its being presented to the preceptor. O best king, having done the daily duty he should take food in the company of brāhmaṇas. He should pass the day in (telling or listening to) stories (about Viṣṇu). He who observes the Unmīlanī-vow in this manner, lives near Viṣṇu for thousands of crores of kalpas.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

The Vow of Pakṣavardhinī

Nārada said:

1. O Mahādeva, of what type is (the vow) called Pakṣavardhinī, having observed which a being is free from a great sin?

Śrī Mahādeva said:

2. That would be Pakṣavardhinī, equal to myriads of horse-sacrifices, when either the new-moon day or the full-moon day is complete (i.e. lasts for the entire day and night) with sixty ghaṭikās and prolongs on the day of pratipad (i.e. the first day of a fortnight).

Nārada said :

3. O Mahādeva, now I am asking about the manner of the worship, having done which a man would obtain great fruit.

Mahādeva said:

4-12. O son of a brāhmaṇa, I shall now tell the manner of the worship. There is no doubt that a man gets the fruit when Viṣṇu is worshipped and adored, since by the performance of worship Viṣṇu is pleased. He should put a pitcher, which has no scratch, which is full of water, which is smeared with sandal, which contains five gems, which is wrapped with garlands of flowers. On the pitcher he should place a vessel containing wheat. (The image of) the deity should be made of gold and

should be named after the month. He should nicely bathe (the image of) the god of gods, Jagannātha, the lord of the world, with pañcāmṛta according to the (proper) rite. It should be besmeared with saffron, agaru and sandal. He should offer a pair of garments along with an umbrella and sandals. He should worship the (image of the) lord of deities kept in the vessel on the pitcher. (Touching) the feet (he should say, 'My homage) to Padmanābha'. (Touching) the knees (he should say, 'My homage) to Viśvamūrti'. (Touching) the thighs (he should say, 'My homage) to Jñānagamyā (i.e. one who is reached through knowledge). (Touching) the waist (he should say, 'My homage) to Jñānaprada (i.e. one who gives knowledge). (Touching) the belly (he should say, 'My homage) to Viśvanātha'. (Touching) the heart (he should say, 'My homage) to Śrīdhara. (Touching) the throat (he should say, 'My homage) to Kaustubhakaṇṭha'. (Touching) the arms (he should say, 'My homage) to Kṣatrāntakārin (i.e. one who destroyed the kṣatriyas). (Touching) the forehead (he should say, 'My homage) to Vyomamūrdhan (i.e. one who has his head in the sky). (Touching) the head (he should say, 'My homage) to Sarvarūpin (i.e. of a universal form). He should also utter his name (and worship) Lakṣmī full of all limbs and of a divine form.

13-19. The wise one should thus duly worship and then should offer materials of worship along with a white coconut to the Disc-holder, the god of gods. The vow becomes complete by means of this offering. (He should pray to the deity as:) 'O lord of the world, lift me who am drowned in the ocean of the worldly existence. You are the lord of all the worlds. You are actually the lord of the world. Accept the respectful offering offered by me. Salutation to you, O Padmanābha'. Offerings of pleasant food, especially those having (all) the six flavours should be very devoutly offered to Viṣṇu. He should devoutly offer the nāga-leaf along with camphor to the god. He should fill the lamp with ghee or with sesamum-oil. Doing (these) properly he should (duly) worship the preceptor. He should cause to be offered (i.e. should offer him) garments, a turban and a dress. He should cause to be given (i.e. should give) the preceptor a present according to his capacity. Having given (him) food and tāmbūla

he should cause to be given (i.e. should give) him a respectful offering.

20-32. The Dvādaśī (called) Pakṣavardhinī should be observed by the poor while keeping in view the estimate of their wealth and according to their capacity. It should be carefully and properly observed. Then he should keep awake by singing, dancing, the recitation of a Purāṇa and laughter and mirth. They praise and command the keeping awake (in honour) of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). For ten existences an every day festival would take place in their houses. Therefore, a man should observe this most virtuous Pakṣavardhinī. Having done (i.e. had) all religious merit, he undoubtedly obtains (its) fruits. Those wise men who have listened to the greatness of Pakṣavardhinī, have done meritorious deeds till the final destruction of the world. A man obtains that religious merit which he (would) obtain by practising the Pañcāgnisādhana or by visiting sacred places, by keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. The Pakṣavardhinī is virtuous, pure, and destroys sins. When a fast is observed on the day (of Pakṣavardhinī) it destroys (the sin due to) crores of brāhmaṇa-murders. It was, O sage, formerly observed by Vasiṣṭha, so also by Bhāradvāja; this one, dear to Viṣṇu, was observed by Dhruva and Ambariṣa. It is virtuous like Kāśī. It is like Dvārakā. When a devotee fasts on this day, it gives him his desired object. It is blessed, most blessed. It destroys (the sin of) a myriad of murders. It should be especially observed by those who are devoted to knowledge. O god, lord of all should be served by all who are intent upon (observing) the vow. As the moon waxes, especially in the bright half, the Pakṣavardhinī waxes for the devotee (of Viṣṇu). As darkness goes away at sunrise, the sin of a man on observing (the vow of) Pakṣavardhinī perishes.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

*Keeping Awake on Ekādaśī and Dvādaśī**Mahādeva said:*

1. O Nārada, listen to the importance of keeping awake, having listened to which (even) a great sinner undoubtedly obtains salvation.

Nārada said:

2-6. Viṣṇu, the lord of all, is always a purifier. O Śiva, I have heard from your mouth the importance of a fast (in honour) of him. Still I desire to hear about the importance of keeping awake. Of what kind is the importance of keeping awake? Of what kind is the nocturnal devotion? O lord of the universe, O master, tell (me) about the worship (offered) during the various watches. You are always adored in the worlds. You are god Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). You are the god, the lord of the universe, since you are devoted to Viṣṇu. You, the lord of Umā, are the greatest among all devotees. In this world you are known by means of your devotion. Therefore, O lord of the universe, tell (me) in which manner people will be emancipated, so also (tell me about) the importance of keeping awake.

Mahādeva said:

7-18. On the Ekādaśī day a man, after having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu at night, should keep awake along with Viṣṇu's devotees in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. The man who always sings, plays upon musical instruments, dances, listens to the Purāṇas, offers incense, waves lights (before the image), offers eatables, flowers, sandal and unguents, fruits, respectful offering, presents with devotion, and controls his senses, and O best brāhmaṇa, speaks truthful and proper words followed by action, and who always keeps awake gladly, is free from all sins and becomes dear to Viṣṇu. When keeping awake at night has become (necessary), those devotees of Viṣṇu who sleep, have lost (the fruit of) the fast and (that of) the vow called Viṣṇu(vrata). Those men, O wise one, who keep awake on the (night of the Viṣṇu-vrata) called Viṣṇu-jāgara through devotion for Viṣṇu and do

not at all sleep, and repeat mentally (i.e. to themselves) Viṣṇu's name, should be known to be most blessed. Especially on this night (the repetition of Viṣṇu's name gives the fruit of) the gift of a cow every moment; (the fruit) is fourfold (if the name is repeated) for a ghaṭikā; it is crorefold (if the name is repeated) for a watch (i.e. three hours); it is countless (if the name is repeated) for four watches. By keeping awake (just) for a twinkling of the eye (i.e. a moment), and that too especially in front of Viṣṇu, the fruit (obtained) is crorefold; it is countless. The fruit of (i.e. obtained by) the best man who dances in front of Viṣṇu, is never lost from his birth to his death. He should, with his mind free from dejection, wave lights before Viṣṇu, with wonder, energy, without sinful talk etc., accompanied by going round (the deity keeping it to his right) and preceded by a salutation.

19-27a. That man, who devoutly keeps awake on Ekādaśī, which is twenty-sixfold fruitful, is not reborn on the earth. He who thus without egotism born of wealth devoutly keeps awake on Viṣṇu's day, is merged into the supreme soul. That wealthy man who through egotism born of wealth keeps awake, (is) a rogue and a wicked man (and) has indeed lost his soul. He, when the (occasion for) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu has come, ridicules it, is born as an insect in feces (and remains as such) for sixty thousand years. That brāhmaṇa knowing the Vedas who, especially through dancing, indulges in ridicule is called a cāṇḍāla. He who for a moment or half a moment(?) keeps awake, obtains the best position (as far as) righteousness, material welfare and sensual pleasures (are concerned). He who is always devoted to the Vedic and scriptural injunctions and who every day performs sacrifices, goes down (to hell if) he ridicules when keeping awake at night has come (to be practised). He who worshipping me, is given to ridiculing Viṣṇu goes to hell with twenty-one (members of) his family. Viṣṇu is Śiva and Śiva is Viṣṇu. They have the same form, (but) remain (separately) in two forms.

27b-30. Therefore, a man should not in any way ridicule (the vow). Bitten by the serpent of Kali the destroyers of honey sleep by day(?); deluded by illusion they do not at all keep awake. Those to whom Ekādaśī has come (and is passed by them) without keeping themselves awake in the Kali age have perished,

since life is uncertain. There is no doubt about this. He raised the couple of eyes after having given the position of Viṣṇu (*obscure!*). Sinners do not see the awakening done (in honour) of Viṣṇu. In the absence of a public reader of a Purāṇa, he should get done singing and dancing. If there is a public reader, (then) O divine sage, he should first read the Purāṇa.

31-37a. O child, on doing the awakening (in honour) of Viṣṇu, the religious merit (that is obtained) is a crorefold more than that of a horse-sacrifice or a Vājapeya sacrifice. A man having kept awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, emancipates the families on the side of father, on the side of mother and on the wife's side. O brāhmaṇa, on keeping awake in honour of Viṣṇu he emancipates (the members of) his family. On a day of fast that is 'pierced' (i.e. that is mixed with another day) the keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, worshipping him, giving gifts—all this is useless as (a good) turn done to the ungrateful. When keeping awake is begun on such a 'pierced' day—the day of the fast—Viṣṇu leaves that place and goes after giving a curse. Among those who keep awake on a day that is not 'pierced' (i.e. not mixed with another day), Viṣṇu being pleased remains in their midst and dances. For as many days as he keeps awake in front of Viṣṇu for so many yugas he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

37b-41. For as many days as he remains without keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, for those many thousands of years he does not return from (i.e. lives in) Raurava hell. He who on the Ekādaśī day sleeps without keeping awake or who remains like a dumb man and does not practise singing or does not read (the Purāṇa text), has dumbness for seven existences for want of keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, one should know that he who, the foolish one, does not dance in front of Viṣṇu by keeping awake, has lameness for seven existences. But he who sings, dances and keeps awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, gets Brahmā's position, my position and truly that of Viṣṇu (also).

42-50. That devotee of Viṣṇu who (himself) being engaged in keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, enlightens people, would live along with his manes and for a long time in Vaikuṇṭha. The man who gives (others) the idea about keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, would live for sixty thousand years in Śveta Dvīpa. O

brāhmaṇa, all that sin which men commit during crores of existences, perishes during the night on keeping awake (in honour) of Śrīkṛṣṇa. For those who keep awake in front of a Śālagrāma stone the fruit for every watch is said to be that which is had (by keeping awake on) a crore of lunar months. Those who do not keep awake when the day (of the vow) of Viṣṇu has come, their observance of the vow is in vain due to the censure of the devotees. Even by (the performance of) myriads of sacrifices pleasures of senses, wealth, sons, fame, eternal worlds are not obtained without keeping awake on the Dvādaśī (day). He who does not have a mind to keep awake on the Dvādaśī day, has no right to worship Viṣṇu. The number of footsteps of him who goes to Viṣṇu's temple for keeping awake has the merit of an equal number of horse-sacrifices. For as many years a man keeping awake lives in heaven as the number of dust (particles) fallen there on the road from the feet (of those who) walk (along it).

51-58. Therefore, from one's house one should go to Viṣṇu's temple for keeping awake. In the Kali (age) to destroy sins this Dvādaśī is (the best) among Dvādaśīs. Keeping awake is said to be of nine types: Full of censure of others, with the mind void of tranquillity, bereft of sacred precepts, without music, so also without light (to be waved before the image of the deity), without the necessary articles (obtainable) according to one's capacity, indifferent, full of censure, and especially full of quarrels. That keeping awake which is according to the scriptural injunctions, is full of dance and music with musical instruments, with the beating of time in music, with light and honey, is accompanied by proper utterances produced with devotion, is pleasing and causing delight, and amuses the enchanted people—(such) keeping awake having these twelve merits and dear to Viṣṇu should be done with efforts in the bright and the dark halves (of the month). What is the use of observing many vows and living at a sacred place to him who does not keep awake when the twelfth day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu has come? He who even while travelling and though full of perspiration, does not give up keeping awake on the twelfth day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is dear to me, O brāhmaṇa.

59-62a. That devotee of me who deluded by *śin* does not keep awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, has his worship in vain, (as) he would not (i.e. does not) worship him who is venerable to me. He who eats on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is not a devotee of Śiva, is not a worshipper of the Sun, is not a devotee of Śakti, nor the votary of (Śiva's) attendant. He should be known to be inferior to a beast. He, a wicked and sinful person, who eats on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, has, after having resorted to the strength of my devotion, acted disagreeably.

62b-64. His body is wrapped inside and outside with crores of sins. Those who keep awake on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, are freed. He who having kept awake, has observed the vow of Dvādaśī that is not mixed (with another day), has given an elbow to (i.e. has avoided) the messengers of Yama. O best sage, they, expecting (to go to) heaven are undoubtedly freed. (On the contrary) those who observe the vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu on a day mixed (with another day) have longed for happiness in hell.

65-69. He (i.e. such a man) has killed his manes, and has murdered gods; has given (his kingdom to demons by observing the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu which is mixed (with another day). For a man who keeps awake with such dispositions on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, who clapping his hands and with a delighted mind dances, who sings songs with his mouth, manifests (many kinds of) joy, who remaining awake on the night stands before Viṣṇu, reads Kṛṣṇa's accounts, amuses the groups of Viṣṇu's devotees, who with his hair standing on end produces musical sounds from his mouth, presents many kinds of food, and causes (others) to talk freely, the fruit at every moment is said to be the same as got by visiting crores of holy places.

70-74. He who without a dejected mind presents incense and waves lights in front (of the image) of Viṣṇu on the night of keeping awake (i.e. on which he keeps awake) would be the lord of the seven islands (i.e. of the earth). Due to keeping awake on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, all those sins like (the ones due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, perish piece by piece. On one hand are all the sacrifices concluded with (the offering of) excellent presents, and on the other there is keeping awake (in honour) of the god of gods. Which is dear to Viṣṇu? Kāśī,

Puṣkara, Prayāga, Naimiṣa, Gayā, the great holy place of Śāla-grāma, the Arbuda forest, Pauṣkara (i.e. the holy Puṣkara), Mathurā, and all (other) sacred places, so also sacrifices and all the four Vedas go to (i.e. attend) the keeping awake (in honour of) Viṣṇu.

75-78. O best brāhmaṇa, all rivers (like) Gaṅgā, Sarasvatī, Tāpī, Yamunā, Śatadrukā, Candrabhāgā, Vitastā, so also ponds, deep lakes, all seas go there on the Ekādaśī (day for) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. These men desirable to gods, being delighted by the musical instrument like the lute, dance and sing (at the time of) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. In this way having kept awake, having worshipped great Viṣṇu, he should, along with Viṣṇu's devotees, break his fast on the Dvādaśī (day).

Mahādeva said:

79-84. O brāhmaṇa, listen. I shall explain (to you) the excellent importance of Dvādaśī. Dvādaśī should always be known to give sons and to give salvation. Having bathed in the morning, having worshipped Viṣṇu, one should observe a fast. 'O Viṣṇu, by means of this vow of me who am blind due to the darkness of ignorance, be pleased, favour me and give me the sight of knowledge'. Then, after this, he should break fast as is possible for him. After this he should duly get done (proper rites) as desired. O brāhmaṇa, when the Dvādaśī (lasts) shorter for breaking the fast, then he who desires salvation, should break the fast at night. Then there would be no blemish due to (breaking the fast at) night and there would be nothing that is prohibited. He should get the duty done (i.e. should do it) as by day in the first and the next watches of the night, since it is said that a man should not bathe at night and should not eat at midnight.

85-92. When on the day of breaking the fast Dvādaśī lasts for a short time, then he should do both the morning and the mid-day rites in the morning. I am not able to describe the religious merit especially of that man who has always observed Dvādaśī on the earth. Great men having accomplished all desired objects, would obtain (salvation). Those devotees like Ambariṣa and others who are well-known in the world, have gone to Viṣṇu's abode after having observed (the vow of) Dvādaśī.

What I told is the truth, the truth again, viz. that there is no god like Viṣṇu, and no day like Dvādaśī. Whatever is given on this day, whatever is eaten, and the worship etc. (offered on this day)—all that is complete when Viṣṇu is worshipped. What is the use of talking much? Viṣṇu dear to his devotees, gives them all their desired objects till the final destruction of the world. All that is given on the Dvādaśī would become fruitful. Whatever is given on the Kurukṣetra is never fruitless. In the same way, O best sage, whatever is given on Dvādaśī would become like that.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The Origin of Ekādaśī and the Killing of Demon Mura

Mahādeva said:

1. O son, on one occasion I had gone into the proximity of (i.e. to) Viṣṇu. There I first asked (him) about the importance of Dvādaśī, having heard which all sages having enjoyed pleasures went to heaven.

Nārada said:

2. O Mahādeva, of what kind would be the great (vow of the) Mahādvādaśī? O lord, O ruler of all, what kind of fruit (would one get) by observing it.

Śiva said:

3-17a. O brāhmaṇa, this Ekādaśī gives the fruit (in the form) of great religious merit. It should be observed by the best sages when it is in conjunction with (certain) constellations. Jayā, Vijayā, Jayantī and Pāpanāśinī—all these destroy sins. They should be observed by those who desire (certain) fruits. When, in the bright half (of the month), the star Punarvasu (i.e. the seventh lunar mansion) appears on the Ekādaśī day, that is called Jayā, and it is the best of days. Having observed a fast on that day a man is freed from a sin. There is no doubt about this. When, in the bright half (of the month), the star Śravaṇa

(i.e. the twentysecond lunar mansion) appears on the Dvādaśī day, that is called Vijayā and it is the best of days. Gift given on that day becomes thousandfold (in religious merit); so also food given to brāhmaṇas (becomes like that). In the same way a sacrifice (performed) or a fast (observed on that day) gives more than a thousandfold fruit. When on the Dvādaśī in the bright half Rohiṇī (i.e. the fourth lunar mansion) appears, that is called Jayantī. That day removes also sins. Viṣṇu worshipped on that day certainly washes sins, small or great, committed during (previous) seven existences. When on the Dvādaśī in the bright half Puṣya (i.e. the eighth lunar mansion) appears, then that will be the very meritorious Pāpanāśinī. (The religious merit of him) who every day gives a prastha of sesamum-seeds (to a brāhmaṇa) for the (whole) year, and (the religious merit of him) who observes a fast on that day (i.e. on the Pāpanāśinī) are said to be equal. Viṣṇu, the lord of all, the lord of the world, being pleased, appears actually (i.e. in person) only, and endless fruit is said (to be obtained by him who observes a fast) on that (day). Viṣṇu who was won over and worshipped on that (day) by Sagara, Kakutstha and Nahuṣa, gave (them) everything on the earth. There is no doubt that he (who observes a fast on that day) is freed from the sin due to speech, mental sin or especially bodily sin committed during the seven (previous) existences. A man having fasted on that (Pāpanāśinī) alone, which is joined with the star Puṣya, obtains the fruit of (having fasted on) a thousand Ekādaśīs. Whatever like a bath, (giving a) gift, muttering (of hymns), a sacrifice, self-study, worship of a deity, is done on that day is said to give an inexhaustible fruit.

17b-18. Therefore, those who desire the fruit (like salvation) should observe (a fast on) this (day) carefully. When Yudhiṣṭhira had the ablution after the fifth horse-sacrifice, he, the religious-minded one, asked Kṛṣṇa, the scion of the Yadu family:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

19. O lord, O Janārdana, tell me all that, viz. what religious merit or what fruit (is obtained) by observing a fast on eating only at night or eating once (a day).

The lord said:

20-27a. In the cold season, when the auspicious month of Mārgaśīrṣa has come, a man should fast on that Dvādaśī which (comes) in the dark half, O son of Pṛthā (i.e. O son of Kuntī, O Yudhiṣṭhira). Knowing what 'nakta' is, a man, with a pure heart and of a firm vow, eating (only) once on the tenth, and being controlled, (should eat) during the eighth part of the day when the Sun is feeble (i.e. is setting). That should be known as 'nakta'. 'Nakta' is not eating only at night. Nakta is enjoined for a householder before the stars appear (in the sky). The nakta for an ascetic is eating only in the eighth part of the day. Eating at night is prohibited for him. Then, O Yudhiṣṭhira, he who has taken the vow, should make the religious observance in the morning, so also in the mid-day, and being pure, should bathe. Bathing in a temporary well is the lowest; bathing in a well is of a middling quality. Bathing in a tank is excellent. Bathing in a river is still better. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sin and the religious merit are equal when a bath is taken in the water where living beings are troubled. Bathing at home is excellent, and the water should purify (him). Therefore, O best (or eldest) of the Pāṇḍavas, a man should bathe in his house.

27b-32. (At that time he should pray:) 'O you earth, that are stepped over by horses, gone over by chariots and by Viṣṇu, remove the sin that has been collected by me in (my) former (existence)'. He should give up anger and greed. He should think of one thing only, and be of a firm vow. He should not talk to a Śūdra, so also to heretics, so also to those given to lying, so also to those who censure brāhmaṇas, and to others of bad behaviour, to those who take away others' wealth, and to those who are adulterers. Having worshipped Viṣṇu, he should make articles of food offered; and with a devoted mind he should offer lights in the house. O Pārtha, on that day he should avoid sleep and sexual union. He should pass the entire day in recreation by means of sacred texts.

33-39. O best king, he, being full of devotion, should keep awake during the night, should give presents to brāhmaṇas, and should, after having saluted them, apologise to them. He should get observed (i.e. observe) the Ekādaśī (vow) during the bright

half as during the dark half (of the month). He should not differentiate between (the two Ekādaśīs). Listen to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who does like this. A man, after bathing at Śamkhoddhāra and after seeing (the image of) god Viṣṇu, does not deserve (i.e. obtain) even the sixteenth part (of the merit) of fasting on an Ekādaśī day. O best king, a man who gives four lakhs (of coins) on the days of the passage of the Sun from one Zodiacal sign to another, does not deserve (i.e. obtain) even the sixteenth part (of the merit) of fasting on an Ekādaśī day. Indeed he who observes a fast on an Ekādaśī day, gets the same fruit as the religious merit that is due to (the bath) during the lunar eclipse or the solar eclipse at the holy place Prabhāsa. Rebirth is not had by him after he has drunk water at Kedāra. In the same way, O Yudhiṣṭhira, it removes staying in a womb.

40-48. The religious merit that he who observes a fast on an Ekādaśī day gets, is a hundredfold more than the fruit that he would get from a horse-sacrifice on the earth. The religious merit of him who fasts on an Ekādaśī day is a hundred times more than the religious merit he would obtain by giving a thousand cows to (a brāhmaṇa) who has mastered the Vedas. Those who fast on the Ekādaśī day are equal to those in whose bodies live the three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Those who are devotees (of Viṣṇu) and who worship Viṣṇu, are those who perform virtuous deeds. So also the religious merit of (i.e. due to) the vow of Ekādaśī cannot be counted. This would be its religious merit which is difficult to be obtained even by gods. Half the religious merit of this is obtained even through eating at night only. Men would have half the religious merit of this through eating once (a day). Sacred places, gifts, restraints roar till that time till a living being (i.e. a human being) would not fast on a day dear to Viṣṇu. Therefore, O best Pāṇḍava, observe this vow. O Pāṇḍava, I do not know the quantity of religious merit (about) which you are asking me. O Pāṇḍava, I have narrated to you the excellent vow, which should be kept secret. Even the performance of a thousand sacrifices is not equal to the Ekādaśī (vow).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

49. O god, how has this auspicious Ekādaśī day come up? How is it pure in the universe and how is it dear to deities?

The lord said:

50-54. O Pārtha, formerly in the Kṛta-age there was a demon by name Mura. He was very wonderful, very fierce and caused fear to all gods. O king, even Indra, and so also other gods were vanquished by that death(-like), great, wicked demon. Driven out of the heaven they roamed on the earth. With uncertainty and full of fear, all of them went to the great god, and Indra told everything to the great lord (i.e. Śiva). (He said:) “O great god, the gods fallen from the heaven are roaming on the earth and they who are staying among the mortals, do not shine (at all). O god, tell me the remedy. What course do (i.e. should) the gods follow?”

Mahādeva said:

55-58. O You best among gods, O lord of gods, go there where he, the eagle-bannered (god), the lord of the world, the protector, and the best resort dwells. O best among gods, he will protect you.

O Yudhiṣṭhira, on having heard the words of the lord, the very intelligent king of the gods went there along with the gods. Seeing the god, the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) sleeping in the water, Indra joined the palms of his hands, uttered (this hymn of praise):

Indra said:

59-65. Salutation to you, O lord of the gods, O you who are saluted by gods and demons, O you enemy of the demons, O you lotus-eyed one, O Madhusūdana, protect us. O lord of the world, all gods frightened by the demon (Mura) have come to seek your refuge. O you to whom your devotees are dear, protect me. O lord of gods, protect us; O Janārdana, protect us, protect us. O you lotus-eyed one, O you destroyer of the demons, protect us. We all have approached you. You alone are our refuge, O lord. O lord, help the gods who have sought your shelter. O god, you are the master; you are the intellect; you are the agent; you are the cause. You are the mother of all the people. You are the father of the world. O holy one, O

lord of gods, O you who love those who seek your shelter; the deities that are frightened, have sought your refuge. O lord, all the deities have been vanquished. All of them have been expelled from heaven by the very fierce and very vigorous demon named Mura.

Hearing the words of Indra, Viṣṇu said (these words):

The lord said:

66. O Indra, of what kind is the demon? Of what form is he? Of what kind is his might? Where is the place of that wicked one? What is his strength? What is his valour? What is precious about him? O you very intelligent one, tell me (that).

Indra said:

67-75. O lord of gods, formerly there was a very fierce, great demon named Tālajaṅgha (who was) born in the family of Brahmā. His son, the demon Mura, was well-known. He was very mighty, very powerful and fearful to gods. (There was) a city by name Candrāvati. He lived in that place. He vanquished all gods, and expelled them from heaven. He installed another Indra (as the chief of gods), so also (another) Vāyu and (another) Agni. He fashioned other (i.e. new) Moon and Sun, so also Vāyu and Varuṇa. He took possession of everything. O Janārdana, (this is) the truth, (the only) truth. He made the world of gods bereft of all holy places.

Hearing these words of him (i.e. of Indra), the angry Viṣṇu (said): “I shall kill the wicked demon, fearful to the gods.” Then the god, along with (other) gods went to the city of Candrāvati. The gods saw the demon roaring repeatedly. He vanquished all gods. They went in the ten directions. Seeing Viṣṇu the demon said: “Wait, wait.” The lord, with his eyes red due to anger, said to him:

The lord said:

76-84. O demon, O you of a bad conduct, see (the power of) my arm.

Then all the wicked demons that were before him were struck

by Viṣṇu with divine arrows. They were overcome with fear. O Pāṇḍava, Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) discharged his disc against the forces of the demon. Hundreds (of demons) were cut off by it, and many died. Only one demon fought there repeatedly. He made all the gods flee and vanquished Viṣṇu. Then (of him who was) vanquished by the demon, a close fight with the demon took place. He fought that close fight for a thousand divine years. Viṣṇu became thoughtful. All gods had fled. Viṣṇu was vanquished. He went to Badarikāśrama. There was a cave named Simhavatī. Viṣṇu slept there (i.e. in it). O Pāṇḍava, it was twelve yojanas (in length) and had one door (only). He entered it and slept (there). The demon was bent on killing him.¹ He was tired due to that great battle, (and had slept there) through his divine power. The demon pursued him.² He then entered that cave. Seeing him (i.e. seeing Viṣṇu) asleep there, the demon was delighted. Thinking Viṣṇu to have been vanquished like this and to have been entered (i.e. overpowered) by fear, (he thought :) 'I shall undoubtedly kill him, the cause of fear to the demons.'

85-90. O Yudhiṣṭhira, then a maiden came out of Viṣṇu's body. She was beautiful, very auspicious, and had divine missiles and weapons. She, of a great might and valour, came up from a portion of his lustre. O Dhanañjaya, she was seen by that lord of demons, Mura by name. He directed a fight there. The maiden also had asked for it. The maiden skilled in all (kinds of) battle, fought there. The great demon by name Mura was reduced to ash due to (her) huṃkāra sound. When the demon was killed, the god (Viṣṇu) woke up. Seeing the demon fallen (dead) he was amazed: 'who has killed this fierce and very cruel enemy of me? (That person) has done a very ferocious deed through compassion for me.'

The maiden said:

91-93a. He having conquered gods, gandharvas, yakṣas and goblins, so also Indra and others, expelled them from heaven. I saw Viṣṇu asleep, and Mura had pursued him. (I thought :) 'He will destroy the three worlds when Viṣṇu is asleep.'

1. and 2. *mām* appears to be a wrong word here. It should have been *tam*.

Hearing those words of her, Viṣṇu, spoke (these) words:
 “How is it that you vanquished him too who had defeated me?”

Ekādaśī said:

93b. O lord, due to your favour I killed the great demon.

The lord said:

94. In the three worlds sages and deities are delighted. O auspicious one, tell me what you like in your mind (i.e. what your mind likes). There is no doubt that I shall give it even if it is very difficult to be obtained by gods.

Ekādaśī said:

95-96. If O god, you are pleased, and if you have told the truth, O Janārdana, I desire one boon in (i.e. from) my heart, O lord of the world. O lord of gods, I shall ask for what is desired by me. O lord, O master of the world, if (your offer is) true, then give me three utterances (i.e. repeat your offer thrice).

The lord said:

97. O you of a good vow, I have certainly spoken the truth, I have made three utterances (i.e. I have repeated my promise three times). Now there would be no absence of promise (i.e. the promise will not be false).

Ekādaśī said:

98-101. O lord of gods, do for me what is proper in the three worlds, in the four ages and everywhere in the three worlds. Through your favour I shall be the chief of all sacred places, the destroyer of all difficulties, and one who brings about all (kinds of) well-being. If, O lord, you are pleased with me, then, may they who through devotion (for me) and devotion for you, fast on my day, have all (kinds) of well-being. O Viṣṇu, give wealth, righteousness and salvation to him who observes a fast or a *nakta* or who eats once a day (on the day sacred to me).

Viṣṇu said:

102-110. O auspicious one, all that you say will take place. O good one, you will grant all desires. (This will) not be other-

wise. My devotees who in the world will observe the Ekādaśī vow and worship me in Kārtika will undoubtedly obtain salvation.

O lord, the Ekādaśī is famous in the four ages and the three worlds. I look upon you as a power. The third, the eighth, the ninth, the fourteenth, and especially this eleventh are dear to Viṣṇu. (A man who observes the Ekādaśī vow gets) religious merit more than (obtained) from all the sacred places. This is true, undoubtedly true. He gave this vow to her repeating it thrice. There was no doubt about it. The Ekādaśī of a great vow became glad and strong. 'You will kill his (i.e. the observer's) enemy. You will give him the highest position. You, giving (all kinds of) welfare, will remove all difficulties. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the Ekādaśī of both the fortnights is equal (in merit) and is auspicious. A man should not differentiate between the bright and the dark (Ekādaśī of the bright half and that of the dark half). He should devoutly listen to (pious accounts) by day or at night. For both the fortnights the same day (i.e. Ekādaśī) would be the full (day). At the sunrise the Ekādaśī day is little (i.e. is in a small part). At the end of the vow is the Trayodaśī (i.e. the thirteenth day).

111-114a. In between (the two) there is the full Dvādaśī (i.e. the twelfth day). Thus that (Ekādaśī-vow) which touches (these) three (days) is dear to Viṣṇu. If a man fasts on one (Ekādaśī he would get the) fruit of (having observed) a thousand Ekādaśīs. This would be thousandfold if the fast is broken on Dvādaśī. Aṣṭamī, Ekādaśī, Śaṣṭhī, Tṛtīyā and Caturdaśī, mixed with the previous day, should not be observed (as fast days). A man should observe (a fast on any one of these) when mixed with the next day. If the Ekādaśī lasts for a day and night and would continue for a ghaṭikā in the (next) morning, that day should be avoided. That Ekādaśī, along with Dvādaśī, should be fasted on.

114b-118. Thus, I have told you about the Ekādaśī falling in both the fortnights. There is no doubt that a man should observe a fast on the Ekādaśī day. They (i.e. who observe this fast) go to the place of Viṣṇu where the eagle-bannered (god Viṣṇu) dwells. Those men who are absorbed in devotion for Viṣṇu are blessed in the world. That man who would at all

times recite the importance of the Ekādaśī(-vow), obtains the religious merit which is the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. There is no doubt that those who devoutly listen to it by day or at night are freed from the sins of killing a brāhmaṇa etc. O best king, the (exposition of) the significance of the Gītā is not equal to devotion to Viṣṇu. There is no other vow like that of the Ekādaśī, that destroys sins.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

The Importance of the Mokṣadā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. I salute Viṣṇu who is actually the lord, who gives happiness to the three worlds, who is the lord of the universe, the author of everything, the ancient Puruṣottama. O lord of gods, I ask (because) I have a great doubt (and also) for the well-being of the world and for the destruction of sins. O master, tell me in detail and properly, about the manner in which that Ekādaśī¹ which would fall in the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, is observed and which deity is worshipped (on that day).

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

4-17. O king, you have asked well. Your spotless fame is excellent. O lord of kings, I shall tell you about the excellent day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. The Dvādaśī that has come up in the dark half of Mārgaśīrṣa is dear to me. (This one) called Mārgaśīrṣa-utpatti has sprung up from my body. O best among

1. From this chapter onwards the Ekādaśīs falling in each of the two fortnights of a month are described. The months are said to end with the full-moon day.

To the north of the Narmadā, a month is generally considered to end with the full-moon day, while in other parts of the country, the month is supposed to end with the new-moon day. The bright half is the same. That half of the month which is the dark half of Caitra according to the practice followed to the north of Narmadā, is the dark half of the Vaiśākha month in other parts of the country.

the Bharatas, it has sprung up for killing the gods (?) and demons. O best king, I have told about it to you. The day previous (to this) in the dark half of the (month of) Mārgaśīrṣa is called Utpatti Ekādeśī in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Hereafter I shall describe the one that falls in the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, by hearing about which a man would obtain the fruit of the Vājapeya (sacrifice). It is great, is called by the name Mokṣadā and removes all sins. A man should carefully worship Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu, on this day), O king. (He should worship Viṣṇu) carefully with the Tulasī-sprouts, according to the manner (told) before. This Ekādaśī (having on that day a portion of) Daśamī also, is called Mokṣā (i.e. Mokṣadā) Ekādaśī. It destroys great sins. At night he should keep awake with dances, songs and my eulogies. O king, listen. I shall tell you a divine, ancient story, by merely hearing which all sins would perish. There is no doubt that due to the religious merit that it gives, the (dead) forefathers (of a man) that have, due to (their) sins, gone to (i.e. born in) a mean stock, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. In the city (called) Campaka which was adorned with Viṣṇu's devotees, there (lived) a king Vaikhānasa by name. He would (i.e. he did) look after his subjects like his own sons. (In the city) lived many brāhmaṇas who had mastered the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. The subjects of that king Vaikhānasa were prosperous. O king, he was ruling over his kingdom like this. He (once) saw at night in a dream his own forefathers gone to a mean stock. He, seeing all of them like this, with his mind full of amazement, told the account that took place in the dream to brāhmaṇas.

The king said:

18-23. O brāhmaṇas, I saw my forefathers gone to hell, and saying to me: "O you born of our bodies, emancipate us from this ocean of hell." I saw them speaking like this and weeping repeatedly, O best brāhmaṇas. Due to this I am unhappy. This great kingdom does not give me pleasure. O brāhmaṇas, I am not pleased with all the horses and the elephants. O best brāhmaṇas, my wife and sons do not please me. What do (i.e. should) I do? O best brāhmaṇas, tell me about that vow, that practice of penance, by means of which my

ancestors will go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. What is the fruit (i.e. use) of that son who is living richly, who is mighty and magnanimous, when his father lives in a fearful hell?’

The brāhmaṇas said:

24-29. The great hermitage of the sage Parvata who knows the past and the future, is nearby. O best king, go to that hermitage.

Then hearing (these) words of them, the great king Vaikhānasa quickly went to the hermitage of Parvata. The king was surrounded by brāhmaṇas and accompanied by (other) kings. The best king reached his (i.e. Parvata’s) extensive hermitage. Having seen the best sage like another Brahmā, surrounded by sages well-versed in the study of Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda, king Vaikhānasa saluted the sage (by prostrating before him) in the manner of a staff and touched his feet. The sage asked him about the welfare of the seven constituent¹ parts of the kingdom, so also about the absence of trouble in the kingdom and the king’s happiness.

The king said:

30-38. O master, by your favour there is well-being in the seven constituent parts of my kingdom. How can those who are devoted to Viṣṇu and brāhmaṇas, have (any) difficulty? I saw in a dream my ancestors living in hell. O master, I have come to you to clear the doubt, O best brāhmaṇa, as to which religious merit will give them salvation. O best sage, some remedy should be adopted in this case.

Having heard these words from him, Parvata, the best sage, the ascetic, resembling Brahmā, fixed his eyes in meditation. Remaining in meditation for a short time, he replied to the king: “O lord of kings, I have understood the former acts of your ancestors. In his previous existence, your father, a kṣatriya, was proud of his kingdom. Prompted by his royal duty and

1. Saptāṅgāni: The seven constituents of a kingdom are: the king, the minister, the allies, the treasury, the territory, the fortress, and the army.

seeking to gain his object, he, leaving his wife behind in the time favourable for conception, went to a village. Your father did not give her (what should be given to his wife) during the period favourable for conception (i.e. did not copulate with her). As a result of that sin, O best king, your father, along with your ancestors, fell into a very terrible hell.” After that king Vaikhānasa again said to the sage: “O sage, by the power of which vow would they have salvation?”

The sage said :

39-47. In the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa there is the Mokṣā (or *Mokṣadā Ekādaśī*). All should observe this vow, and (its) religious merit should be given to a (dead) father (i.e. ancestor). By the efficacy of that religious merit they will have salvation. O glorious one, this is true since it is the statement of Brahmā.

Having heard the words of the sage he again came back to his house. And then the month of Mārgaśīrṣa also came. King Vaikhānasa, having observed the vow with effort, gave, along with all, its religious merit to his father. When the religious merit was given, just in a moment, shower of flowers occurred from the sky; and Vaikhānasa's father, along with his ancestors, entered (i.e. obtained) salvation. And from the sky he (i.e. the father) spoke (these) auspicious words: “O son, may it be well with you, may it be well with you.” Speaking thus he went to heaven. O king, the sins of him who observes the auspicious (vow of) the Mokṣā (i.e. Mokṣadā) Ekādaśī, perish, and after death he would obtain salvation. There cannot be any Ekādaśī superior to this one, that would give (one) salvation. O king, I do not know the measure of religious merit (it gives). O king, this is the vow of him who does good to me. This (vow) is like the desire-yielding gem. It gives salvation to men. A man would get the fruit (of the performance) of a Vājapeya sacrifice by reading about and listening to it.

CHAPTER FORTY

*Saphalā Ekādaśī**Yudhiṣṭhira said:*

1. Which Ekādaśī would take place (i.e. fall) in the dark half of Pauṣa? What is the name and the manner of observing it? Tell this to me in detail, O master; tell me which deity is worshipped on that day.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-14. O lord of kings, due to the bond of affection (between us) I shall tell (it to you). O king, I am not so much pleased with sacrifice in which profuse gifts are given, as I am pleased with the Ekādaśī-vow. Therefore, with all efforts, the day of Viṣṇu should be observed (as the day of vow). O you famous among the most religious, this is true, not false. On the Ekādaśī day falling in the dark half of Pauṣa and called Saphalā, a man should duly worship god Viṣṇu. This auspicious Ekādaśī should be observed in the same manner as told before. O king, as Śeṣa is (the best) of the serpents, as (Garuḍa) the eater of serpents is (the best) of the birds, as Viṣṇu is (the best) of the deities, as brāhmaṇa is (the best) of the bipeds, so the day of Ekādaśī is the best of the vows. O king, those men who are devoted to the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, and observe the vow of Ekādaśī, are always venerable to me. They are united with wealth here (i.e. in this world) only, and after death they obtain salvation. O king, on (the day of) the Saphalā (Ekādaśī) a man should worship Viṣṇu by uttering his (various) names, with coconuts, betel-nuts, citron-fruits, jambīra-fruits, pomegranates, and auspicious dhātrī-fruits, so also with cloves, badari-fruits and especially with mangoes. So also he should worship the lord of gods with incense and lights. Especially on the Saphalā (day) he should cause to be given (i.e. should give) the present of lights. He should keep awake along with Viṣṇu's devotees during (that) night. O king, listen to the religious merit of him, of a concentrated mind, who keeps awake during that night (just) for (the time of) the twinkling of an eye. No sacrifice is equal to that. There is

no sacred place like that. All (other) vows do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to even) the sixteenth part (of the Saphalā-vow), O lord of kings.

15-23. He who thus keeps awake, gets the fruit which cannot be obtained by (practising) penance for thousands of years. Obest king, listen to the auspicious account of the Saphalā. There was a city of (i.e. belonging to) Māhiṣmata well-known as Campāvatī. That royal sage had five young sons. Of them the eldest was always engaged in (committing) sins. He was an adulterer, fond of prostitutes and a drunkard. The sinner spent his father's money in that only. He was always engaged in bad behaviour and censured brāhmaṇas. He always censured Viṣṇu's devotees and deities. Noticing his son to be like this, king Māhiṣmata called him, among the sons, by the name Lumpaka (i.e. a robber). His father and brothers expelled him from the kingdom. He was thus abandoned like an obstructor by the attendants also. Lumpaka also, who was abandoned like that, then thought: 'I have indeed been expelled from the kingdom by my kinsmen and my father.' Thinking like this he set his heart on (committing) sins. 'I must go to a fearful, dense forest; and from it I shall plunder the entire city of my father.'

24-31a. Thinking like this, Lumpaka, by a lucky coincidence, went out of that city, and went into that dense forest. He was always engaged in killing living beings. He was the treasure of the arts of stealing and gambling. That sinner plundered the entire city. He, moving in the city for stealing, was arrested by night-stalkers. To them he said: "I am the son of king Māhiṣmata." He who committed sinful deeds was released by them, and again came (back) to the forest. He was fond of to (eating) flesh and fruits. Near that wicked man there was the abode of Viṣṇu. There was an old Aśvattha tree (standing there) for many years. The tree had great divineness in the forest. That Lumpaka, of a sinful mind, living just there, ate, after many days had passed, fruits of trees due to some collection of (his) religious merit on the tenth day of the dark half of Pauṣa.

31b-38. Lumpaka who was the most sinful, was oppressed by heat. He was without clothes and lost his sight. Being oppressed by severe cold, he did not enjoy the pleasure of sleep near that tree of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. He was as "it were dead.

Covering his mouth (i.e. his lips) with his teeth, he passed the entire night. Even at sunrise, the most sinful one did not (re-) gain consciousness. (Thus) Lumpaka remained unconscious on that day of Saphalā. When the Sun was in the middle (of the sky) that Lumpaka got (back) consciousness. He looked here and there; was pained; and tumbling from his seat, he again and again walked like a lame man with his feet. He went into the middle part (i.e. the interior) of the forest, was emaciated by hunger and was oppressed. That Lumpaka, of a wicked mind, did not have strength to kill a living being. O king, at that time that Lumpaka did not obtain fruits. When he came there, the Sun had set. 'O pity, what will happen (to me)?' Like this he wailed. There, at the root of the tree he placed many fruits and said:

39-44a. "May Viṣṇu be pleased with these fruits." Having spoken like this Lumpaka did not get sleep on (that) night. Viṣṇu regarded his (sleeplessness as) keeping awake at night (in his honour), and took the placing of fruits as being worshipped with fruits (on the day) of Saphalā. That Lumpaka observed this vow accidentally only. By the power of that religious merit he obtained the kingdom free from troubles. Till it was sunrise, Viṣṇu went to heaven. At that time a divine voice was heard: "By the favour of Saphalā, O son, you will obtain the kingdom." When he said "All right", he became one of a divine form. O king, he had a great inclination towards Viṣṇu.

44b-49. He, rich with divine ornaments, obtained the kingdom which was free from trouble. He ruled over the kingdom for fifteen years. By the favour of Kṛṣṇa he had charming sons and a (charming) wife. Having quickly abandoned his kingdom and having given it to his son, he went to Kṛṣṇa's proximity, going where a man does not meet with grief. O king, he who observes the excellent vow of Saphalā in this way, gets happiness in this world, and after death would obtain salvation. Those men who are engrossed in (the vow of) Saphalā, are blessed. Their existence is fruitful. No doubt should be raised about this. A man, by reciting, listening to and observing the (vow of Saphalā) obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya-sacrifice, O king.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Putradā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O Kṛṣṇa, you have told (me about) the auspicious (vow of) the Saphalā Ekādaśī. Favour me and tell me about the one that would fall in the bright fortnight (of the month of Pauṣa). What is its name? What is the manner of it (i.e. in which way is it) to be observed ? Which is the deity that is propitiated on that (day)? With whom are you, Puruṣottama himself, pleased?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

3-12. O king, listen, I shall tell (you about) the one that would fall in the bright half (of Pauṣa). O great king, with a desire for the good of the people, I shall tell about it. O king, it is to be carefully observed in the manner (as told) before. Its name is Putradā. It is great, and removes all sins. Its superintending deity is Viṣṇu. He gives (all) desired objects and all prosperity. No greater (vow) than this (exists) in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Viṣṇu makes a man possessed with knowledge and makes him successful. O king, listen. I shall tell you an auspicious tale that removes sins. Formerly there lived king Suketumat in the city of Bhadrāvati. His queen was Campakā by name. The sonless king passed his time in (entertaining) desires. The king did not obtain a son who would continue his line. Then the king thought of righteous deeds for a long time. 'What should I do? Where should I go? How can I have a son?' King Suketumat did not derive pleasure from his kingdom or his city. Every day, along with his chaste wife, he became unhappy. The couple was always full of anxiety and grief. His (dead) ancestors drank lukewarm water offered by him. 'We do not see anybody who will gratify us after the king'. Thinking like this his manes were unhappy.

13-19a. The king did not find pleasure in his kinsmen, allies, ministers, friends, so also elephants, horses and foot-soldiers. Despondency always prevailed in the king's mind. 'A man who is without a son does not get the fruit of his existence. The house of a sonless person is always desolate. His heart is always

unhappy. Without a son freedom from the debt of (one's) ancestors, deities and men is not possible. Therefore, with all efforts a man should produce a son. Those with religious merit, in whose house a son would be born, get success in this world, and an auspicious position in the next world. In the house of those men who practise righteous deeds long life, (good) health, and wealth prevail. O king, (these) cannot be had without religious merit and devotion to Viṣṇu. I think that sons are certainly the wealth (of a person).'

19b-31. Thinking like this the king did not get happiness. King Suketumat thought (like this) in the early morning and at night. He thought of destroying himself. Then the king, seeing misfortune in (i.e. due to) suicide, saw his body fallen and his sonlessness. Then according to his intellect, he saw (i.e. thought about) his welfare. Then the king mounted upon a horse, went to a dense forest. The family-priest and others did not know (that) the king had gone. In the dense forest resorted to by beasts and birds, the king roamed, observing the forest-trees like vāṭa, aśvattha, bilva, kharjūra, and panasa, so also bakula, sapta-parṇa, tinduka, and tila. The king also saw (trees like) śāla, tamāla and sarala. (He also saw) trees like iṅgudī, kakubha, śleṣmātaka, sallaka, karamarda, pāṭala and badara also. He also saw aśoka (trees), palāśa (trees), wolves, hares, wild cats, buffaloes, porcupines and camara (deer). The king saw serpents that had half come out from the ant-hills, and wild intoxicated elephants with their young ones. (He saw) lords of herds having four tusks and accompanied by the female elephants and herds. Seeing the elephants of him, the king thought: 'The lord moving among them obtained great beauty.' The king observed the forest full of great wonders. Hearing on his way the cries of jackals and of owls, and seeing various bears and deer, he roamed in the forest.

32-36a. In this way the king saw the forest. When the Sun had gone to the middle (of the sky), he being oppressed with hunger and thirst, ran here and there. The king with his throat and neck dry thought: 'What deed have I done (by which) I have met with such grief? With sacrifices and worships I have pleased the deities. I have pleased brāhmaṇas with gifts and desired meals. I have always greatly looked after my subjects

like my (own) son. Due to what have I met with this great, terrible distress?' The king who was thinking like this, went ahead in the forest.

36b-42. By the efficacy of his good deeds, he saw an excellent lake. It was being touched by (i.e. had the contact of) fish. It looked very beautiful due to lotuses. It also looked beautiful with ducks, ruddy geese and royal swans. It was full of many alligators, fishes and other aquatic animals. The fortunate king saw many hermitages of sages near the lake, along with many omens suggesting auspiciousness. His right eye throbbed. So also his right hand, indicating auspicious fruit, throbbed. Seeing on its lake sages muttering Vedic prayers in an undertone, the king stood in front of the sages. The king saluted separately (i.e. individually) the sages of praise-worthy vows by joining the palms of his hands and repeatedly prostrating before them in the manner of a staff. The sages also said (to him): "O king, we are pleased with you."

The king said:

43. Who are you here? Tell me what your names are. Why have you assembled here? Tell the truth to me.

The sages said:

44-45. O king, we are Viśvedevāḥ.¹ We have come here for a bath. Māgha has come near (i.e. will commence) on the fifth day from today. O king, today is Ekādaśī called Putradā. Viṣṇu gives a son to those who observe this (Ekādaśī), O king.

The king said:

46. I have a great uncertainty about producing a son. If you are pleased, then give me a son.

The sages said:

47-53. O king, today only it is the Ekādaśī called Putradā. Do this well-known vow, which is the best (vow). O lord of

1. Viśvedevāḥ: Name of a particular group of deities, ten in number, and supposed to be sons of Viśvā. Their names are: Vasu, Satya, *Kratu, Dakṣa Kāla, Kāma, Dhṛti, Kuru, Purūravas, and Mādravas.

kings, after ablution and by the favour of us and of Viṣṇu, you will certainly have a son.

By these words of them, and the advice of the sages, the king observed the excellent vow which is (that of) Putradā, according to the (proper) rules. Having broken his fast on Dvādaśī the king came home. Then the queen conceived. At the time of her delivery a bright son was born. By means of his righteous deeds he pleased his father. He became a king (later). Therefore, O king, the excellent vow of Putradā should be observed. I told it to you for the good of the people. Those who, with a concentrated mind, observe this Putradā vow, obtain sons in this world and after death go to heaven. O king, by reciting and listening to it, a man would obtain the fruit of (having performed) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

The Vow of Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. Very nice, O Kṛṣṇa, O Jagannātha, O first god, O lord of the world. Be pleased, and tell me. Show favour to me. Which would be the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Māgha? What is the manner in which it is to be observed? Tell me this in detail.

The lord said:

3-4. O best king, listen. That Ekādaśī which would fall in the dark half of Māgha is known as Ṣaṭtilā and destroys all sins. Listen to the auspicious, sin-removing account of Ṣaṭtilā, which the best sage Pulastya narrated to Dālabhya.

Dālabhya said:

5-7. O brāhmaṇa, tell that truly (to me) how those living beings who have come to the mortal world, who commit sins, and are having various sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, who take away others' wealth, who are deluded by great addictions,

do not go to hell. O glorious one, (please) tell me (how) sin perishes (even) by means of some small gift.

Pulastya said:

8-15a. Very nice, very nice, O you illustrious one, this is a secret, very difficult to be had. I shall tell it, O best brāhmaṇa, as I am asked by you, which is not told to anyone by deities like Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Indra. When the month of Māgha has arrived, a man being pure after bath, and with his senses curbed, and without lust, anger, pride, jealousy, greed and wickedness, having remembered the gods, having washed his feet with water, should take the cowdung fallen on the ground, scatter sesamum-seeds, cotton and should get fashioned balls one hundred and eight (in number). No doubt should be raised in this matter. Then when the month of Māgha has come, and if the Āṣāḍha star appears (in the sky) or if it is the beginning of the dark half, he should observe the restraints of Ekādaśī at an auspicious time. Listen to the manner (as) I (tell you). Having worshipped the god of gods, having bathed well, being restrained and pure, he should, by fasting on the Ekādaśī day, recite the names of Kṛṣṇa. He should keep awake at night, and should get performed a sacrifice first.

15b-20a. Again on the second day he should worship Viṣṇu, the lord of the lordly gods. Along with sandal, agaru, and camphor, he should offer eatables and a mixture of rice and peas with a few spices. Then remembering the lord by (uttering) his name, he should repeatedly offer to (the deity) called Kṛṣṇa respectful offering full of pumpkin gourds, coconuts or citrons. In the absence of all (these) (he should make the respectful offering) with betel-nuts, after properly worshipping Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). “O Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, you are kind. Be the refuge of those who have no refuge. O Viṣṇu, favour them who are plunged in the ocean of mundane existence. Salutation to you, O lotus-eyed one; salutation to you, the creator of all; salutation to you, O Subrahmaṇya, O ancestor of great men. O lord of the world, accept, along with Lakṣmī, this offering, which is made by me.” (This is) the hymn recited at the time of making a respectful offering. O brāhmaṇa, after that he should worship (the deity)

and should cause to be given (to it) an earthen pitcher along with an umbrella, sandals and garments. (He should say:)

20b-23. “May Kṛṣṇa be pleased with me.” A dark cow should be given according to his capacity to the best brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, he, expert in recognizing a worthy recipient, should give him a pot full of sesamum seeds. O sage, the black sesamum seeds are recommended for bath and food. He should with effort give them to the best brāhmaṇa according to his capacity. For as many thousands of years as many sprouts from the sesamum seeds are there in the field, he is honoured in heaven. These six uses of sesamum seeds destroy sins: bathing with the sesamum seeds (i.e. with water mixed with them), rubbing (one’s body) with sesamum seeds, offering a sacrifice with sesamum seeds, offering water with sesamum seeds, giving sesamum seeds, and eating them.

Nārada (Yudhiṣṭhira?) said:

24-25. O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, O you of mighty arms, O you the creator of everything, salutation to you. What kind of fruit is due to the Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī? Tell it to me, O Yādava, along with an episode, if you are pleased with me.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

26-32. O king, listen to what I saw as it took place. O Nārada(?), in the mortal world formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa woman. She was always engaged in observing vows and was always engrossed in worshipping deities. She was engaged in observing the monthly fasts; she was very devoted to me. She observed fasts in honour of Kṛṣṇa, and was intent on worshipping me. O best brāhmaṇa(?), she tormented her body with fasts. The very chaste woman always offered her house etc. due to her devotion to gods, brāhmaṇas and maidens. O brāhmaṇa(?), she always took delight in great expiation. She did not give alms to beggars; she did not gratify brāhmaṇas. Then, O brāhmaṇa(?), after a long time I thought: “There is no doubt that her body is purified by means of vows and expiations. By mortifying her body she honoured devotees of Viṣṇu. She did not offer food, by means of which great satisfaction would be had.” O brāhmaṇa(?),

knowing like this, I went to the mortal world. Taking the form of a Kāpāla.¹ I begged alms in my (begging) bowl. (She said :)

33-43. “O brāhmaṇa, what for have you come? Where will you go later? Tell (this to me).” I again said: “O beautiful woman, give (me) alms.” With great wrath she threw a lump of clay into the copper-vessel. Then O brāhmaṇa, I again went (back) to heaven. Then by the power of her practising the vow, the female ascetic of great vows, bodily came to heaven after a long time. Due to the gift of the lump of a clay she got a charming house; but O brāhmaṇa sage(?), it was without heaps of grains. When she would observe (i.e. she observed) the house, she did not see anything there. Then, O brāhmaṇa(?), she moved out of the house and came to me. She spoke these words full of great anger: “By means of many kinds of vows, expiations and fasts, and with worship, I propitiated the god, the guardian of the entire world. O Janārdana, nothing is seen there in my house.” Then I said to her: “O you of a great vow, go home. Wives of gods, full of great curiosity and wonder will come to see you. Do not open the door unless they recite the auspicious (account of) Ṣaṭtilā.” Thus addressed by me, the woman went (back to her house). O brāhmaṇa(?), in the meanwhile gods’ wives came (to her house). There they said, “We have come to see you. O beautiful woman, open the door (so that) we shall see you.”

The woman said:

44. If you want to see me, you must especially tell the truth—the meritorious vow of Ṣaṭtilā—for opening the door.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

45-54. None of them told her (about) the vow of Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī. Then one of them told (about) the vow of the Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī. The other one then said: “The woman should be seen by me.” Then after opening the door, the woman was seen by them. O best brāhmaṇa(?), like that woman a goddess or a female gandharva or a demoness or a female serpent was never seen by them be-

1. Kāpāla: A follower of the Śaiva sect—the Left-hand Order characterised by carrying skulls of men in the form of garlands and eating and drinking from them.

fore. By the advice of the goddesses the vow of Ṣaṭṭilā which gives pleasures and salvation was observed by that woman of a true vow. She, endowed with beauty and loveliness, obtained in a moment wealth, grains, garments, gold and silver. By the prowess of Ṣaṭṭilā her house was endowed with everything. In a moment she became endowed with beauty and loveliness. One should not be very greedy; one should avoid fraud with regard to wealth. According to his wealth he should cause to give (i.e. should give) sesamum seeds and garments. A man obtains good health in very existence. He does not get poverty, or misery or misfortune. (All this) will not take place due to fasting on Ṣaṭṭilā. O king, there is no doubt that a giver of sesamum seeds in this way is free from all sins without any trouble. (Giving) a gift duly to a worthy recipient removes all sins. O best king, there is no misery or exertion in the body.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Jayā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. O Kṛṣṇa, you have said well. O lord, you are the first god. (There are four kinds of living beings:) generated by sweat; oviparous; plants; viviparous. You make and mar them; you protect and destroy them. You told (me) about Ṣaṭṭilā falling in Māgha. O god, favour (me) and tell me which Ekādaśī would fall in the bright half (of that month). What is the manner of it (i.e. the manner in which it is observed? Which deity is worshipped on that day?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

4-8a. O lord of kings, I shall tell you about (the Ekādaśī) that would fall in the bright half of Māgha. It is called Jayā. It is well known. It is great and removes all sins. It is pure. It destroys sins. It gives desired objects and salvation to men. It destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and it (also)

destroys the state of a goblin. Men are not reduced to the condition of ghosts when the vow of this (Ekādaśī) is observed by them. There is no (Ekādaśī) other than this that destroys sins and gives salvation. O king, for this reason it should always be observed. O best king, listen to an ancient auspicious tale. I have told about its greatness in the Padma Purāṇa.

8b-15a. Once Indra ruled in heaven. Gods happily lived in that charming (heaven). They were engaged in drinking nectar and were waited upon by celestial nymphs. In it there was a grove called Nandana. It was served by (i.e. full of) Pārijāta trees. Gods rejoice and are pleased by the celestial nymphs there. Once Indra, the lord of fifty crores (of the residents of heaven), rejoicing as he liked, joyfully made (the celestial nymphs) to dance. Gandharvas sang there. There was a gandharva (named) Puṣpadantaka. Citrasena was also there. So also there was Mālinī, the daughter of Citrasena. There was Citrasena's wife also. Puṣpadantī was born of Mālinī. Puṣpadanta's son was Mālyavat by name. Mālyavat was very much fascinated by the beauty of Puṣpadantī. She subjugated Mālyavat with her glances.

15b-22. Listen to (the description of) her charm with loveliness and her beauty. Her arms are as it were the nooses (thrown) round the neck by Cupid. Her eyes were long up to the ears, were reeling and red in the corners. Her ears looked beautiful due to the ear-rings. She had a conch-shaped neck, and was adorned with divine ornaments. Her stout and raised breasts resembled golden pitchers. Her waist was lean, excellent and could be grasped in the fist. Her buttocks were expansive. Her hips and loins were large. Her feet were beautiful and bright like red-lotus. By (that) Puṣpavatī who was like this, Mālyavat was very much fascinated. To please Indra, the two came there to dance. They sang there and were waited upon by bands of celestial nymphs. The two Puṣpadantī and Mālyavat, had their bodies filled with cupid (i.e. the feeling of love). Due to love for each other they were infatuated. With their mind perplexed they did not sing chaste songs.

23-31. Influenced by the arrows of Cupid they had rivetted their eyes upon each other. Indra knew that their minds were attached to each other. Due to the lapse in clapping of the

hands and in the measuring (of time), so also due to the execution of the song, Indra, thinking that it was an insult to him, got angry with both of them and giving them a curse said these (words): “Fie upon you; you are fallen; you stupid ones have disobeyed me. Be turned into goblins as husband and wife; go to the mortal world, enjoying the fruit of your deed.” Thus cursed by Indra the two with their minds distressed, being deluded by Indra’s curse reached the Himālaya mountain. Both became goblins and met with terrible grief also. Their minds were tormented, and met with misery caused by snow. Being deluded, they were not aware of their state of a gandharva or a celestial nymph. They were oppressed by summer and the effect of bodily sins. Troubled by (the fruit of) their deeds they did not get pleasure or peace at night. Talking to each other they moved in the mountain-caves. They were chattering their teeth and had horripilation on their bodies.

32-40a. Then that male goblin said to his wife, the female goblin: “What great, fierce and thrilling sin have we committed due to which we have obtained (i.e. are reduced to) goblinhood as a result of our bad deeds? Hell is looked upon as fierce, and goblinhood as painful. Therefore, with all efforts, one should not commit a sin.” Thus being anxious, they were overpowered with grief. Due to their good luck, the Ekādaśī of Māgha, named Jayā and well-known as the best among days, came. When that day came, O king, they remained there without food and without drinking water. They did not kill any living being; they did not eat leaves and fruits. Near the Aśvattha tree, they remained always full of grief. O king, while they remained like that the sun set. Night, that was fierce, terrible and fatal, approached. The two, trembling and clinging to each other with their bodies and arms, then slept there on the (bare) ground. They did not have sleep, or coition, nor did they get pleasure.

40b-46. O best king, they were thus troubled by the curse of Indra. When they were thus unhappy the night rolled by. The sun rose when the day of Dvādaśī came (i.e. on the Dvādaśī day). O best king, I held in my heart (i.e. thought to myself) about their salvation. They observed the good vow of Jayā and kept awake at night. Listen to what happened by

the efficacy of that vow. When the Dvādaśī day came, and when the Jayā-vow was observed like that, their goblinhood disappeared by Viṣṇu's prowess. Puṣpadantī and Mālyavat had their forms as before. They had the same affection as before, had put on the (same) ornaments as before. They got into an aeroplane and went to the beautiful heaven. Having gone in front of the lord of gods (Indra), they gladly saluted him. Seeing them like that, Indra, being amazed said to them:

Indra said:

47. Tell me, due to what moral merit you who were reduced to goblinhood, who had received a curse from me, were freed and by which god.

Mālyavat said:

48-51. O lord, our goblinhood has gone by Viṣṇu's favour, the observance of the Jayā-vow, and the strength of devotion to you.

Hearing these (words) Indra also spoke again: "You have become sinless, pure, and have become adorable even to me. You have observed (the vow on) the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu; you are greatly attached to the devotion for Viṣṇu. There is no doubt that those mortals who adhere to (the vow of) the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, and are devoted to Kṛṣṇa, are adorable to us also."

Kṛṣṇa said:

52-54. For this reason, O king, the vow of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu should be observed. O best king, Jayā removes the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder. He who has observed the vow of Jayā, has given all gifts, has performed all sacrifices. He certainly rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha as long as a crore of kalpas. O king, by reciting or listening to (this account), one would obtain the fruit (of the performance) of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice).

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

*Vijayā Ekādaśī**Yudhiṣṭhira said:*

1. What is the name of the Ekādaśī that would fall (i.e. falls) in the dark half of Phālguna? O Vāsudeva, favour me and tell it to me.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. Nārada asked the lotus-seated Brahmā: “O best of brāhmaṇas, favour me, and tell me about the religious merit due to the observance of the Vijayā Ekādaśī that would fall (i.e. that falls) in the dark half of Phālguna.

Brahmā said:

3-12. O Nārada, listen; I shall tell (you) a great account that removes sins. I have not narrated to anyone this Vijayā-vow which is ancient, pure, and which removes sins. There is no doubt that Vijayā gives victory to the kings. Formerly, Rāma went to the forest and lived in Pañcavaṭī for fourteen years with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. The glorious wife, Sītā, of Rāma of a victorious nature, who lived there was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa through lustfulness. Due to that grief even Rāma was embarrassed, and (while) wandering he saw Jaṭāyus who was dead. Then he, wandering in the forest, killed Kabandha. (Then) his friendship with Sugrīva took place. The forces of the monkeys came together for Rāma. Then Sītā was seen in the (Aśoka) garden of Laṅkā by Hanūmat. He gave her the token of Rāma and performed a great feat. Then again having come back to Rāma, he told him the entire (account). Then Rāma, having heard the words of Hanūmat, was pleased to (take out) a march (against Rāvaṇa) with Sugrīva’s consent. (He said to Lakṣmaṇa:) “O Saumitra, due to which religious merit this very unfathomable abode of Varuṇa (i.e. the ocean) full of aquatic animals, can be crossed? I do not see a means with which this (ocean) can be crossed easily.”

Lakṣmaṇa said:

13-18. You alone are the first god, and the ancient, best man. In this island lives the sage Bakadālbhya. O Rāghava, his hermitage is at a distance of half a yojana from this place. O son (i.e. descendant) of Raghu, there are many other brāhmaṇas also. O best king, having gone (there), ask the best sage.

Having heard these extremely good words of Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma went to see that great sage Bakadālbhya. With his head (bent down) he saluted the sage, as a god (salutes) Viṣṇu. Then that sage having recognized that ancient best man who had entered the human body for some reason, was pleased, and said, “O Rāma what for have you come?”

Rāma said:

19-24. O brāhmaṇa, by your favour I have come along with the army to this shore of the ocean to conquer Laṅkā along with the demons. O sage, be favourable and tell me the means by which I shall cross the ocean. Now be pleased. O god, for this reason only I have come to see you.

Having heard the words of Rāma, the great sage Bakadālbhya, with his mind very much pleased, said to the lotus-eyed Rāma: “O Rāma, today you should observe the best among vows, having observed which you will be mightily victorious. Having conquered Laṅkā and the demons, you will obtain pure fame. Being concentrated in mind, observe this vow. The Vijayā Ekādaśī would fall in the dark half of the month of Phālguna.

25-35. O Rāma, by (the observance of) that vow you will get victory. You will, along with the monkeys, undoubtedly cross the ocean. O king, listen to the manner of this vow (i.e. in which the vow should be observed), which is fruitful. When the tenth day has arrived a man should cause to get fashioned a pitcher. He should place this decorated pitcher made of gold, silver, copper or clay and filled with water and with sprouts. He should put under it seven (kinds of) grains, and barley upon it. On it he should place the golden (image of) the lord Nārāyaṇa. When the eleventh day comes, he should bathe in the morning.

Along with a wreath round the neck and unguents he should keep it (the pitcher) steady. He should worship it especially with betel nuts and coconuts, so also with sandal, incense, lights and various offerings of eatables. O Rāma, the day is passed in front of it with (i.e. in narrating) good tales. A wise man should also keep awake at night in front of it. For the continuous observance of the vow he should light a lamp of ghee. When the twelfth day comes, on the rise of the sun he should take the jar to the region of water and place it in a river or into a stream and should worship it duly. He should give that jar to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas. O lord of kings, he should cause to give (i.e. he should give) the great gifts (Mahā-dānas) along with the jar (to a brāhmaṇa). O Rāma, observe along with the chiefs of troops carefully the vow in this manner. You will be victorious.”

36-39. Having heard like this, that Rāma did as he was told. When the son (i.e. descendant) of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) observed that vow, he became victorious. He got (back) Sītā. He conquered Laṅkā, killed Rāvaṇa in the battle. O son, those men who observe the vow in this manner, get success in this world, and get the inexhaustible other world (i.e. they live permanently in heaven). For this reason, O son, the vow of Vijayā should be observed. The greatness of Vijayā destroys all sins. A man by reciting (about) or listening (to this vow) would obtain the fruit of the performance of the Vājapeya sacrifice.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Āmalakī Ekādaśī

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:*

1. O Kṛṣṇa, I have heard about the importance and the great fruit of Vijayā. Now tell me about (the importance of) that (Āmalakī Ekādaśī) which falls in the bright half of the month of Phālguna.

*It should be Yudhiṣṭhira.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-4. O son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira), O illustrious one, listen. I shall tell you about that (Ekādaśī) which the glorious Vasiṣṭha explained to Māndhātṛ, when he (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) was asked by Māndhātṛ. This is, O king, especially said to be the speciality of Phālguna. The Āmalakī-vow is auspicious and gives (i.e. takes one) to Viṣṇu's world. A man should go to the root of Āmalakī (tree), and should keep awake there (during the night). Having kept awake there for that night, he would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows.

Māndhātṛ said:

5-6. O best brāhmaṇa, when did this Āmalakī spring up? Tell all this to me. I have great curiosity (to hear about it). Why is it (said to be) pure? Why is it (said to be) the destroyer of sins? Due to what would a man obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows by keeping awake on it?

Vasiṣṭha said:

7-17a. O glorious one, I shall tell (you) how it came about on the earth. The great tree of Āmalakī destroys all (kinds of) sins. When formerly (all this) was just an ocean only (i.e. when the earth was inundated in water), when the immovable and the movable had perished, when hosts of gods and demons had disappeared, and serpents and fiends had perished, then the lord of the gods, the highest soul, the ancient one went to Brahman, his highest and immutable position. Then from the spittle of Brahmā, keeping awake, a drop lustrous like the moon was produced, and it fell down on the earth. From that drop was produced the great Āmalakī tree, having many branches and twigs bent due to the burden of fruits. It was declared as the first shoot among all the trees. Then, after it Brahmā created all these beings—the revered God created gods, demons, gandharvas, yakṣas, fiends, serpents and so also the spotless great sages. Those gods came there, where Dhātṛī (the Āmalaka tree) dear to Viṣṇu, stood, and O glorious one, seeing it they were very much amazed. They stood there thinking, 'We do not know this tree.' When they were thinking like this, a heavenly voice said to them:

“This excellent tree is Āmalakī, said to belong to Viṣṇu. Merely by remembering it a man would get the fruit of (giving) a cow. By touching it one’s religious merit is doubled, and by wearing it it is tripled.

17b-21. Therefore, making all efforts, a man should always resort to Āmalakī. It is said to remove all sins, to belong to Viṣṇu and to destroy sins. At its root lives Viṣṇu; and the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) stays above it; and in its trunk the highest lord, the revered Rudra lives. All the sages (live) in its branches, and the deities (live) in its twigs. The gods remain in its leaves, and the Maruts in its flowers. All the lords of the created beings are similarly settled in its fruits. I have declared this Dhātṛī to be full of all gods. Therefore, it is most adorable for those who are greatly devoted to Viṣṇu.”

The sages said:

22. We do not know who you are. Due to what have you become the cause? Tell us the truth—whether you are a god or someone else.

23-27a. Seeing the amazed wise men (*the voice said:*) “I am that ancient Viṣṇu, who is the creator of all beings and all worlds.” Having heard those words of the god of gods, Brahmā’s sons then began praising the god who was beginningless and endless. “Obeisance to the Being, the self-born one, the soul, the supreme soul. Repeated and constant salutations to the un-falling one, to the endless one (i.e. Viṣṇu). Repeated salutations to Dāmodara, to the omniscient one, to the lord of sacrifices.” Thus praised there by the sages, lord Viṣṇu was pleased. He said to the sages: “What desired (objects) should I give you?”

The sages said:

27b-29. O venerable one, if you are pleased, then with a desire for our good, tell us (about) some vow which gives the fruit of heaven and salvation, which gives wealth, grains, religious merit, and pleasing oneself, which requires little exertion, which gives many fruits and which is the best vow among vows, having observed which one is honoured in Viṣṇu’s world.

Viṣṇu said:

30-32. When in the bright half of Phālguna, the Ādāvādaśī comes with Puṣya (i.e. the eighth lunar mansion appearing in the sky), it would be very auspicious and would destroy great sins. O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the special (vow) to be observed on that day. Having gone to Āmalakī, one should keep awake there. One would be free from all sins and would obtain the fruit of giving a thousand cows. O brāhmaṇas, I have told you about this vow, the best of all vows. Having worshipped Viṣṇu (residing) in it, one is not dropped from Viṣṇu's world.

The sages said:

33-40. Tell us about the manner of (the observance of) this vow. How would it be perfect? What are the hymns, what are the salutations, and what are the deities that are declared? How is a gift (given)? How is a bath (taken)? What is said to be the manner of worship? So also tell us accurately the hymn for offering respectful offering and worship.

Viṣṇu said:

O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the manner (of the observance) of this vow. Having remained without food on the Ekādaśī day and the next day, he should, after cleaning his teeth, utter the words, "O lotus-eyed one, O you unfallen one, I shall (now) eat. Be my refuge." He should not talk with the fallen, the thieves, so also the heretics, so also with men of bad conduct, with those who have violated the limits (of good conduct), and who have outraged their preceptors' wives. Then the wise man, restrained and composed, should duly bathe in the afternoon, in a river, or a tank or a lake or at home. First, he should apply clay (to his body) and then should bathe. "O you earth, who are trodden by horses, chariots and by Viṣṇu, O you earth, remove my sin, and the wicked deed that I have done."

41-48. This is the hymn (to be recited at the time) of (applying) the clay (to the body). "O water, you are the life of all beings and protector of their bodies. Salutation to the lord of the species that are generated by sweat and that sprout as plants. Let this bath of me be (as it were) I have bathed at all holy

places, deep lakes, streams, in rivers and reservoirs." This is the hymn to be recited at the time of bathing. Having got fashioned the golden (image of) the sage Jāmadagnya (i.e. Paraśurāma) of the weight of a māṣaka of gold, or half of it, he should come home and perform the sacrifice for the worship. Then with all the requisites he should go to the Āmalakī (tree). Then having (thus) gone to the Āmalakī (tree), and having cleaned (the region) all round (it), he should place there a jar having no scratch, to the accompaniment of hymns, having five gems (attached to it), made fragrant with divine perfumes, with an umbrella and a pair of sandals, and smeared with white sandal, with a wreath and a garland attached to its neck, incensed with all (kinds) of incenses; he should make it charming by kindling a series of lamps all around; upon it he should place a pot full of divine parched grains. On the pot he should place (the image of) the very lustrous Jāmadagnya.

49-52. (Worshipping) the feet (of the image, (he should say "Salutation to Viśoka ;" (worshipping) its knees (he should say) "(Salutation to) Viśvarūpin." (Worshipping) its thighs (he should say) "(Salutation to) Ugra." (Worshipping) its waist (he should say) "(Salutation to) Dāmodara." (Worshipping) its belly (he should say) "(Salutation to) Padmanābha." (Worshipping its chest he should say) "(Salutation to) Śrīvatsadhārin." (Worshipping) its left arm, (he should say) "Salutation to Cakrin." (Worshipping) its right arm (he should say) "Salutation to Gaḍin." (Worshipping) its neck (he should say) "Salutation to Vaikuṇṭha." (Worshipping) its mouth (he should say) "Salutation to Yajñamukha". (Worshipping) its nose (he should say) "Salutation to Viśokanidhi." (Worshipping) its eyes (he should say) "Salutation to Vāsudeva." (Worshipping) its forehead (he should say) "Salutation to Vāmana." (Worshipping) its eyebrows (he should say) "Salutation to Rāma." He should worship its head saying "Salutation to the Sarvātman."

53-54. This is the hymn to be recited at the time of worshipping (the deity). Then to the superior god of gods he should, with a devoted mind, offer a respectful offering with a white fruit. Then, with a devoted mind he should keep awake by means of dances, songs, musical instruments, religious tales and eulogies.

55-63. He should similarly pass the entire night by means of (listening to, reciting) accounts about Viṣṇu. Then by (repeating) Viṣṇu's names, he should go round the Dhātṛī (tree). (The repetition of the names should be done for) one hundred and eight or twentyeight times. Then, in the morning, having waved a light (in front of the image) of Viṣṇu, and having honoured a brāhmaṇa, he should offer all that to him (saying) "In the Jāmadagnya ghaṭa there are a couple of garments and two sandals. May Keśava, in the form of Jāmadagnya, be pleased with me." Then he should touch and go round the Āmalakī (tree). Having then bathed duly, he should feed brāhmaṇas. Then surrounded by (i.e. along with the members of) his fraternity he should eat. I shall tell you about the entire religious merit (obtained) by doing like this. There is no doubt that he gets the fruit which is had at all the holy places, by means of all (kinds of) gifts, and which is greater than (that of) all sacrifices. I have thus narrated to you in full the vow that is the best of (all) vows.

Saying so, the lord of gods vanished there only. All the sages also did all that completely. In the same way, O lord of kings, (please) observe this vow which is hard to practise and which frees (one from) all sins.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. I have heard about the Āmalakī (vow) in the bright half of Phālguna. What would be (i.e. what is) the name of the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Caitra?

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2. O lord of kings, listen to the sin-destroying account, which Lomaśa, when he was asked by emperor Māndhātṛ, told (to him).

Māndhātṛ said:

3. O venerable one, with a desire for the well-being of the people, I desire to hear what the name of the Ekādaśī in the first half of Caitra would be. What is the manner of it (i.e. in which way is it observed)? What is its fruit? (Please) favour (me) and tell it (to me).

Lomaśa said:

4-8. The Ekādaśī in the dark half of Caitra is called Pāpamocanī. It is said to destroy the state of a goblin. Listen, O king, I shall tell its account which gives the desired objects, divine power, auspicious and righteous things, and destroys sins. Formerly in the forest called Caitraratha, full of bees, and resorted to by celestial nymphs, when the spring season had arrived, gandharva maidens rejoiced along with kin-naras by (playing upon) musical instruments. The residents of heaven (i.e. gods) led by Indra also sported there. There was nothing else as delightful as the Caitraratha forest. In that forest many sages practised profuse penance.

9-18a. A celestial nymph known as Mañjughoṣā started to infatuate an excellent sage named Medhāvin, best among sages, who was a celibate and lived there. Showing her devotion to him, she through fear of him remained just a krośa away in the vicinity of the hermitage, singing sweetly and pressing (i.e. playing upon) the lute agreeably. The mind-born Cupid, seeing her with flowers (worn by her) and sandal (applied to her body) and desiring to vanquish the best sages, the devotees of Śiva, lived in her body. (Mañjughoṣā) having, in due order, made her eyebrows the curved end of the bow, her glances the string of the bow, her eyes along with her eyelashes the arrows, her breasts the tent, started for victory. Mañjughoṣā became the army of that Cupid only. Seeing that sage Medhāvin she too was oppressed by the passion of love. That Medhāvin also, with his body shooting up with youth, shone (there). Wearing a white sacred thread and appearing like another Cupid, that Medhāvin lived in the auspicious hermitage of Cyavana.

18b-24. Having seen the best sage staying there, that Mañjughoṣā was overpowered by Cupid (i.e. passion of love)

and she sang gently. That best sage, having seen her singing like that, with her bracelets jingling and her anklets and girdle tinkling, was forcibly deluded by Cupid with his army. That beautiful woman Mañjughoṣā, seeing that sage like that, approached him and deluded him with feminine coquettish gestures; and keeping her lute down (on the ground) she embraced that lord of sages, as a creeper would encircle a tree shaking due to the velocity of the wind. That best sage, Medhāvin, too rejoiced with her. Seeing in that (forest) only her excellent body, his auspicious nature left him, and he was influenced by the nature of Cupid. The lover did not know (i.e. care for) night or day, while rejoicing with her. Due to (i.e. in) the violation of (good) conduct, the sage passed a period of many years. Mañjughoṣā set out to go to the divine world. While going she said to the best sage, rejoicing (with her): “O brāhmaṇa, give me the order to go to my own region.”

Medhāvin said:

25-30. O you beautiful one, today only just at the beginning of the nightfall you have come. Stay with me till (it is the time for my) morning prayer.

Hearing these words of the sage, she was frightened. She, afraid of the sage's curse, again delighted that sage for many years, O best king. She rejoiced with the sage for fiftyfive years nine months and three days. (But that period) was just half a night for him. When that much time passed, she again said to the sage: “O Brāhmaṇa, give me the order to go (back). I have to go home.”

Medhāvin said:

It is (just) the morning. Listen to my words. Be steady till I offer my evening prayer.

Hearing these words of the sage, she was full of joy. Smiling slightly, she of a bright smile again spoke:

The celestial nymph said:

31-38. O sinless best brāhmaṇa, how long your prayer has

extended! (Please) favour me, and take into consideration the time that has passed.

Hearing these words of her, the best brāhmaṇa, with his eyes dilated due to wonder, calculated the time that had passed. Fiftyseven years were passed (by him) with her. Then he got angry with her, and was (like fire) with rows of flames. He, seeing her of the nature of destruction, putting an end to his penance, became very angry, and discharging sparks of fire from his eyes, and noticing that his penance earned with great effort had been wasted with her (i.e. in her company), the sage Medhāvin with his lips throbbing and his senses agitated cursed her: "Be a female goblin. Fie upon you, a sinful woman of bad conduct, an unchaste woman, who loves sins (i.e. sinful conduct)." Parched by his curse, she remained bent with modesty. The beautiful woman, desiring the sage's favour said these words to him: "O best brāhmaṇa, (please) favour me. Appease your curse; for the friendship of the good takes place (even) by (walking together for) seven steps (or by exchanging seven words). O brāhmaṇa with you I have passed many years. For this reason, O lord, O you of a good vow, favour (me)."

The sage said:

39-42. O good woman, hear my words appeasing the curse. O sinful one, what have I to do with you? You destroyed (my) great penance. In the dark half of Caitra would fall (i.e. falls) the auspicious Ekādaśī called Pāpamocanikā, which destroys all sins. Having observed the pure vow of it (i.e. on that day, your) state of a female goblin will go away.

Having spoken like this Medhāvin went to his father's hermitage. Seeing him to have come (back), Cyavana said to him: "What is this that you have done? You have destroyed your religious merit, O son."

Medhāvin said:

43. O father, I committed a sin. I rejoiced with a celestial nymph. O father, tell me an expiation by means of which my sin would perish.

Cyavana said:

44-46. In the dark half of Caitra falls the (Ekādaśī) called Pāpamocanī. O son, when the vow of it is observed, the heap of sins would perish.

Hearing these words of his father, he observed that excellent vow. His sin perished and he became endowed with (the merit of) his penance. That Mañjughosā too, having observed that excellent vow, was freed from the state of a female goblin due to (having observed) that vow of Pāpamocanikā. That excellent celestial nymph taking a divine form went to heaven.

Lomaśa said:

47-49. O king, all the sin (however) little of those best men who observe the vow of the Pāpamocanikā, would perish. A man, by reciting (about) it, by listening (to its account) would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. All those who have killed a brāhmaṇa or have snatched gold or are drunkards or have gone to the teacher's bed (i.e. have violated the wife of the preceptor) become free from sins by means of the observance of this vow. By its observance the excellent vow gives great religious merit.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Kāmadā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Salutation to you, O Vāsudeva; tell me, Ekādaśī of which name would fall in the bright half of Caitra.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2. O king, listen attentively to an auspicious old tale which formerly Vasiṣṭha narrated to Dilīpa who had asked (him).

Dilipa said:

3. O revered one, I desire to hear. Favour me and tell me what the name of the Ekādaśī that would fall in the bright half of Caitra, is.

Vasiṣṭha said:

4-12. O king, you have asked well. I shall tell (about it) to you. The Ekādaśī falling in the bright half of Caitra is Kāmadā by name. (This) Ekādaśī is most auspicious, and is a fire to the fuel of sins. O king, listen to this story which destroys sins, (and) which gives religious merit. Formerly in the beautiful city of Nāgapura, adorned with gold and jewels, lived very powerful nāgas led by Puṇḍarīka. In that city king Puṇḍarīka ruled. He was served by gandharvas, kinnaras, and celestial nymphs also. The excellent celestial nymph was Lalitā; and the (excellent) gandharva was Lalita; the couple, glowing with attachment, and oppressed by passion of love, rejoiced in their beautiful house which was full of wealth and grains. In the heart of Lalitā (her) husband always resided; (and) in his heart, that beautiful Lalitā always resided. Once Puṇḍarīka, remaining in his assembly, was sporting. Lalita, without his wife, was singing and dancing (there). Remembering Lalitā, his tongue stumbled over (i.e. while uttering) an arrangement of words. Knowing the state of his mind, the best nāga Karkoṭaka reported his error in (uttering) the arrangement of words to Puṇḍarīka.

13-20. Hearing the words of Karkoṭaka, Puṇḍarīka, the king of the nāgas, with his eyes red due to anger, became extremely fierce. He then cursed Lalita who was singing and was overpowered by the passion of love: “O you of a wicked mind, be a demon that eats raw flesh, and that eats human beings, since, being influenced by (the love for) your wife, you are singing before me.” As a result of his words, he (i.e. Lalita) got a demon’s form, O best king. His face was fierce. His eyes were deformed. He caused fear even when just seen. His arms were as long as a yojana. His mouth resembled a cave. His eyes were like the moon and the sun. His neck was like a mountain. His nostrils were (just) hollows. His lips were a yojana in length. O lord of kings, his body rose (up to) eight yojanas. He, as

result of his deed(s) became a demon of this type. And that Lalitā, seeing her husband thus deformed was oppressed by great grief, and thought to herself: “What do (i.e. should) I do? Where do (i.e. should) I go? My husband is troubled by the curse.” Recalling like this to her mind, she did not obtain pleasure in her mind.

21-25. Lalitā, along with her husband, moved into a dense forest. That demon who took any form he liked, was cruel, was engaged in (committing) sins, who was deformed, ate human beings, wandered in that impassable forest. He, oppressed by sins, did not have pleasure at night or by day. Seeing her husband like that Lalitā was very much pained. She, weeping, wandered with him in (that) dense forest. Having seen a lovely hermitage and a sage of a tranquil form, she quickly went to him, and saluting him, stood before him. Seeing her distressed, the sage, solely devoted to kindness, said to her: “Who are you? Why have you come here? Tell the truth to me.”

Lalitā said:

26-28. There is a gandharva Vīradhanvan (by name). I am the daughter of that noble one. Know me to be Lalitā by name. I have come here for the sake of my husband. O great sage, due to a sin, my husband has become a demon of a fierce form and wicked deeds. Seeing him, I am not happy. Now, O brāhmaṇa, instruct me. O lord, tell me what I should do. (Tell me about) the religious merit due to which he is free from his state of demon, O best brāhmaṇa.

The sage said:

29-31. O you beautiful woman, it is now the bright half of the month of Caitra. O Lalitā, (in it falls) the Kāmadā Ekādaśī which is great and which destroys sins. O auspicious one, duly observe its vow as told by me. Give the religious merit which (you will obtain) from this vow to your husband. When the religious merit is given (to him), his sin will go away in a moment.

Hearing these words of the sage, Lalitā was delighted.

32-39. Having fasted on the Ekādaśī, so also on the day of Dvādaśī, Lalitā, in the vicinity of a brāhmaṇa, and in front of Viṣṇu, uttered these words for the emancipation of her husband: “I have observed the vow, viz. the Kāmadā fast. Let his goblinhood go (away) by the prowess of that religious merit.” Merely at the words of Lalitā, just at that moment, his sins went away, and he had a divine form. His state of a demon went (away) and he got gandharvahood again. Full of gold and jewels, he rejoiced with Lalitā. The couple having more lovely forms than before got into an excellent aeroplane, and looked more charming due to the efficacy of Kāmadā. O best king, realising this, this (Kāmadā-vow) should be carefully observed. For the good of the people I told it to you. It destroys sins like that of the condition of a goblin. There is nothing superior to it in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. O king, by reciting about it, and listening to the (the account of) it one would get the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Varūthinī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be the name of the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Vaiśākha? Tell me (its) importance. Salutation to you, O Vāsudeva.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-15. O king, this Ekādaśī named Varūthinī, (falling) in the dark half of Vaiśākha, gives grandeur in this and the next world. Due to the Varūthinī-vow happiness always results; and the sins are destroyed, and good fortune is obtained. An unfortunate woman who observes this (vow) obtains good fortune. This gives pleasures and salvation to all the people. It removes all the sins of people, and cuts off living as an embryo (i.e. puts an end to rebirth). Due to the Varūthinī-vow only

Māndhātṛ went to heaven. So also many other kings like Dhundhumāra (went to heaven). Lord Śiva became free from the sin of (breaking) the skull of Brahmā. One who observes the vow of Varūthini gets the fruit equal to that (obtained by him) who gives a bhāra of gold on Kurukṣetra when the Sun (is auspicious). That man with faith who observes the vow of Varūthini, gets (his) desired (objects) in this world and the next (world). O best king, to those who observe it, it is pure, purifying; it destroys great sins. It gives them pleasures and salvation. O king, giving of elephants is superior to giving of horses. Giving of land (is superior) to giving of elephants. Gift of sesamum-seeds is superior (even) to that. Giving of gold is superior to that, and giving of food is superior to that (i.e. giving of gold). There was not nor there will be a greater gift than that of food. By means of food the manes, gods and men are satisfied. O best king, giving one's daughter (in marriage) is said by the wise to be like that. The lord himself said that giving of a cow is equal to that. Of all the gifts that have been mentioned, giving knowledge is the best. A man, by observing the Varūthini(-vow) gets a fruit equal to that. Those men who, deluded by sin, subsist on the money (got) for (giving their) daughter (in marriage), lose their religious merit, and go to hell full of torments. Therefore, with all care money for giving a daughter in marriage should not be taken (i.e. should be avoided).

16-25. O lord of kings, he who through greed takes money for offering his daughter in marriage, certainly becomes (i.e. is born as) a cat in the next existence. O king, even Citragupta cannot measure the religious merit of him who, with his religious merit, gives, according to his capacity, his daughter well-adorned (in marriage). A man gets fruit equal to that by observing the Varūthini(-vow). Bell-metal, flesh, masūra (a kind of pulse), thick peas, kodrava (a species of grain eaten by the poor), vegetables, honey, eatables of (i.e. offered by) others, and food and sexual union—these ten a devotee of Viṣṇu should avoid on the tenth day. Playing with dice, sport, sleep, tāmbūla, cleaning the teeth, censuring others, wickedness, theft, harming (others) and indulging in sex, anger, telling lies—(these) he should avoid on the Ekādaśī. Bell-metal, flesh, liquor, honey, oil, talking to those who are fallen, exercise, journey and food

and sexual union, (mounting on) a bull's back, food prepared with masūra—he should avoid on Dvādaśī. O king, to those who have observed the Varūthini(-vow) in this manner, it would, after destroying all their sins, give them an undecaying position in the end. Those who, having kept awake at night, have worshipped Viṣṇu, are freed from all sins and reach the highest position. Therefore, those who are afraid of sins, should observe it with all efforts. A man afraid of (Saturn) the son of enemy of the night, should observe the Varūthini(-vow). O king, by reciting (about) it and by listening to (the account of) it, a man would obtain the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows. Being free from all sins, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Mohini Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Of which name would be the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Vaiśākha? What is its fruit? What is the manner of (observing) it? Tell it, O Viṣṇu.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O lord of kings, the same as you are asking me (now) was formerly asked by the intelligent Rāma from Vasiṣṭha.

Rāma said:

3-4. O glorious one, I desire to hear about the best among the vows, which destroys all sins, and which cuts off all miseries. I have experienced sorrows (like the ones) due to separation from Sitā. So I am scared. (Therefore), O great sage, I am asking you.

Vasiṣṭha said:

5-10. O Rāma, you have asked well. This is (due to) your devoted mind. Merely by uttering your name a man is purified.

Yet, with a desire for the well-being of the people, I shall tell you (about) the excellent vow, (most) pure of the purifying vows. O Rāma, the Ekādaśī (that) would fall in the bright half of Vaiśākha, is called Mohinī. It is great and removes all sins. Due to the prowess of the vow of this (Ekādaśī men) are freed from the noose of delusion and the multitude of sins. I am telling you the truth and the truth (only). Therefore, O Rāma, this one, that destroys sins and puts an end to great misery should be observed by (people) like you. O Rāma, listen attentively to the great, sin-removing story, merely by hearing which (even) a great sin perishes.

11-20. On the lovely bank of Sarasvatī there was an auspicious city Bhadrāvati. A king named Dyutimat ruled there. He was born in the Lunar family. He was courageous and was true to his word. A vaiśya prosperous with wealth and grains lived there. He was known as Dhanapāla. He prompted auspicious deeds. He constructed public water places, wells, temples, gardens, tanks and houses. He was engrossed in devotion for Viṣṇu and was calm. He had five sons: Sumanas, Dyutimat, Medhāvin and Sukṛta. The fifth Dhṛṣṭabuddhi was always engaged in (committing) great sins. He was attached to the union with others' wives, and was well-versed in stories about voluptuous people. He was attached to addictions like gambling, and ardently longed for (the company of) others' wives. He did not intend to worship deities, nor the dead ancestors, nor brāhmaṇas. The wicked one lived (by doing) injustice, and wasted the money of his father. He ate what was prohibited and was always attached to drinking liquor. The wicked one threw his arms round the neck of a prostitute and wandered over the crossway. He was expelled from the house by his father and was also forsaken by his kinsmen. He even exhausted the money, ornaments on his body. He was abandoned by the harlots and was condemned (by them) due to the loss of his wealth. Then he was disturbed in mind, was without clothes, and was oppressed by hunger. "What should I do? Where should I go? By what means shall I subsist?" (Thus he thought.)

21-29. Just in his father's city he started stealing. He was arrested by the royal officers, but was released due to the importance of his father. Being zealous, they bound him, again

released him and again bound him. The wicked Dhṛṣṭabuddhi was bound with strong fetters. He was repeatedly whipped and tormented. “O dull-witted one, you should not live within the range (i.e. limits) of my kingdom.” Saying so, he was freed by the king from the strong fetters. Due to his fear he went out (of the city) to a dense forest. Being oppressed by hunger and thirst he ran here and there. Like a lion he killed deer, pigs and spotted (deer). Addicted to eating flesh, he always lived in the forest. Taking a bow in his hand, and putting the quiver on his back, he, going on foot, killed the birds moving in the forest. That blinded, cruel Dhṛṣṭabuddhi killed these—partridges, peacocks, francolins, and rats—and other (birds). He plunged into the mud of sins due to sins committed in his former existence. He was overcome with pain and sorrow. He was annoyed day and night. Due to his acquisition of some religious merit he reached the hermitage of Kauṇḍinya.

30-32. Dhṛṣṭabuddhi, oppressed with the burden of grief, approached the ascetic who had bathed in Gaṅgā in the month of Vaiśākha. Due to a slight contact of his garment his sins vanished and his misfortune was destroyed. Standing in front of Kauṇḍinya, he, with the palms of his hands joined, said to him:

Dhṛṣṭabuddhi said:

O brāhmaṇa, O greatest of the brāhmaṇas, taking compassion on me, tell me that religious merit due to the powers of which salvation takes place.

Kauṇḍinya said:

33-39. Listen attentively to that by which your sins will perish. In the dark half of Vaiśākha falls the well-known (Ekādaśī) named Mohinī. Prompted by my words, observe the vow of that Ekādaśī. When men observe a fast on this Mohinī (Ekādaśī), their sins comparable to Meru and earned (i.e. committed) in many existences perish.

Hearing these words of the sage, Dhṛṣṭabuddhi, pleased in his mind, observed duly the vow according to the advice of Kauṇḍinya. O best among kings, when he observed (this) vow, his sins vanished. Then, he, having a divine body and mounted

upon Garuḍa, went to Viṣṇu's world which is free from all calamities. O Rāmacandra, the Mohinī-vow is excellent in this way. In three worlds with the mobile and the immobile, there is nothing greater than it. Sacrifices and the like, so also (visits to) holy places, gifts are not equal even to the sixteenth part of (the religious merit) it (gives). By reciting (about) it and listening to (its account) a man would obtain the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Aparā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Jyeṣṭha? I desire to hear (about its) importance. O Janārdana, (please) tell it.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-10. O king, you have, with the desire of the well-being of the people, asked well. (That Ekādaśī) is Aparā by name, O lord of kings. It gives unending fruit. He who observes the (vow of) Aparā becomes famous in the world. O king, he who is overcome by (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa, who kills (the members of) his family, who has procured an abortion, who censures others, who is interested in others' wives, certainly becomes free from sin on observing the (vow of) Aparā. These, viz. one who gives false testimony, who uses false measures or false weights, who would study false (i.e. unauthoritative) Vedas, so also false sacred texts, so also one who is a fraudulent astrologer, who is a fraudulent physician, and one who is connected with false testimony are the residents of hell. O king, by observing the (vow) of Aparā, they are free from sins. A kṣatriya who giving up the duty of a kṣatriya, flees from the battle, goes, being expelled from his caste, to a fierce hell. He too, by observing the (vow of) Aparā, would, after shedding his sin, go to heaven. A

learned disciple who censures his preceptor, having incurred great sins, goes to a fearful hell. That man also by observing the (vow of) Aparā would obtain good position (i.e. beatitude).

11-20. O king, listen to the greatness of Aparā. I am (now) telling it. A fruit similar to that which men obtain (by bathing) at Prayāga in Māgha, when the Sun is in Makara (i.e. the sign Capricornus of Zodiac), or that religious merit which is obtained (by a man) after bathing at Kāśī on an eclipse-day, or the fruit which a man who offers piṇḍas to his dead ancestors at Gayā, gets, or which a man who bathes in the Gautamī (river) when Jupiter is in Simha (i.e. the sign Leo of the Zodiac) gets, or the fruit which a man gets on bathing in Kṛṣṇavenī when Jupiter is in Kanyā (i.e. the sign Virgo of the Zodiac), or the fruit a man gets on seeing Kumbhakedāra, or in the pilgrimage to Badaryāśrama and visiting holy places during it, or the fruit which a man obtains (by bathing) at Kurukṣetra when the planet Sun (is auspicious), or the fruit that a man gets by performing a sacrifice with (the giving of) presents and gifts of elephants, horses or gold, is obtained by observing the (vow of) Aparā. So also a man obtains that fruit by the Aparā-vow which he gets by giving (to a brāhmaṇa) a recently calved cow, gold, or (a piece of) land. This (vow) is an axe (cutting) the tree in the form of sins, and is a wild fire to the fuel in the form of sins. It is the Sun (dispelling) the darkness of sins. It is a lion (killing) the spotted deer of sins. Those who are without (i.e. who do not observe) the vow of (this) Ekādaśī, are born to die like bubbles in water or like ants among creatures. A man, having fasted on the Aparā (Ekādaśī day) and having worshipped Viṣṇu, is free from all sins and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. I have told (this vow) to you with the desire of the well-being of the people. O king, a man reciting (about) it and listening (to its account), would obtain the fruit of (gift of) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Nirjalā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Janārdana, I have heard the full importance of Aparā. O you who show respect (to others), tell me about that (Ekādaśī) which would fall (i.e. falls) in the bright half of Jyeṣṭha.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2. Satyavatī's pious son, Vyāsa, who knows the essence of all sacred texts and who has mastered the Vedas and the Upaniṣads will tell (you about) it.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3. I have heard the duties as told by Manu, so also as told by Vasiṣṭha. O Dvaipāyana, you please tell properly the duties of Viṣṇu's devotees.

Śrī Vedavyāsa said:

4-9. O lord of men, you have listened to the duties as told by Manu, so also as told by Vasiṣṭha. They cannot be practised in Kaliyuga. O you very intelligent one, (the Ekādaśī vow) is the essence of (i.e. of what is told in) the Purāṇas, is an easy means, requires little money, little effort, (but) gives great fruit. One should not eat on the Ekādaśī-days of both the fortnights (of a month). On the Dvādaśī day, being pure, having worshipped Viṣṇu, having honoured (a brāhmaṇa), one should then eat with a brāhmaṇa. O king, one should not eat during the impurity caused by a birth or a death in the family. O best of men, those who desire to go to heaven should practise this vow as long as they live. There is no doubt about this. Even those who are sinners, who are of a wicked conduct, who are most sinful, who are bereft of piety, go to my proximity (i.e. reach me) if they do not eat on Ekādaśī.

10. Having heard these words of him, the mighty-armed Bhīma trembled like an aśvattha-leaf, and saluting his preceptor, said to him:

Bhīmasena said:

11-14. O grandsire, O you very intelligent one, listen to my important words. Yudhiṣṭhira and Kuntī, so also Draupadī and Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, who practise (this) good vow, never eat on the day of Ekādaśī. They always tell me, “O Bhīma, do not eat (on the Ekādaśī day).” I told them: “For me hunger is difficult to bear. I shall duly give gifts. I shall worship Viṣṇu.”

Hearing the words of Bhīmasena, Vyāsa said (these) words:

Vyāsa said:

15. If you desire (to go to) heaven, and if (you think) hell is painful, then you should not eat on the Ekādaśī of both the fortnights.

Bhīmasena said:

16-18. O grandsire, O you very intelligent one, I shall tell in front of (i.e. to) you. I am not able (to go on) by eating (even) once a day. Then O lord, how can I (put up with) a fast? That fire, called Vṛka, which is always present in my belly, is extinguished only when I eat many times. O great sage, I am not able to observe a (single) fast. I shall properly observe that due to which heaven is reached. Therefore, having decided about one, tell me that by (observing) which I shall obtain heaven.

Vyāsa said:

19-26. When the Ekādaśī would fall on (the day when the Sun) is in the second or the third sign of the Zodiac in the month of Jyeṣṭha, a wise man should carefully observe (the Ekādaśī fast) without (even drinking) water. He should avoid even sipping a mouthful of water and should not eat (at all). Otherwise the vow would be broken. Listen, when a man (lives even) by avoiding water from the sunrise of a day to the sunrise (of the next day), he obtains the fruit of twelve Dvādaśīs. Then in the auspicious morning of the Dvādaśī day he should bathe, and having duly given water, gold etc. to brāhmaṇas, he, being contended and controlled, should eat along with brāhmaṇas. O

Bhīmasena, listen to the religious merit (which is obtained) by doing like this. There is no doubt that he hereby obtains the fruit of the Ekādaśīs that fall during the year. Keśava, the holder of a conch, a disc and a mace told me like this: “Leaving all others a man should seek my refuge only.” A man, not eating on an Ekādaśī day is freed from sins. In the Kali-age, there is no purity of objects. Rites (or ceremonies) are based on the Smṛtis.

27-33a. How can there be a rite based on the Vedas, when the wicked Kali-age has arrived? O son of Vāyu (i.e. Bhīma), what is the use of telling you much again and again? A man should not eat on the Ekādaśī of both the fortnights. Listen, O Bhīma, to the auspicious fruit that (a man) obtains by remaining without water on the Ekādaśī day of the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha. O Bhīma, if fasts are observed on all the auspicious Ekādaśī days that are said to fall during the year and in the bright or dark fortnights (of each month), they give wealth and grains, give sons, good health and auspicious (things). O king, there is no doubt about it. I am telling you the truth. The big-bodied, fierce, dark-formed, fearful messengers of Yama, who hold staffs and nooses, do not approach that man. (But) Viṣṇu’s messengers who have put on yellow garments, who are gentle, who have held discs in their hands, whose speed is like that of the mind, take him on his death to Viṣṇu’s city.

33b-41. Therefore, with all efforts a man should observe the Ekādaśī-fast without (drinking even) water. Then having given he is freed from all sins. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, on this day observe a fast and worship Viṣṇu with all efforts for the destruction of your sins. “Even by means of passion as much as the size of the point of an arrow, I have not sinned even in a dream. O lord of gods, I shall eat food on the next day of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu.” Uttering this hymn he should engage himself in (observing) the fast of Ekādaśī after being endowed with faith and restraint for the destruction of all his sins. By the power of Ekādaśī all the sin of the size of the Meru and Mandara mountains, which a man has committed, is reduced to ash. O king, those who are not able to give should give a pitcher containing gold along with garments.

He who, on this day, observes the vow of (not drinking even) water, is meritorious. The fruit of the gift of gold is said to be a crorefold in every watch. All that (like) a bath, a gift, muttering of prayers, a sacrifice that is given (or performed) by a man, becomes unending. This is told by Kṛṣṇa himself. What is the use of any other religious rite than the Ekādaśī observed without (drinking) water?

42-52. Having properly observed it with due rites, a man would obtain Viṣṇu's position. All that like gold, food, garments, which are given by a man on this day, would, O king, be inexhaustible. He who eats food on the Ekādaśī day eats sin. In this world he becomes a cāṇḍāla and after death gets a miserable position. Those who, having fasted, will give gifts on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, obtain the highest position. Those like the killer of a brāhmaṇa, a drunkard, a thief, a hater of his preceptor or one who always tells lies, who fast without (even drinking) water, are freed from all sins. O son of Kuntī, listen to the special gift which is to be given on the Ekādaśī day, on which not (even) water (is to be drunk) by men and women endowed with faith. He who lies in water should be worshipped and a watery cow should be given (to a brāhmaṇa). An actual cow should be given or of ghee. O best among the righteous, brāhmaṇas should be carefully pleased by means of big presents and with various kinds of sweet food. The brāhmaṇas are pleased, and when they are pleased, Viṣṇu gives salvation. Those who have not fasted on this day have wronged themselves. They—the sinners, and of a bad conduct—have been undoubtedly plundered. Those who, being calm, controlled, devoted to (giving) gifts, worshipped Viṣṇu, and keeping awake, fasted on this day, have taken along with themselves a hundred (members) past and future (of) their families to the abode of Viṣṇu.

53-58. On this day on (which even) water (should) not (be drunk) food, garments, so also cows, water, a good bed and a good seat, a water-pot used by an ascetic, so also an umbrella should be given (to a brāhmaṇa). He who gives a pair of shoes to the best brāhmaṇa—a worthy recipient—is honoured in heaven (after being taken there) by (i.e. in) a golden aeroplane. He who would listen to (the account of) this with devotion, and

he who would narrate it, both go to heaven. No doubt should be raised about this. That fruit which a man obtains by offering a śrāddha at Kurukṣetra when the Sun is eclipsed by Rāhu, is obtained even by listening to (the account of) this. After cleaning his teeth, he should have the restriction: 'On the day of the Ekādaśī, to please Viṣṇu, I shall, remaining without food, avoid water except for sipping.' Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, should be worshipped on Dvādaśī.

59-64. Having duly worshipped (Viṣṇu) with sandal, incenses, flowers, so also pleasing garments, he should recite this hymn: "O god of gods, O Hṛṣīkeśa, O you who emancipate (beings) from the ocean of the mundane existence, take me to the highest position due to (my offering) the pitcher of water." O Bhīma, on that auspicious Ekādaśī which falls in the bright half of Jyeṣṭha, a man should fast without (even) drinking water, by giving water pitchers with sugar to the best brāhmaṇas. (Due to this) he rejoices with Viṣṇu. Then he should devoutly give pitchers to brāhmaṇas. Having then fed the brāhmaṇas, he should take food with devotion to them. He who thus observes the full Dvādaśī, removing sins, is free from all sins and goes to the good position (of Viṣṇu).

Since then Bhīma observed (a fast on) this Ekādaśī day. In the world the Dvādaśī came to be known as Pāṇḍava-Dvādaśī.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Yoginī Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be (i.e. is the name of) the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Āṣāḍha? Please favour and tell it to me.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2-10. O king, I shall tell you the best of the vows, which destroys all sins and gives full salvation. In the dark half of

Āṣāḍha (falls) the Ekādaśī called Yoginī. O best king, it destroys great sins. (This) Yoginī is an ancient boat for those plunged into the ocean of the worldly existence and for (the good of) those observing the vow of Yoginī which has become the essence in the three worlds. I shall tell an old, auspicious tale. In Alakā (lived) Kubera solely devoted to Śiva. He had a flower-collector called Hemamālin. His beautiful wife was Viśālākṣī by name. With his mind attached to her and being under the sway of Cupid's noose, he, after having brought a heap of flowers from the Mānasa (lake) stayed at home. Being attached to his wife through love, he did not go to Kubera's house. In the temple of god Kubera was worshipping Śiva. O king, at mid-day he was waiting for the flowers. Hemamālin enjoyed with his wife in his house. The king of yakṣas, angry due to the delay, then said: "O yakṣas, why is the wicked-minded Hemamālin not coming (yet)? Ascertain about (i.e. the whereabouts of) him." Thus he spoke repeatedly.

The yakṣas said:

11-14a. O king, lustful for his wife, he rejoices in his house as he pleases.

Hearing their words Kubera was filled with anger. He quickly called that attendant, Hemamālin. He too having realized the delay, with his eyes full of fear, came there even without bathing, and stood in front of him. Seeing him Kubera was angry, and his eyes were reddish due to anger. Full of anger and with his lips trembling through anger, he said:

Kubera said:

14b-22. O sinner, O you of a wicked conduct, you have condemned the god (Śiva). O meanest among the attendants, you, separated from your wife, and suffering from eighteen kinds of leprosy, disappear from this place, and go away.

When these words were uttered by him, he fell from that place and overcome with great grief, his body suffered from leprosy. By day he did not get happiness, nor did he have sleep at night. In the shadow his body was extremely tormented, and

he was oppressed in the summer. Due to the efficacy of Śiva's worship his memory was not lost. Though overpowered by sin, he remembered his old deeds. (Then) wandering from there he went to Himālaya, the excellent mountain. There he saw the ascetic Mārkaṇḍeya, the excellent sage. His age was equal to that of Brahmā. The sinner saluted his feet from a distance. The best sage Mārkaṇḍeya, having seen him trembling like that, called him to oblige him, and said these words to him: "Why (i.e. due to what) are you overcome with leprosy? Why are you so much condemned?" Thus addressed, he replied to Mārkaṇḍeya, the great sage:

Hemamālin said:

23-27. I am Kubera's attendant, Hemamālin by name. O sage, everyday I fetched a collection of lotuses and offered it to Kubera at the time of his worshipping Śiva; and one day I, with my mind attached to the pleasure (derived) from my wife and with my mind distressed with grief, was not conscious of the time. Therefore, O sage, I was cursed by the angry Kubera. I am overcome with leprosy, and am separated from my wife. Due to my auspicious deeds, I have now come to you, knowing that the heart of the good is naturally capable of obliging others. O best sage, advise me, a sinner.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

28-34. Since you told the truth here and did not tell a lie, therefore, I am, instructing you in an auspicious vow. Observe the Yoginī-vow in the dark half of Āṣāḍha. Due to the religious merit of this vow, your leprosy will certainly disappear.

Hearing these words of the sage, he fell (i.e. prostrated himself) like a staff on the ground. Being lifted up by the sage, he became extremely delighted. By the advice of Mārkaṇḍeya he observed the vow, with the result that the eighteen kinds of leprosy of him (i.e. from which he was suffering) disappeared completely. When by the sage's words he observed the vow, he became happy. O king, the vow of Yoginī is said to be like this. A man who observes the Yoginī-vow obtains the fruit equal to that which a man who would feed eighty-eight

thousand brāhmaṇas obtains. (The vow) removes great sins; it gives the fruit of great religious merit. By reciting and listening to this account a man is free from all sins.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Devaśayani Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Which would be (i.e. is) the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āṣāḍha? What is the name and the manner of it? (i.e. in which manner is it observed?) Tell me about it in detail.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-8. I shall tell you (about that Ekādaśī) named Śayani which is very auspicious, which gives heaven and salvation, which is great and which removes all sins, merely hearing about which a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya (sacrifice). I have told (you) the truth and the truth (only). Nothing is greater than this for men. O lord of kings, the best one is created by the Creator for the destruction of the sins of sinners. There is no greater (vow) than this which would give salvation. Listen, O king, for this reason that the best position would be obtained by men, the listeners, even by listening to it. Those are the Vaiṣṇavas (i.e. Viṣṇu's devotees) who are greatly devoted to me. In Āṣāḍha, the great god Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is worshipped. He who has worshipped with lotuses the lotus-eyed Vāmana in the bright half of Āṣāḍha on the day of Kāmikā, has honoured the entire world and has worshipped the three ancient gods (viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva); so also, he who has observed the Ekādaśī—the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu—has honoured the entire world and worshipped the three ancient gods.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

9-10. O Viṣṇu, I have a great doubt here. (Please) listen. How do you sleep (in the ocean)? How have you resorted to

Bali? What do the other people do? Why do they sleep on the ground, O very intelligent one, tell (i.e. explain) this. I have a great doubt.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

11-16. O best king, listen to the great account which removes sins, (and) by merely hearing which all sins would perish. O king, formerly in the Tretā age there was a demon named Bali. Greatly devoted to me he worshipped me everyday. With various sacrifices the demon worshipped me, the ancient one. O king, with great devotion he performed sacrifices and observed vows. Then having deliberated in many ways with Indra, Brāhaspati and (other) deities, I though worshipped with hymns (by Bali) in various ways, conquered the demons with my Vāmana-form in my fifth incarnation, with (i.e. after taking up) a very fierce form of the nature of (i.e. pervading) the entire universe by prevarication. (Bali, however,) remained firm resorting to truth only. Śukra warded him off saying, 'This is Viṣṇu'.

17-26. O king, I begged for land measured by my three steps and a half. When he offered the water just for conveying his intention, O king, listen, I took up a form like this: I put my feet in the 'Bhūr' world, and I put knees in the 'Bhuvas' world. I put my waist in the 'Svar' world, and belly in the 'Mahas' world. I put my heart in the 'Jana' world, and my neck in 'Tapas' world. I put my face in the 'Satya' world, and head above it. The planets like the Moon, the Sun, so also the constellations, so also gods with Indra, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas and kinnaras praised (me) with various hymns from the Vedas. Seizing Bali by his hand, I occupied the earth in three steps. Then I placed half the step on his head. O king, the demon, my worshipper, went to the lower world. I threw down the demon. What else did I do after it? He was bent with modesty, Viṣṇu was very much pleased. Kāmikā in the bright half of Āṣāḍha is Viṣṇu's day. On that day one of my forms remains resorting to Bali. Another (form) lies on the back of Śeṣa in the ocean, O great king, till the coming (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika. Till then he would be very religious and devoted to best of all duties.

27-37. A man who observes the vow goes to the best position. For this reason, O king, it should be carefully observed.

There is no other (Ekādaśī) than this which is pure and which destroys sins. On that day on which the lord of gods holding a conch, a disc, and a mace sleeps, a man should worship the god holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, and he should especially, with devotion, keep awake at night. (Even) Brahmā is not able to measure the religious merit of (i.e. due to) it. O king, he who, in this way, observes this best vow of Ekādaśī, which removes all sins, gives pleasures and salvation, even though a cāṇḍāla, always lives in my heaven doing what is dear to me. Those men who pass the four months (from the eleventh of the bright half of Āṣāḍha to the eleventh of the bright half of Kārtika) by offering lights, and with the vow of eating on a palāśa-leaf, are dear to me. When Viṣṇu is lying (on Śeṣa), a man should sleep on the ground. He should avoid vegetables in Śrāvaṇa, and curd in Bhādrapada. He should avoid milk in Āśvina, and give up two-leaved (grains) in Kārtika. Or remaining in celibacy, he would reach the highest position. O king, due to the Ekādaśī-vow a man is freed from sins. It should always be observed. It should never be forgotten. That Ekādaśī falling in the dark half between Śayanī and Prabodhinī should be observed by a householder; never any other. O king, a man should listen to the great account which removes sins. He (thereby) obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Kāmikā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What is the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Śrāvaṇa? Tell that to us, O Govinda, salutation to you.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2. O king, listen. I shall narrate to you the account that removes sins and which formerly Brahmā told to Nārada who asked (him about it).

Nārada said:

3-4. O lotus-seated lord, I desire to hear from you, what would be (i.e. is) the name of Ekādaśī in the dark half of Śrāvaṇa. Who is its (presiding) deity? What is the manner (in which it is to be observed)? What is its religious merit. O lord tell (this).

Hearing these words of him Brahmā spoke (the following) words:

Brahmā said:

5-7. O Nārada, listen. With the desire for the good of the people, I shall tell you about the Ekādaśī named Kāmikā (which falls) in the dark half of Śrāvaṇa. Merely by hearing about it, one would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Listen to the fruit which a man who worships the lord of gods holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, gets. Listen to the meritorious fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who would worship or who meditates upon Hari, Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, called Śrī Hari.

8-18. He does not obtain that fruit (by bathing) in Gaṅgā, at Kāśī, Naimiṣa or Puṣkara, which he gets by worshipping Kṛṣṇa on that day. He obtains that fruit by worshipping Kṛṣṇa, which he obtains (by bathing) at the time of a portent foreboding a great calamity, when Jupiter is in the Leo sign, in Godāvarī or Daṇḍaka. Both, he who gives the earth along with the oceans and he who observes the Kāmikā-vow, are said to get the same fruit. The man who observes the Kāmikā-vow obtains the fruit which he who would give a milch cow along with articles of household use, gets. The excellent man who would worship god Viṣṇu in Śrāvaṇa, has worshipped gods with gandharvas, uragas and pannagas. Therefore, sin-fearing men should, with all efforts, and according to their capacity, worship Viṣṇu on the Kāmikā day. The Kāmikā-vow is best for the emancipation of those who are plunged in the ocean of the worldly existence, full of the mud of sins. There is no other (vow) than this (so) pure and sin-removing. O Nārada, know it to be like this. Viṣṇu himself has said (so). Know that the fruit of (i.e. got by) the

observers of Kāmikā-vow is much superior to the fruit obtained by those devoted to the knowledge of the supreme spirit. The man who, after having kept awake at night, observes the Kāmikā-vow, does not see the fearful Yama, or does not face a calamity. He does not see (i.e. is not born in) a bad stock due to his observing the Kāmikā-vow. The meditating saints have reached final emancipation after observing the Kāmikā-vow.

19-29. Therefore, with all efforts it should be observed by those who have controlled themselves. The man who would worship Viṣṇu with Tulasī-leaves is not tinged with sin, as a lotus-leaf with water. He obtains that fruit by worshipping Viṣṇu with a Tulasī-leaf, which he obtains by giving a bhāra of gold or fourfold silver of it. Worshipped with gems, pearls, lapis lazuli, corals etc. Viṣṇu is not so pleased as he is with Tulasī-leaves. The sin of him, (right) from his birth, who has worshipped Viṣṇu with Tulasī-sprouts certainly perishes. Salutation to Tulasī which, when seen, destroys the entire heap of sins, which, when touched, purifies the body, which, when saluted, removes diseases, which, when sprinkled over, frightens Yama, which, when planted, brings about the vicinity of lord Kṛṣṇa, and which, when placed at his feet, gives salvation instantly. Citra-gupta is not able to know the measure of the religious merit of the man who gives (i.e. keeps) a light day and night on the day of Viṣṇu (i.e. on the day sacred to Viṣṇu). The dead ancestors of him whose lamp burns in front of Viṣṇu, remain in heaven and are gratified with nectar. Having burnt a lamp with ghee or sesamum oil, he, being honoured with a hundred crores of lamps, goes to the Sun's world. I have told you this importance of Kāmikā. Men should, therefore, observe it which removes all sins, which removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, which removes (the sin of) causing abortion. It gives (them) the abode of Viṣṇu, and gives the fruit of great religious merit. A man endowed with faith, on hearing about the greatness of this, obtains (i.e. goes to) Viṣṇu's world, and is free from all sins.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

*Putradā Ekādaśī**Yudhiṣṭhira said:*

1. What would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī (falling) in the bright half of Śrāvaṇa? O Madhusūdana, please favour me and tell it to me.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2-9. O king, listen attentively to this great sin-removing account, by hearing which the fruit would be that of a Vājapeya. At the beginning of Dvāpara age formerly in the city of Māhiṣmatī a king named Mahījit ruled over his kingdom. The kingdom did not give happiness to him who was sonless. A sonless man does not have happiness in this world or in the next. He passed a long time in the thought of (i.e. expecting) a son. But the king did not have son giving all happiness to men. Noticing himself to be advanced in age the king became anxious. Then being in the assembly among his subjects he said these words: “O people, in this (my) life I have not committed a sin. I have not put into my treasury money that is unjustly earned. I have never taken away a brāhmaṇa’s wealth, nor the wealth of a deity. I have never taken away another’s deposit, which (act) causes great sin; I have looked after the people like my own sons, and I have conquered the land righteously. I have inflicted punishment on the wicked, even though they were like my brother or son. The eminent persons were always honoured by me and I have not hated people.

10-17. O best brāhmaṇas, think over as to why a son is not born in the house of me who am thus talking about a righteous path.

Hearing these words the brāhmaṇas along with the subjects and the family-priest held consultation and went to a dense forest. Here and there they saw hermitages resorted to by sages. Desiring the well-being of the king, they saw the best sage Lomaśa who was guileless, who was (all) alone practising a severe penance, who was ancient, who did not eat food, who had con-

quered his soul, and who had controlled his anger, who knew the truth about righteousness, who was proficient in all sacred texts, who had (lived) a long life, who was magnanimous, who had hair, and who resembled Brahmā. As each kalpa passed, one of his hair withered. Therefore, this great sage who was omniscient, was named Lomaśa. Seeing him all were glad and came near him. They saluted him according to decorum, as he deserved and as laid down (in the sacred texts). Bowing with modesty, they said to one another: “Due to our good fortune only we have come across this best sage.” Seeing them bowing like that, the best sage said:

Lomaśa said:

18-19. Why have you come here? Tell it to me with the reason. Why were you delighted on seeing me and why are you praising me? I shall certainly do what would be beneficial to you. There is no doubt that the existence of (people) like me is for obliging others.

The people said:

20-25. Listen. We shall tell the reason of our arrival. We have come to you to get our doubt removed. There is none greater than Brahmā except you. Therefore, for some work we have approached you. This king Mahījit by name is at present sonless. O brāhmaṇa, we are his subjects, looked after by him like his own sons. Seeing him sonless, and distressed by his grief, we have, entertaining a firm thought, come here to practise penance. O sage, give instruction as to how the king would have a son.

Hearing these words of them, he remained in meditation for some time. Knowing his former birth, the sage replied:

Lomaśa said:

26-30. In the previous existence he was a poor vaiśya, and doing evil deeds and engaged in trade he roamed from village to village. On the tenth day in the bright half of Jyeṣṭha, when the Sun had reached the centre of the sky (he saw) a pond on the border of a village. Seeing the well (pond?) containing water

he decided to drink water. At once there came a cow with her calf. Being oppressed by thirst and by heat, she drank water. Preventing her who was drinking water, he himself drank it. Due to that sinful act the king became sonless. Due to the religious merit of some (former) existence he obtained the kingdom free from nuisance.

The people said:

31. It is heard in (i.e. learnt from) the Purāṇa that sin perishes due to religious merit. Advise about the religious merit due to which the sin would perish, and by your grace the king would have a son.

Lomaśa said:

32-44. O men, observe the Ekādaśī which (falls in) the bright half of Śrāvaṇa, is called Putradā, and gives desired objects.

Hearing this, and saluting the sage, they went (back) to the city and observed that vow duly, justly and by keeping awake. The people gave its very pure religious merit to the king. When the religious merit was given, the queen had conception. When the time of delivery arrived, she gave birth to a bright son. A pavitraka (a ring) was fashioned in honour of Vāsudeva on the twelfth day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa when the Sun was in Cancer. (The pavitraka was fashioned with) gold, silver, copper, silken threads or silken cloth and lotuses, kuśa, kāśa, or with cotton cut by a brāhmaṇa woman. Having bathed he should purify the thread of three strands. On the previous day, at the time separated by the times of milking the cow, preliminary consecration (should be done). Having saluted the brāhmaṇas and the feet of the preceptor, he should keep awake with the auspicious sounds of songs. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, bhīllas, so also sūdras,—all following their own practices, should devoutly fashion the pavitraka. Then he should duly give it to his preceptor. He should also honour the brāhmaṇas—Viṣṇu's devotees—with sandal and flowers. A brāhmaṇa should offer it to Viṣṇu with the hymn: *Ato devā*. A sūdra should do so with the root-hymns to Śiva as to Viṣṇu. Every year men should fashion

pavitrakas. So also those who desire pleasures and salvation in the mundane existence which is an ocean of grief. He who does not fashion the pavitraka according to the rule, has his worship—i.e. the worship of Viṣṇu's devotee—(rendered) fruitless. Hearing the importance of this (vow) a man is free from sins. Having obtained in this world the pleasure from his son, he would go to heaven after death.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Ajā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Janārdana, I desire to hear what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Bhādrapada. (Please) tell it.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-11. O king, listen attentively. I shall tell (you) in detail. This Ekādaśī is called Ajā and it destroys all sins. The sins of him who on this day observes this vow after worshipping Viṣṇu, perish; (so also they perish) even by listening to the vow. O king, there is nothing greater than this, beneficial for both the worlds. I have told you the truth. My words are not false. Formerly there was a king known as Hariścandra. He was an emperor, true to his word, and the lord of the whole earth. Due to the acquisition of (the fruit of) some act he was deprived of his kingdom. He sold his wife and son and also himself. The righteous king became the slave of a cāṇḍāla. O lord of kings resorting to truth he removed the garments of the dead; (but) that best king never swerved from truth. In this way the king passed many years. Then the king, full of anxiety, became very much distressed. "What should I do? Where should I go? How shall I escape (this)?" When he who was plunged into the ocean of sin, was thinking like this, a certain sage knowing that the king was distressed came (there). Brahmā has created brāh-

maṇas to oblige others. The best king, seeing the excellent sage, bowed (to him).

12-23. Joining the palms of his hands, he stood before Gautama. He told (him) his account accompanied by (i.e. full of) grief. Hearing the king's words, Gautama was amazed. The sage instructed the king in this vow. The sage instructed the king (in the observance of) the vow. "O king, the very auspicious Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Bhādrapada called Ajā and giving great merit has come. O king, observe its vow. Your sin will come to an end. Due to your good fortune it will fall on the seventh day (from today). Engaging yourself in a fast; keep awake at night. When thus this vow is observed, your sin will certainly perish. O best king, due to the efficacy of your religious merit, I have come (here)." Telling like this, the sage disappeared. Hearing the sage's words, the king observed the excellent vow. When the vow was observed, the king's sin perished in a moment. O best king, listen to the efficacy of this vow. There would be the end of the misery which (otherwise) would be had for many years. Due to the efficacy of the vow the king overcame his misery. He was united with his wife and lived with his son. Drums sounded in the sky and shower of flowers fell from the sky. By the efficacy of the Ekādaśī he got the kingdom free from (any) nuisance. Along with (the residents of) his city and his paraphernalia, Hariścandra obtained heaven. O king, those men who observe the vow of this kind, get free from all sins and go to heaven. By reciting (about this) vow or even by listening to (a man) would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Padmā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. What would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada? O Keśava, tell about its deity and manner (in which it is observed).

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O king, I shall tell you the wonderful account which Brahmā narrated to the magnanimous Nārada.

Nārada said:

3. O Brahman, salutation to you. Tell me of what name would be the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada? I desire to hear this for propitiating Viṣṇu.

Brahmā said:

4-13. O best sage, you are Viṣṇu's devotee. You have indeed asked well. In this world there is nothing superior to this day of Viṣṇu. This Ekādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada is known as Padmā. On it Viṣṇu is worshipped. (This) excellent vow should be observed. I shall tell you an auspicious old account by just hearing which (even) a great sin perishes. A royal sage, Māndhātṛ by name, born in the family of Vivasvat, was a valorous emperor who was true to his word. He righteously looked after his subjects like his own sons. In his kingdom there was no famine. There were no agonies or diseases. His subjects were healthy and prospered with wealth and grains. The wealth in the treasury of the king was earned justly. All castes and stages of life abided by their duties. In the kingdom of that king the land resembled the desire-yielding cow. When he was ruling like this, many groups of years passed. And one year there was indeed the maturity of his acts. The cloud(s) did not shower (water) in his country for three years. By that his subjects, oppressed by hunger, were frustrated. They were without Svāhā (i.e. offerings to gods), Svadhā (i.e. oblations to dead ancestors), Vaṣaṭkāra (i.e. oblations to deities) and Vedic study. Due to his misfortune, his country was troubled by (ill) luck. Then the subjects gathered and said these words to the king:

The subjects said:

14-16. O best king, listen to the words of your subjects. In the Purāṇa(s) the wise have called āpa (water) nārā (water). That is the lord's abode. Therefore, he is called Nārāyaṇa. Viṣṇu, the lord in the form of rain, is present everywhere. He

alone causes rain, from rain comes up food and from that subjects (spring up). O best king, without it the subjects perish. O king, do that by which security of possession would take place.

The king said:

17-26. You have told the truth. You have told no lie. Since food is called Brahman, everything is placed in food. Beings spring up from food. The world exists due to food. This is heard in (i.e. from) the very extensive Purāṇa (literature). Due to the bad behaviour of the kings the subjects would be oppressed. (Even) thinking with my intellect I do not see anything like this done by me. Yet with a desire for the well-being of the subjects I shall strive. The king having innumerable attendants thought like this, (and) saluting the Creator went into a dense forest. He went to principal sages and to hermitages resorted to by ascetics. Then the king saw the sage Aṅgiras, Brahmā's son, who had brightened the quarters with his lustre and who was, as it were, another Brahmā. Seeing him, the delighted king got down from his vehicle, and the restrained one, with the palms of his hands joined, saluted his feet. Having greeted him with blessings (like 'May it be well with you'), he asked about the well-being of the king in the seven constituents (of the kingdom). The king told it and asked him about his health. He who was offered a seat and had received a respectful offering, sat near him. The king, asked by the sage about the reason of his arrival, replied:

The king said:

27-28. O revered one, when I was righteously looking after the earth, there was a drought. I do not see the reason for this. I have come to you to get my doubt removed. Give delight to my subjects by (securing) their welfare.

The sage said:

29-31. O king, this is the Kṛta age, best among the ages. In this (age) people are devoted to Brahman, and Dharma has four feet. In this age (only) brāhmaṇas practice penance, not other people. O king, in your country a cāṇḍāla is practising penance.

For this reason the cloud does not shower. Make an effort to kill him, by which (your) sin will come to an end.

The king said:

32. I shall not kill that innocent one practising penance. Instruct me in righteousness which will destroy the trouble.

The sage said:

33-41. If this is so, then, O king, observe the Ekādaśī-vow. In the bright half of Bhādrapada (falls the Ekādaśī) well-known as Padmā. By its power there will certainly be good rainfall. This one gives all prosperity and destroys all calamities. O king, observe its vow along with your subjects and attendants.

Having heard these words of the sage, the king came home. In the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada he along with all his subjects and the four castes observed the vow of Padmā. O king, when thus the vow was observed, the cloud showered. Land was inundated with water and was resplendent with corn. By the power of the best sage people got happiness. For this reason this excellent vow should be thus observed. On this (day) a man should give a pitcher full of water along with curd and rice and well covered, so also an umbrella and (a pair of) sandals to a brāhmaṇa. (He should pray:) “Salutations to you, O wise Govinda, called Śravaṇa. Destroying the streams of (my) sins, give me all pleasures. Give pleasures and salvation and happiness to people.” By reciting or listening to (this account a man) is free from all sins.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Indirā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. (Please) favour me and tell me, O Viṣṇu, as to what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī in the dark half of Āśvina.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2-10a. The name (of the Ekādaśī falling) in the dark half of Āśvina is Indirā. By its power (even) a great sin perishes. It gives a (good) cause to the dead ancestors that have gone to (i.e. born in) a low stock. O king, listen attentively to the sin-removing great story. By hearing it a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice. Formerly, O king, in Kṛtayuga there was a prince named Indrasena. He was the lord of Māhiṣmatī. That king, endowed with glory, righteously looked after (his kingdom). He possessed sons and grandsons and had wealth and grains. The king, the lord of Māhiṣmatī, was solely devoted to Viṣṇu. The king repeating internally Viṣṇu's names giving salvation, duly passed his time and meditated upon the Supreme Spirit. When the king, one day, was comfortably seated in his assembly, there came down from the sky the sage Nārada. Seeing him to have arrived, he, getting up with the palms of his hands folded, duly honoured him and seated him on a seat. The best king said to the sage seated comfortably:

The king said:

10b-11. O best sage, by your grace everything of me is prosperous. By seeing you all my sacrifices and rites have become fruitful. O divine sage, favour me and tell me the reason of your arrival.

Nārada said:

12-18. O best king, listen to my wonderful words. O best king, from Brahmā's world I had gone to the world of Yama. Devoutly honoured by Yama, I sat on an excellent seat. The religious, truthful son of the Sun (i.e. Yama) waited upon me.

In the assembly of the deity of Śrāddhas (i.e. of Yama), I saw your father, doer of many righteous acts, there as a result of a fault in a vow. He has told (i.e. given) a message (for you). Listen to it, O lord of people. "A king known as Indrasena is the lord of Māhiṣmatī. Tell him, O brāhmaṇa, that I am staying with Yama due to some hindrance, due to my former existence. O son, giving me the religious merit of the Indirā(-vow) send me to heaven." Thus addressed, I have come to you, O king. O king, for (the attainment of) heaven by your father, observe the Indirā(-vow). By the power of that vow your father will go to heaven.

The king said:

19. O revered one, favour me and tell me about the Indirā-vow. In what manner is it to be done? In which fortnight, and on which date?

Nārada said:

20-31a. O lord of kings, listen. I (shall) tell you the manner of this auspicious vow (i.e. in which way it is to be observed). On the auspicious tenth day in the dark half of the month of Āśvina, a man, with a devout mind, should bathe in the morning. Then, bathing in the mid-day he should be composed; and with faith he should perform the Śrāddha to gratify his manes. Then eating once only, he should sleep on the ground at night. When on the Ekādaśī day the bright morning has dawned, he should wash his face without cleaning his teeth; and should devoutly take up the vow of fasting. "Remaining without food and without all pleasures to-day, I shall eat tomorrow, O lotus-eyed one. O Viṣṇu, be my refuge." Having imposed such a restriction (upon him) he should at mid-day duly bath the tip of the Śālagrāma stone. Having worshipped Viṣṇu with incense, sandal etc., he should at night keep awake in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. Then, when the morning of the twelfth day comes, he should after worshipping Viṣṇu duly perform the Śrāddha. Endowed with faith, he should perform the Śrāddha to gratify his manes. That Śrāddha which is offered with the flour of wheat would be done (in a) pure (way). So also would be the Śrāddha offered with barley, rice, sesamum-seeds, beans,

wheat and grams. O king, having honoured brāhmaṇas with gifts, he should worship them. (Then) controlled in speech, he himself should eat with his kinsmen, daughter's son and sons etc. O king, being careful observe the vow in this manner. O king, your dead ancestors will go to Viṣṇu's world.

31b-36. Speaking thus to the king, the sage disappeared, O king. The king, along with (the inmates of) his harem, and with sons and servants, observed the excellent vow in accordance with the manner told (by the sage). O son of Kuntī, when the vow was observed, a shower of flowers fell from the sky. His father, mounted on Garuḍa, went to Viṣṇu's abode. The royal sage Indrasena too, having ruled his kingdom free from nuisance and having installed his son on the throne, himself went to heaven. I have told you the importance of the Indirā-vow. A man, on reciting or listening to it is free from all sins. After enjoying all pleasures here (i.e. in this world) he would live for a long time in Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Pāpāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Madhusūdana, be pleased and tell as to what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the bright half of Āśvina.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2-10. O lord of kings, listen. I shall tell you about the importance of the Ekādaśī which would fall in the bright half of Āśvina—the importance which destroys sins. The great (Ekādaśī) is known as Pāpāṅkuṣā and removes all sins. On that day a man should worship me named Padmanābha. That fruit which a man with his senses well-controlled for a long time gets, and which leads to the acquisition of all desired objects, and which

gives men heaven and salvation, is obtained by saluting the eagle-bannered god (Viṣṇu). A man, full of delusions, having committed many sins, does not go to hell after having saluted Viṣṇu, the remover of all sins. All those sacred places and holy abodes that are there on the earth, all of them are reached (by a man) by means of reciting Viṣṇu's appellations. Those men who have submitted themselves to god Śārṅgadhara Viṣṇu, never suffer from the torments of the world of Yama. A man, after having accidentally fasted on an Ekādaśī day, does not suffer from the torments of Yama even after having committed a fearful sin. A man who being a devotee of Viṣṇu, censures Śiva, does not go to Viṣṇu's world. He certainly goes to hell. A Pāśupata who being a devotee of Śiva, censures Viṣṇu, is roasted in Raurava (hell) till the (periods of the) fourteen Indras are over.

11-22. Like the vow of Viṣṇu which destroys sins, there is no other (vow) in the three worlds that purifies (men). O king, as long as a living being would not fast on the auspicious day of Viṣṇu, sins would remain in his body. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices do not equal to the sixteenth portion of the Ekādaśī-fast. There is no (other) vow like the Ekādaśī-vow. Even those who observe it under some pretext, do not go to Yama. This (vow) gives heaven and salvation. It gives good health of the body. This gives a wife sons; this gives wealth and friends. O king, Gaṅgā, or Gayā, or Kāśī, or Puṣkara, or Kurukṣetra is not more auspicious than the day sacred to Viṣṇu. O king, having fasted at night and fasted on the day sacred to Viṣṇu the position of Viṣṇu is obtained without trouble. A man would emancipate ten members on his mother's side, ten on his father's side, and ten on his wife's side, O lord of kings. Men (observing this) have four arms, divine forms, have banners of (Garuḍa) the enemy of serpents, and white garments, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. A man having fasted on an Ekādaśī (day) in his childhood, youth, or old age does not face a calamity, O best king. A man observing a fast on the Pāpāṅkuṣā (Ekādaśī) in the bright half of Āśvina is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man having given gold, sesamum-seeds, land, a cow, food and water, so also

(a pair of sandals), an umbrella (to a brāhmaṇa) does not see Yama.

23-28. He whose days come and go without meritorious acts, does not, though breathing, live, like the bellows of a blacksmith. O best king, even a poor man should make his day fruitful by always, and according to his capacity, doing acts like a bath and (giving) gifts. The doers of meritorious acts like a sacrifice, a bath, muttering (of hymns etc.), meditation, sacrificial sessions do not see (i.e. suffer from) the torments of Yama. Persons doing such meritorious acts are seen to be living a long life, possessing wealth, born in a noble family and free from diseases. What is the use of talking much in this matter. People go to (i.e. suffer from) calamities by means of unrighteousness. By means of righteous acts they go up to heaven. No doubt should be raised in this case. O sinless king, I have thus told you about the importance of Pāpāṅkuṣā, about which you had asked me. What else do you want to hear?

CHAPTER SIXTY

Ramā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Janārdana, through favour and love for me, tell me what would be (i.e. is) the name of the Ekādaśī falling in the dark half of Kārtika.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

2-12a. O lord of kings, listen. I shall tell you. In the dark half of Kārtika falls the very auspicious Ekādaśī. It is called Ramā. It is great and removes great sins. O king, as the occasion has come, I shall tell you its importance. O king, formerly there was a king, Mucukunda by name. He had formed friendship with (Indra) the lord of gods. He also was fully friendly with Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera, and Bibhiṣaṇa, O king. That king was

a great devotee of Viṣṇu and was true to his word. When he was ruling over his kingdom from which troublesome persons were removed, a daughter Candrabhāgā, (resembling) the excellent river (Candrabhāgā) was (born) in his house. She was given (in marriage) to Śobhana, the son of Candrasena. Once he came to his father-in-law's house, O king. The very meritorious day of the Ekādaśī-vow (also) came. When the day of the vow came, Candrabhāgā thought: 'O lord of gods, what will happen? My husband is very weak. He is not able to put up with hunger, and my father's rule is strict.' When the tenth day comes, his drum is beaten: 'Do not eat, do not eat on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu.' Hearing the sound of the drum, Śobhana said to his wife: "O dear one, what should I do? Advise me, O beautiful one."

Candrabhāgā said:

12b-15a. O lord, today nobody in my father's house is to eat (anything). On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu elephants, horses, (their) young ones, so also other beasts are not to eat grass or (drink) water. Then, O dear one, how would human beings eat on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu? O dear one, if you eat (anything today) then you will be censured. Thinking like this to yourself, make your mind strong.

Śobhana said:

15b-23. O dear one, these words are true. I shall fast (today). Whatever is laid down by destiny will just take place in the same way.

Thus resolving, he observed the vow. With his body oppressed with hunger, he became extremely distressed. While he was thinking like this, the sun went to the western mountain. That night enhanced the joy of Viṣṇu's devotees engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu, and with their minds attached to keeping awake. (But) it became very painful to Śobhana. At the time of sunrise, Śobhana expired. The king got him cremated with (pieces of) wood fit for a king. Candrabhāgā did not abandon her body with her husband. Having performed his funeral rites, she remained in her father's house. (And) O greatest king, due to

the power of the Ramā-vow, Śobhana reached the divine charming city on the peak of the Mandara mountain, which (city) was excellent with innumerable qualities. It was adorned with large houses with golden pillars, and gems and lapis lazuli, and with beautiful crystals of different shapes.

24-28. Being praised by gandharvas, and waited upon by celestial nymphs, Śobhana mounted upon the throne. He had very white umbrella (held over his head) and chowries (were waved). He had (put on) a crown and ear-rings. He was adorned with necklaces and bracelets. There Śobhana shone like a great king of kings. In the city of Mucukunda there was (a brāhmaṇa) known as Somaśarman. The brāhmaṇa, wandering for pilgrimage, saw him. Recognising him to be the king's son-in-law he approached him. Śobhana too, knowing that Somaśarman had come, quickly got up from his seat and saluted the best brāhmaṇa. He asked him about the well-being of his father-in-law, the king, and about his wife Candrabhāgā, and about the city.

Somaśarman said:

29-31a. O king, there is well-being in your father's house. Candrabhāgā is all right and in the city everywhere there is well-being. O king, tell me your own account. It is a great wonder. Such a wonderful and beautiful city has not been seen by anyone. O king, tell me this: How did you obtain this?

Śobhana said:

31b-32. In the dark half of Kārtika falls the Ekādaśī called Ramā. Having fasted on that day, I have secured this unstable city. O best brāhmaṇa, do that by which it will be stable.

The brāhmaṇa said:

33. O lord of kings, how (i.e. why) is it unstable? How will it be stable? Tell me the truth. Then I shall do it, not otherwise.

Śobhana said:

34-35. O brāhmaṇa, I observed this best vow without faith. Therefore, I think, it is unstable. Listen (by which) it will be

stable. The very beautiful Candrabhāgā is Mucukunda's daughter. Tell her this account. (Then) it will be stable.

Kṛṣṇa said:

36. Hearing his words, he went to the city of Mucukunda; (and) the brāhmaṇa narrated the entire account to Candrabhāgā.

Somaśarman said:

37. O auspicious one, I actually saw your beloved husband. I (also) saw his unconquerable city resembling (that of) Indra. He described it to be unstable. Do that by which it will be stable.

Candrabhāgā said:

38-45. O brāhmaṇa-sage, take me, desiring to see my husband, there. By means of the merit of my vow I shall make the city stable. O brāhmaṇa, do that by which we two shall be united. Great religious merit is obtained by bringing together the separated ones.

Hearing this, Somaśarman went with her to Vāmadeva's hermitage near the Mandara mountain. Vāmadeva listened to the full account told by them. He sprinkled (water over) the bright Candrabhāgā with Vedic hymns. By the power of the hymn recited by the sage, and due to observing the vow on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu her body became divine and she obtained a divine condition. With her eyes dilated due to great joy she approached her husband. Seeing his wife to have come, Śobhana was very much delighted. Calling her he made her sit on his left side. Then Candrabhāgā said (these) dear words to her husband: "O dear one, listen to the beneficial words: I have religious merit. When I crossed the eighth year (while living) in my father's house.

46-54. I have since then, observed the Ekādaśī vow in the manner as it was told and with my mind full of faith. By the power of that (religious merit) the city will be stable. It will be rich in all desired objects till the final deluge." O best king, in this way she, enjoying divine pleasures, of a divine form, and adorned with divine ornaments, rejoiced with her husband.

Śobhana, of a divine body, also rejoiced with her on the peak of Mandara mountain by the power of the Ṛamā-vow. This vow is like the desire-yielding gem or like the desire-yielding cow. O king, I have told you about the (Ekādaśī) called Ramā. O sinless one, you have heard its full importance. I have told you the sin-destroying importance of the vows of the Ekādaśīs of both the fortnights. As is the (one of the) dark (fortnight), so is the (one of the) bright fortnight. No discrimination should be done between the two. Ekādaśī, when observed, gives pleasures and salvation to men. As a white cow is like a black one—as their milk is similar, similarly the two Ekādaśīs are said to give a similar fruit. A man who listens to the importance of the Ekādaśī-vows is freed from all sins and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Prabodhint Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O Kṛṣṇa, I have duly heard from you the importance of Ramā (Ekādaśī). O you who respect (others, now) tell me about the Ekādaśī falling in the bright half of Kārtika.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

2. O king, I shall tell you about (the Ekādaśī) falling in the bright half of Kārtika, as it was told by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, to Nārada.

Nārada said:

3. Tell me in detail the importance of the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī) on which Viṣṇu, the propounder of righteousness, keeps awake.

Brahmā said:

4-11. O best sage, listen to the greatness of Prabodhinī which destroys sins, which increases religious merit, and which

gives salvation to men of good minds. Till the Prabodhini of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu (falling) in Kārtika does not arrive, all the holy places including the oceans and the lakes roar. O best brāhmaṇa, Gaṅgā-Bhāgīrathī roars on the earth till the Ekādaśī awakening Viṣṇu (and falling) in Kārtika and destroying sins has not come. A man would obtain even through one fast on the Prabodhini (day) (that which is obtained by means of) thousands of horse-sacrifices, and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices. The Haribodhini (i.e. Prabodhini Ekādaśī) gives, O son, even that which is difficult to obtain, which is difficult to reach, and which is not within the range of the three worlds, even though it is not asked for. The Haribodhini, when fasted on, gives people splendour, wealth, intellect, kingdom, happiness and riches. This (Ekādaśī) that destroys sins, burns even when it is fasted on once the sins that are declared and have the size of Meru and Mandara. Keeping awake at night on this (Ekādaśī) burns like a heap of cotton the sin committed in thousands of former existences.

12-20. O best sage, he who, according to his nature, duly observes a fast on Prabodhini, gets the fruit as declared (in sacred texts). O best among the excellent sages, a man who duly does the good act as enjoined, gets the fruit (as large) as Meru. He who without the proper manner does a good act as much (i.e. as big) as Meru, obtains its fruit just of the measure of an atom, O Nārada. The dead ancestors of those who will devoutly observe (the vow of) Prabodhini, are delighted and live in Viṣṇu's world. A man, even after having committed a terrible sin like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, is freed from the hellish misery and goes to the highest place of Viṣṇu (on observing the Prabodhini-vow). Having kept awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, the sins of a man are washed. O brāhmaṇa, that fruit difficult to obtain by means of the sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, is easily obtained by means of keeping awake on Prabodhini. A man obtains that fruit by keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, which he would get by bathing in all holy places and by giving gold or land. He who has observed the Prabodhini in Kārtika, is alone born fortunate and has himself only purified his family. Though death is certain for men, wealth and body are uncertain.

21-25. Realising this, O best sage, the day of (i.e. sacred to)

Viṣṇu should be observed (as a fast-day). All the holy places that are there in the three worlds, are (present) in the house of the one who properly observes the (fast on) the Prabodhini. What is the use of many (other) acts of religious merit for him who has observed (a fast on) the Prabodhini (Ekādaśī)? This Haribodhini (falling) in Kārtika gives sons and grandsons. He (alone) is wise, is a meditating saint, an ascetic, and has controlled his senses (who fasts on Prabodhini). He (who) fasts on Haribodhini, gets pleasures and salvation. This one, helping the essence of righteousness, is very dear to Viṣṇu. A man who devoutly observes (this vow) would enjoy pleasures. By fasting on Prabodhini a man does not enter a womb (i.e. he is not reborn).

26-33. Therefore, giving up all other meritorious acts, a man should observe (this vow). All the sin committed through deeds, mind and speech is washed by Viṣṇu on a man's keeping awake on Prabodhini. All that a man does like a bath, (giving) a gift, muttering (hymns), worship in honour of Viṣṇu on Prabodhini is inexhaustible. Those men who devoutly worship god Viṣṇu on that day and observe a fast on that day, are free from sins incurred during hundreds of existences. O son, this is a great vow which destroys a stream of great sins. A man should duly fast on the day of Viṣṇu's being awake and should please Viṣṇu with this vow. Illuminating all quarters he goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Men desiring brilliance and wealth should carefully observe this. Viṣṇu worshipped on this day, washes men's sin which is accumulated (by them) in their childhood, in their youth, and in their old age, so also the sin committed during hundreds of existences, even if it is small or great. This one brings wealth and grains, is auspicious, is great and removes all sins.

34-41a. By fasting on it through devotion for Viṣṇu, there would be nothing difficult to obtain. The fruit which is obtained (on bathing) at the lunar or the solar eclipse, is said to be thousandfold by keeping awake on the Prabodhini. All that—bath, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, self-study, Viṣṇu's worship, done on Prabodhini becomes crorefold. All the religious merit that would be earned by a man from his birth, becomes fruitless if the vow in Kārtika is not observed. O Nārada, a man who would spend Kārtika without observing the vow of Viṣṇu, does not obtain the fruit of the religious

merit earned during his existence. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, with all efforts he should serve Viṣṇu, the god of gods. It gives all desired objects. A man devoted to Viṣṇu, should avoid others' food in Kārtika. By avoiding others' food, he would obtain the fruit of the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. A man who would spend every day of Kārtika in (pursuing) sacred texts would burn all (his) sins, and would obtain the fruit of a myriad sacrifices.

41b-48a. Viṣṇu is not so much pleased with sacrifices, gifts, and Vājapeya etc. as he is pleased with the narration of stories from the sacred texts in Kārtika. Those who narrate Viṣṇu's account or listen to (his) auspicious accounts, or to half a verse or a quarter of a verse in Kārtika obtain the fruit of (having given) a hundred cows. Giving up all other righteous acts, sacred texts should be discussed and grasped in Kārtika before (the image of) Viṣṇu, O great sage. O best sage, he who, with (a desire for) the highest good and any (other) desire, narrates (or listens to) Viṣṇu's accounts in Kārtika, would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family. A man who regularly listens to Viṣṇu's account, especially in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O sage, he who listens to Viṣṇu's account on the day of his awakening (i.e. on the Prabodhini Ekādaśī) obtains that fruit (which is obtained) by giving (the earth) with the seven islands. O best sage, eternal world (of gods) is said to be reached by them who, after hearing the divine account of Viṣṇu, honour according to their own capacity the knower (i.e. the reader) of the account.

48b-54. O Nārada, that man who would pass Kārtika in singing and in pursuing sacred texts, is not seen by me to be reborn. O sage, the man, a meritorious soul, who does (i.e. engages himself in) singing, dancing, (playing on) musical instruments, and (listens to) the auspicious account of Viṣṇu, remains above the three worlds. With many flowers, with many fruits and camphor, agaru and saffron, Viṣṇu's worship should be done on the Prabodhini day in Kārtika, from which immeasurable religious merit is obtained, O best sage. At the time of keeping awake on the Prabodhini (night) respectful offering with various kinds of fruits should be made after taking water in a conch. A crore-fold of fruit which (is obtained by bathing)

at all holy places, that fruit which (is had) by means of all gifts, is got by giving a respectful offering on the Prabodhini day. After that the preceptor should be honoured with a meal, a covering etc., so also with gifts in order to please the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), O divine sage.

55-68. A man who listens to Bhāgavata, and a man who would listen to a Purāṇa, would obtain for every letter (of the text) the fruit due to the gift of a tawny cow. O best sage, for him who observes, according to his capacity, the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu, as has been laid down, salvation is certainly secured. Madhusūdana, the eagle-bannered god, worshipped with one ketakī-leaf, becomes very much pleased for a thousand years. The fire of hell is put out by seeing him who would worship Viṣṇu with agasti-leaves, O divine sage. Viṣṇu, the greatest person, when worshipped with mango-leaves in Kārtika, gives desired objects, as at the lunar or the solar eclipse. He who, leaving all (other) flowers, devoutly worships Viṣṇu with mango-blossoms, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. O child, all the sin of those, (even) of a myriad existences, who offer Tulasī-leaves and flowers to Viṣṇu in Kārtika, would burn. Tulasī is auspicious if it is always seen, touched, meditated upon, described, praised, planted, sprinkled and worshipped. O sage, those who everyday are devoted to Tulasī in (these) nine ways, produce religious merit lasting for thousands of crores of yugas. O sage, as long as Tulasī planted by men on the earth grows with branches, twigs, seeds, flowers and leaves, (the persons) that are born or will be born in their families, live in Viṣṇu's house for (many) thousand years till universal deluge. That fruit which exists in all flowers and leaves, is obtained by (offering) a Tulasī-leaf (to Viṣṇu) in Kārtika. Seeing that Kārtika has arrived, great Viṣṇu should be regularly worshipped with tender Tulasī-leaves. The religious merit obtained by the performance of hundreds of sacrifices and giving many gifts is obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu with Tulasī-leaves in Kārtika.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

*Kamalā Ekādaśī**Yudhiṣṭhira said:*

1-4. O revered one, I desire to listen to the best of the vows (in honour) of Viṣṇu, which removes all sins and gives (its) fruit to those who observe it. O Janārdana, tell me the account of Viṣṇu's month; what is the manner in which it is observed? What is its fruit? Which deity is worshipped during it? O Janārdana, tell me about the vow that is observed when the intercalary month arrives. What is the fruit of what gift? What should be done by men, O lord? In what a bath (should be taken)? What (hymns) should be muttered? What is said to be the manner of the worship? Which best food should be eaten in this Puruṣottama-month?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

5-18. Through love for you, I shall, O best king, narrate the sin-destroying greatness of the Puruṣottama-month. That Ekādaśī day which would come when the intercalary month has arrived, is called Kamalā, and is the best of days. By the power of that vow Lakṣmī would be favourable. One who observes (this) vow, should get up in the early part of the day, and having remembered Viṣṇu, he should duly bathe and should observe the vow. Muttering (of his names) in the house has one-fold effect, while that of doing it in a river has double that effect. (The effect) is more than a thousand-fold (if the muttering is done) in a cow-pen; and is a hundred-fold (if it is done) at auspicious, holy places and in the proximity of deities. (The effect) is a lakh(-fold if the muttering) is done near Tulasī and is infinite (if it is done) near (the image of) Viṣṇu. In Avantī there was an excellent brāhmaṇa, Śivaśarman (by name). He had five sons. The youngest one was hurtful. Then (i.e. so) he was abandoned by his father and forsaken by kinsmen and relatives. Due to the power of his bad deeds he went to a very distant forest. Once fortunately he went to the best holy place. Emaciated with hunger, having a melancholy face, he bathed in Trivenī. Oppressed by hunger, there he looked for sages' hermi-

tages. In the Puruṣottama month and the gathering of people, there he saw the excellent hermitage of the sage Harimitra. From the mouth of the brāhmaṇas, telling a sin-destroying tale, he devoutly listened to the account of Kamalā in the hermitage. The Ekādaśī is most auspicious, and gives pleasures and salvation. Having duly heard about this Kamalā day—that the Ekādaśī is most auspicious and gives pleasures and salvation, Jayaśarman at that time observed the vow with them in the lonely temple. When it was night, Lakṣmī came there. (She said:) “O brāhmaṇa, due to the power of Kamalā I (shall) grant you a boon.”

Jayaśarman said:

19-20. O beautiful one, who are you? To whom do you belong? How are you pleased with me? Are you Indrāṇī (the wife) of the lord of gods, or Bhavānī (the wife) of Śaṅkara? Or (are you) a female gandharva, a female kinnara or the spouse of either the Moon or the Sun? O you of a beautiful face, I have neither seen nor heard about the like of you.

Lakṣmī said:

21-24a. Now I am pleased. Being urged by the god of gods due to the efficacy of (the vow of) Kamalā, I have come from Vaikuṇṭha. At Prayāga, near the sages, you have observed the vow of that (Ekādaśī) which would fall in the bright half of the Puruṣottama month. O best brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that by the power of this vow in your family will be born (those) men (who) will, through my favour, obtain (good position). I have told the truth.

The brāhmaṇa said:

24b-25a. O Lakṣmī, if you are pleased, then explain the vow in detail, which those brāhmaṇas that are good introduce in tales.

Lakṣmī said:

25b-30a. This is the best (account) for the listeners to listen. It is the most holy. It is auspicious and removes bad dreams.

Therefore, it should be carefully heard. The best man who reads devotedly a verse or half a verse, is instantly freed from crores of great sins. As Garuḍa is among the birds, this is the best among months. This Dvādaśī day is among the days as the Gaṅgā is among the rivers. Even now all the gods desiring to be born in Bhārata, duly worship that Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya. The groups of deities like Brahmā always worship those who devoutly worship the lord, god Viṣṇu.

30b-43. Those who are engrossed in (muttering Viṣṇu's) names, so also those who are engaged in the narration (of the virtues of Viṣṇu), so also those who are intent upon worshipping Viṣṇu are fortunate in the Kali age. There would be the couple of Ekādaśīs: (the one) in the bright half, (the other) in the dark half. The householders should observe (a fast on) the former, and for the ascetics the latter is prescribed. (The three days—) Ekādaśī, Dvādaśī and Trayodaśī partly in the night (after Dvādaśī, are auspicious). If the fast is broken on Trayodaśī, the religious merit is that of a hundred sacrifices. “O Puṇḍarīka, fasting on the Ekādaśī day, I shall eat on the next day. O Acyuta, be my refuge.” Uttering this hymn of (i.e. sacred to) the god of gods, the Disc-holder, he, with his mind pleased, should devoutly observe a fast. The restrained observer of the vow should keep awake in front of the deity with songs, musical instruments, dances and Purāṇa-recitals. Then the observer of the vow, having got up (early) in the morning, having bathed and with his senses controlled should duly worship Viṣṇu. By bathing (the image of) Viṣṇu with pañcāmṛta¹ on Ekādaśī, and with water on Dvādaśī, a man gets assimilation into Viṣṇu. O Keśava, favour me, and be (well-)disposed through this vow to me who am blinded by the darkness of ignorance, and give me the sight of knowledge. Having thus prayed to the lord of the god of gods, the Mace-holder, he should devoutly feed brāhmaṇas and give them gifts. Then, controlled in speech and solely devoted to Viṣṇu, he should offer the five great sacrifices² and eat along with his relatives. He who, being controlled,

1. Pañcāmṛta: A collection of five sweet things, viz., milk, sugar, ghi, curd and honey used in worshipping a deity.

2. Mahāyajña: See Manu. 69.71. They are: the sacrifices offered to Brahma, deities, manes, human beings and beings.

observes in this way the auspicious Ekādaśī-vow goes to Viṣṇu's abode, return from which is difficult.

Speaking thus, and granting him a boon, Lakṣmī disappeared. The brāhmaṇa too, being rich came to his father's house.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

O king, he who would in this way observe the excellent vow of the Kamalā (Ekādaśī), and would listen to (Viṣṇu's account) on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu is freed from all sins.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Kāmadā Ekādaśī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-9. O lord of the world, I have heard about vows having many virtues. But, O Janārdana, I have heard nothing like the Ekādaśī(-vow). Again tell about the Ekādaśī(-vow) which destroys sins and gives religious merit and observing which a man would obtain the highest position in the world.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

O lord of the world, whether the Ekādaśī would be in the bright or the dark fortnight, it is not to be omitted, as it (gives) salvation and enhances happiness. O king, in the Kali-age, Ekādaśī frees a man from the bonds of the mundane existence, gives all desired objects, and destroys all sins on the earth. O best king, the Ekādaśī (falling) on a Sunday or a Tuesday or on the day of the passage of the Sun or a Planet through a Zodiacal sign should always be fasted on. It increases (the number of) sons and grandsons. Those to whom Viṣṇu is dear, should never give up the Ekādaśī-vow. It always gives a (long) life, fame, progeny and health. The Ekādaśī-vow always gives salvation, (handsome) form, kingdom. O king, those men who, endowed with great faith, observe it in the manner as is laid down, are of the form of Viṣṇu. O king, undoubtedly they are seen to be liberated while living.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

O Kṛṣṇa, how is it that those who are seen to be of the form of sin (i.e. who are sinners), are liberated while living, and are of the nature of Viṣṇu? I have a great curiosity.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

10-22. O king, how are they who in the Kali-age observe devoutly and according to the acts as are laid down in the sacred texts, the excellent Ekādaśī-vow without (drinking) water, not of the form of Viṣṇu or not liberated while living? There is no other auspicious vow like that of Ekādaśī which removes all sins and gives all desired objects to men. Having eaten once only on the Daśamī day, and observed the vow without drinking water on the Nandā (Ekādaśī day) and having broken the fast on the Bhadrā (day), men become similar to Viṣṇu. A faithful man who observes the auspicious vow of the Kāmadā (Ekādaśī) obtains his desired (objects) in this and in the next world. This (vow) is pure, purifying, and destroys great sins. O best king, this one gives pleasures and salvation to those who observe it. A man should duly worship Viṣṇu on Kāmadā with flowers, incense etc., so also with offerings of food. A devotee of Viṣṇu, who observes the vow, should avoid these ten (articles) on Daśamī: bell-metal, flesh, beans, grams, kodrava, vegetables, honey, food offered by others, eating food and sexual union. On the Ekādaśī day he should avoid gambling, sport, sleep, tāmbūla, brushing his teeth, censuring others, wickedness, harming (others) and sex, (so also he should avoid) anger, false words on the Ekādaśī day. On the Dvādaśī day he should avoid bell-metal, flesh, beans, oil, false speech, exertion, journey, food and sexual union, (mounting upon) a bull's back, others' food, and vegetables. O king, those who have observed the Kāmadā (Ekādaśī) in this manner, and having after keeping awake at night, worshipped Viṣṇu, are freed from all sins and go to the best position. O king, by reciting (about) or listening to this vow (a man) would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

The Importance of Cāturmāsya

Nārada said:

1-2. O great god, I desire to hear about the restraints to be observed during the four months that are well-known on the earth. (Please) tell them. O lord, tell me what should be done during the four months (from the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āṣāḍha to the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Kārtika) when Viṣṇu, Janārdana has gone to sleep? (Tell me) the fruit (obtained) on giving up the six flavours and keeping (i.e. not cutting) hair and nails, and (the fruit obtained) through other restraints.

Sūta said:

3-7. Hearing these words, the god with his eyes dilated, laughed, and said to Nārada, the best brāhmaṇa and treasure of penance:

Mahādeva said:

Now, O divine sage, listen. I am telling in detail. A man should observe a fast on the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āṣāḍha. He should devoutly observe the Cāturmāsya-vows. When Viṣṇu is asleep, the man should lie on the bare ground and should pass the four months till Kārtikī (Ekādaśī) would come. No installation (of an image) or rites like sacrifices take place. So also marriages, thread ceremonies, other auspicious ceremonies, royal journeys and processions do not take place (in Cāturmāsya).

8-15. Listen to the fruit of the vow of him (i.e. that he gets) who would observe vows (and practise) rites when the Garuḍa-bannered, Acyuta, Jagannātha is asleep. A man would obtain that fruit by observing the vows in Cāturmāsya which he would obtain by means of thousands of horse-sacrifices. He should make Viṣṇu sleep when the Sun is in Gemini; and should awaken Viṣṇu, when the Sun is in Libra. When the intercalary month comes, the order of the rite is like this: He should install Viṣṇu's image holding a conch, a disc, and a mace. O

Nārada, he should place the auspicious (image) wearing a yellow garment on a bed covered with a white (piece of) cloth and a pillow. And the Viṣṇu devotee, knowing (accounts in) history and Purāṇas, should bathe it with curd, milk, honey, fried grains and ghee. O brāhmaṇa, he should smear it with auspicious sandal, incense and lovely flowers, and should worship it with white flowers with (the accompaniment of) this sacred prayer: “O Jagannātha, when you are asleep, this world would be asleep. When you are awake, the world with the mobile and the immobile would be awake.”

16-29. Thus (i.e. with this prayer), O Nārada, having installed that image of Viṣṇu, he should, in front of it, take up the vow: The person (taking up the vow) may be a male or a female devotee of him, according to the division between righteousness and unrighteousness. For four months, till the awakening of the god, he should take up these restraints preceded by brushing the teeth. Then he should observe a fast. When it is the bright morning, he, having conquered his self, should do his daily acts. I shall separately tell the fruits of the doers of the acts: A man, by avoiding jaggery, would secure sweetness. A man would obtain a long(-lived) progeny by avoiding oil. O brāhmaṇa, a man becomes handsome-bodied by avoiding ghee. He would secure his enemy's destruction by avoiding bitter oil. He would secure matchless good fortune by avoiding fragrant oil. He who avoids enjoying flowers, would be a vidyādhara in heaven. A man who practises abstract meditation, would obtain Brahmā's position. He who would avoid the six flavours, viz. acrid, sour, sweet, saline, pungent, and astringent, would avoid deformity and a bad smell. By avoiding tām̐būla he becomes an enjoyer and has his throat red. By avoiding ghee he (secures) handsomeness and his body would always be glossy. O best brāhmaṇa, by giving up fruits he gets many sons. By eating from a palāśa-leaf he would be handsome and would get pleasures. One who illuminates would become bright and actually the lord of wealth. He who avoids curd and milk, obtains Goloka.¹ The order of him who observes the vow of silence, is never futile.

1. Goloka: 'Cow-world', a part of heaven, or (in later mythology) Kṛṣṇa's heaven.

By avoiding a dish of barley or rice boiled in milk he secures Indra's seat. He, abiding in religious practices and taking delight in them, would, after muttering the hundred-fold fruitful (prayer) 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa', be the only lord of vidyā-dharas in heaven.

30-41. He who always enjoys the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā by merely bathing at Puṣkara would be the lord of the earth. O wise one, he who would anoint and bathe Viṣṇu in his house would live for a kalpa in Vaikuṇṭha. There is no doubt about this. That man who goes round (the image) keeping it to his right, goes with (i.e. in) a divine aeroplane to which swans are yoked. He who sings and plays upon musical instruments would go to the world of gandharvas. O wise one, one who eats the five products of a cow, would obtain the fruit of the Cāndrāyaṇa(-vow). He who would amuse people every day with recitations from sacred texts, gets the form of Vyāsa before Viṣṇu, and then would obtain Viṣṇu's position. By worshipping (him with) the Tulasī-leaf he would go to Viṣṇu's city. Having done sprinkling, he would obtain the divine place of the celestial nymphs. By bathing with cold water in his house he would obtain a spotless, body. By avoiding a bath with hot water he would get the fruit of a bath at Puṣkara. A man who eats from leaves would obtain the fruit (of a bath) at Kurukṣetra. He who everyday sleeps on a slab of stone gets the merit due to (a bath at) Prayāga. By avoiding (drinking) water for three days he is not overcome by diseases. He who eats from copper vessels would obtain the fruit of (a bath at) Naimiṣa. Avoiding bell-metal he should use the remaining vessels. If no (other) vessels are available, he should use an earthen pot or vessels made by him of palāśa leaves or taken from others. The wise man who for one year keeps the sacred fire and the wise one who eats from the vessels—both these are said to be equal.

42-49. The eating from the vessels made of lotus-leaves is said to be equal to the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. O brāhmaṇa, each of the meals taken from the lotus-leaves is said to be equal to (the vow of) three nights. The fruit which is said (to accrue) from the Ekādaśī-fast is (the same as) the fruit of giving everything. He would get the fruit of (visiting) all holy places. He would not see hell on eating from lotus-leaves. A brāhmaṇa goes to

Vaikunṭha. The others would obtain heaven. This great divine tree is sin-destroying and gives all desired objects. O best king, a śūdra should avoid the (use of) the middle leaf. If he eats from that he would get (i.e. live in) hell for a period of fourteen Indras. He should avoid the middle leaf and eat from others. O brāhmaṇa, that śūdra who eats his meal from the middle leaf, would be purified by giving a tawny cow to a brāhmaṇa, not otherwise. A śūdra who would get a cow milked in his house, and would drink (that milk), would be born as an insect in the feces (and remain like that) for ten thousand years. And being freed from the insect-stock, he would get the beast-stock (i.e. will be born as a beast).

50-63. That man (belonging to the) śūdra (caste), who would drive a tawny bull, is, O Nārada, roasted in the Kumbhīpāka (hell) for as many years as are the hair (on his body). There is no doubt about it. If especially the śūdra has a shegoat in his house, he, drinking her milk goes to Raurava (hell). That śūdra who deals with a brāhmaṇa, is said to be belonging to a noble family, and the brāhmaṇa would be cast out (of the fold of) the Vedas. A brāhmaṇa who, prompted to doing trade, obeys a śūdra, becomes the resident of hell for as many years as he walks the steps. If a brāhmaṇa is sent by a śūdra for getting water to his house, he would go to hell by drinking that water which is like liquor. A śūdra should always give gifts to a brāhmaṇa. He should especially be devoted to him (i.e. a brāhmaṇa). Enjoying pleasures here, he goes to the next world. This (world) fashioned with the five elements is said to be useless. Therefore, he should give (gifts) to his preceptor. By that he would obtain inexhaustible fruit. O best brāhmaṇa, in this fearful Kali-age, full of sinful conduct, the wicked ones censure men of meritorious deeds. Due to censure (of others) a man becomes unhappy till the universal deluge. O wise one, there are many practices in the Kali-age. The religious practice giving merit, fulfilling desires and giving salvation is rare. A man who sleeps on the bare ground on the earth, is not troubled by diseases for ten thousand years. The man endowed with many sons and wealth, becomes free from leprosy. A man who eats (only) at night, would obtain the fruit of a pilgrimage. Without asking he gets the fruit of constructing wells and tanks. So also he who,

averse to taking (someone's) life, would avoid treachery. It is told in the Vedas that non-violence is a great virtue. .

64-80. I have heard that everywhere giving gifts, kindness and restraint (are great virtues). Therefore, even by the great these should be done with a great effort. He who gives his body, sons and grandsons to his preceptor, would by the efficacy of the gift, become dear to Viṣṇu. He who is initiated by a śūdra, and the śūdra who initiates him—both are said to be sinners till the universal deluge. That most sinful śūdra who would advise harm, drops twentyone (members of) his family into hell. O brāhmaṇa, in the Kali-age many śūdras who are heretics are seen. Even for conversing with them hell is (visited by a man). By merely seeing the śūdras who are engaged in (getting) sacred knowledge and who mutter the Gāyatrī (hymn), (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa comes (to him who sees them). The brāhmaṇas having (marks of) conches and discs and accepted in the Vaiṣṇava sects, and always engaged in duties enjoined by the Vedas, purify (even) the respectable brāhmaṇas. This should always be done in the Cāturmāsya. What is the use of telling others things again and again, O brāhmaṇa? Those men who are Viṣṇu's devotees are blessed on the earth. Their family is most blessed, and their caste is said to be most blessed. The sin of him who would eat honey when Viṣṇu is asleep, would be great. Listen to what happens on avoiding it. He would obtain that fruit which he would get by all various sacrifices. He should avoid pomegranates, citrons and coconuts. Becoming a deity and moving in an aeroplane, he would go to Viṣṇu's position. The fortunate one, being rich, is born in an affluent family. That man who would pass the four months by eating once only, is honoured in Viṣṇu's world for as many thousand years as the muhūrtas after the sun have passed. That man who would avoid rice, barley and wheat (in the Cāturmāsya), would get that fruit which is declared by the sages to be the fruit of a horse-sacrifice duly performed with gifts. He possesses wealth and grains and has many sons. The fruit of offering with Tulasī(-leaves), sesamum-seeds and darbhas, is especially crore-fold in Cāturmāsya, when he would do it with the three articles (like Tulasī-leaves) when Viṣṇu is asleep.

81-94. They too rejoice near Viṣṇu for crores of yugas. Those who sing a line or half a line, half a ṛk or ṛks in front of Viṣṇu, are undoubtedly released. He who avoids sexual union when god (Viṣṇu is asleep, i.e. during the Cāturmāsya) is honoured in Viṣṇu's world for the period of a Manu. By avoiding curd, milk, so also butter milk, jaggery and vegetables, a man gets release. There is no doubt about it. O sage, those men who, day after day, bathe (with water mixed) with āmalaka, obtain great religious merit, (for) the wise say that the dhātṛī (i.e. āmalaka)-fruit destroys sins. (Dhātṛī) was formerly created by Brahmā for the emancipation of the three worlds. He who practises sandhyā and silence for the four months, rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha for the periods of four Manus. A man who cooks for himself and eats the food (cooked by himself) for four months is honoured in Indra's world for ten thousand years. A man should resort to silence during the four months of the rainy season. He would go to Viṣṇu's world, and after that to Brahmā's (world). A man who observes silence while eating, never perishes. The demons observing silence while eating, went to heaven. A man would be impure (due to) food with (i.e. containing) worms and insects. Such food should be known as equal to cow-flesh, O best brāhmaṇa. That food should be known to be impure. If a man eats that, that is said to be the food which is always dear to the demons. Formerly Brahmā was pleased. That magnanimous one gave it. (Men) having eaten silently, have undoubtedly gone to heaven. If a man eats food while talking, then by that it would become impure. He just eats sin. Therefore, he should observe silence. O Nārada, eating silently should be known to be like (observing) a fast.

95-110. There is no doubt that the five (great) sins of him who, the best man, eats after giving the five oblations to the five breaths¹, are destroyed. O brāhmaṇa, a garment that has joints should be worn at the time of a rite (in honour of) the manes. That garment remaining on an impure body would be impure. A man who, with a garment put around his waist on his back, passes excrement or urinates, or has sexual union, should avoid that garment (while doing holy rites). O brāhmaṇa, the rite

1. Prāṇāhuti: Oblations offered to the five vital breaths, viz. Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna.

especially in honour of the manes should be avoided (when such a garment is put on). O sage, at all times the worship of god (Viṣṇu), the disc-holder, should especially be done by those who have controlled their senses. When Viṣṇu is asleep, grassy vegetables and safflower (should be avoided). So also garments having joints should be carefully avoided. He who avoids these in Cāturmāsya, when Viṣṇu is asleep, would not go to hell till the universal deluge. One should not (drink) liquor, should not eat flesh of a rabbit or a pig. That man also, on being engaged in harmlessness, when, especially in Cāturmāsya, god Viṣṇu is asleep, obtains godhead. O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given up uselessly getting angry or harsh, so also sexual union on the parvan days, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. On celibacy (being observed) the progeny grows, so also life. He should avoid flowers, leaves, fruits, a couch, rubbing his body with unctuous substances and anointing (it), so also (taking) milk for no reason, flesh and liquor. Whatever is given up in Cāturmāsya when Viṣṇu is asleep, should first be given to a brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt about this. That wealth which is given to a brāhmaṇa, is, O wise one, inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇa, thereby he gets crore-fold merit. There is no doubt about this. O best brāhmaṇa, with whatever vow Viṣṇu is worshipped, he gives Viṣṇu's abode. No doubt should be raised in this matter. He who, in the Cāturmāsya when Viṣṇu is asleep, does not have a vow, goes to hell, (and) his life has passed in vain. That man who everyday observes the excellent vow as told by a brāhmaṇa, so also the restraints that have been told, goes to the highest position. The gift given without the three things (viz. Tulasī, sesamum-seeds and darbhas) becomes useless.

111-112. Therefore, the best man, should according to his capacity and with all efforts please with vows and gifts Viṣṇu, the god of gods. All that gift (that is given) and that honouring of the brāhmaṇas done without bathing are useless till the regimes of fourteen Indras last.

Nārada said:

113. O lord, O master of the universe, tell me what kind of celibacy is that, having practised which human beings would pleased Viṣṇu.

Mahādeva said:

114-121. He who is devoted to his wife is said to be a celibate by the wise. O wise one, he who would forsake his wife, is inferior to a cāṇḍāla. Approaching the wife during her menses is said to be celibacy. The man who abandons his devoted, faultless wife, is a sinner in the world, and would obtain the (sin of) causing an abortion. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices are not equal even to a sixteenth part of the Ekādaśī-fast. All (such things as) bathing, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifices, self-study and worship of deities done in the Cāturmāsya are inexhaustible. He who listens to the Purāṇa one time or two times, gets free from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's world. O best brāhmaṇa, he who, when Viṣṇu is asleep, recites or mutters his name, gets a crorefold fruit of it. A brāhmaṇa devoted to Viṣṇu, who worships (Viṣṇu), he alone, the soul of the entire religion, is worthy of respect. There is no doubt. On hearing this auspicious, pure, sin-destroying (account of) Cāturmāsya, a man obtains religious merit, and would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Cāturmāsya Vow to be Concluded Properly

Nārada said:

1. O lord, tell me about bringing to the conclusion the vows in the Cāturmāsya. (For) when the vows are (properly) concluded, everything certainly becomes complete.

Mahādeva said:

2-20. If, O magnanimous one, he who observes a vow, does not bring it to the (proper) conclusion, then he would not get the proper fruit. He, having had a deficiency in the vow becomes a leper or blind. For this reason, (a man) should bring the vow to (proper) conclusion. Having accepted these vows and

observed them duly, he should go to a brāhmaṇa after Viṣṇu who had slept, gets up. He should, duly and in detail, apologise to the god of gods. If he had avoided (the use of) oil during the Cāturmāsya, he should give ghee (to a brāhmaṇa); and if he had avoided (using) ghee (during the Cāturmāsya) he should offer milk (to a brāhmaṇa). After observing silence he should give sesamum-seeds to a brāhmaṇa. If (he had avoided) meal (in the Cāturmāsya) he should offer a meal rich in curd and rice to a brāhmaṇa. He should especially give food along with gold. O best sage, by giving food (to a brāhmaṇa) he is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu. The man who eats from the pot (i.e. plate) made from palāśa(-leaves) for the four months, should give (to a brāhmaṇa) a pot full of ghee, O brāhmaṇa. When he has eaten only at night (during the four months), he should give a meal with the six flavours to a brāhmaṇa. He should give a bull with gold to a brāhmaṇa who does not ask for it. He who had abandoned beans should give (a brāhmaṇa) a cow with her calf, O best sage. On having bathed (with water mixed) with dhātṛī, he should give gold of the weight of a māṣa. If he had observed the vow of (not eating) fruits, he should give fruits. For the vow of (not eating) grains, he should give grains. Or rice is said (to be given). Similarly for (his vow of) sleeping on the ground, he should give a cotton-bed with a pillow. O best brāhmaṇa, he who had observed celibacy during the Cāturmāsya, should devoutly give food to a brāhmaṇa couple with objects of pleasure, dakṣiṇā, with vegetables and salt. If a man has bathed every day without (having applied) oil (to his body), he should give ghee and barley. If he had observed the vow of (growing) his nails and hair, he should give a place. If he had avoided (the use of) sandals, he should give sandals. On having avoided flesh, a cow with a calf is said to be given. He who has offered a lamp every day, should offer a golden lamp. And he should give that lamp with ghee to a brāhmaṇa. For the vow of (avoiding) vegetables, and for that of (avoiding) beans, he should (respectively) give vegetables and gold weighing a māṣa to a brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, if he desires fulfilment of his vow. For the vow of (avoiding) sexual unions he should give silver to a brāhmaṇa; and for that of nāgavallī (i.e. a tāmbūla), (he should give) camphor along with gold. O best brāhmaṇa, that which is from

time to time done for the vow should especially be given with a desire to go to heaven to a brāhmaṇa. Having first bathed, he should observe the vows before Viṣṇu. The god, holding a conch, a disc and a mace is without a beginning and an end. Who do not observe (a vow) before him, since Viṣṇu destroys sins?

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Propitiation of Yama

Nārada said:

1-4. O best god, for my well-being, tell me about the propitiation of Yama. O god, how (i.e. by doing what) a man does not go to hell? It is heard that in Yama's world there is the river Vaitaraṇī. She is unapproachable, boundless, difficult to be crossed, and contains much blood. How can she, difficult to be crossed by all beings, be easily crossed? O lord, this is just the great fear about Yama's world? O revered one, having favoured me, tell me the entire act to be free from that (fear).

Mahādeva said:

5-6. O brāhmaṇa, formerly I had bathed in the salty ocean at Dvārāvātī. O brāhmaṇa, I (there) saw a sage named Mudgala who came there. He was blazing like the sun. His body was shining with penance. Having saluted me, the sage Mudgala, being amazed, said:

Mudgala said:

7-21. O god, suddenly I fainted and fell on the ground. My limbs are burning. I am seized by Yama's servants. I, this soul of the size of the thumb, was dragged forcibly, was bound tightly by Yama's soldiers and taken near Yama. In a moment I saw in the assembly Yama of tawny eyes, of a dark face, very fierce, and possessing hundreds of fatal diseases, and waited upon in person by (the three humours in the human body viz.) wind, bile, phlegm—the (three) deficiencies—so also by

diseases like fever parching up the body, by boils and cuts etc. (He was also served by) crushing of the body with burning (sensation), head-ache, by fistula in the anus, (all) destroying the strength; by inflammation of the glands of the neck, eye-diseases, strangury, fever and sores. (He was also waited upon) by (diseases like) swooning, throat-disease, heat-disease, by goblins and thieves. Thus he was (served) by many that were fierce, terrible and of various forms. (He was served) by fiends, demons having skulls and heads in their hands in the battle as well as in hell, who were fierce and who were seated and who stood before him. (He was waited upon) by superintendents of religious affairs, so also by scribes like Citragupta, by tigers, lions and pigs, so also by serpents with locks of hair on their hoods and very difficult to catch. (He was waited upon by) scorpions, fanged beings, insects like bugs, wolves and dogs like (i.e. in the form of) spotted leprosy, herons, vultures and jackals. (So also he was waited upon) by thieves, poor beings, plagues, by female and male imps with their hair loose, and by asthmas with knitted eye-brows and crooked faces. They were of a mighty valour, were not timid, and punished the sinners. Yama, being waited upon by his attendants, shone in the assembly, as the Vyālāñjana mountain shines with fearful wild animals. Then Yama, the lord of all, said to his servants: “How have you, being confused about the name, brought this sage insted of Bhīmaka’s son named Mudgala, (living) in the village of Kauṇḍinya? The life of that kṣatriya has come to an end. He should be brought. Free this one.” Hearing this they went from him and again came (back to him). All those servants of Yama again said to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). “We who had gone there, did not see a man whose life had come to an end. O Sun’s son, we, with our minds somehow confused, do not know (what to do).”

Yama said:

22-23. Generally those men who have observed the auspicious Dvādaśī and are told about the Vaitaraṇā river, are invisible to you, (my) servants. So also they who die at Ujjayinī, Prayāga, or in Yamunā, or who have offered sesamum-seeds, an elephant or gold, or cows, and (have performed) daily rites.

The messengers (i.e. the servants) said:

24-26. O brāhmaṇa, tell us fully what kind of vow it is. O god, what should be done in that vow which would please you? O best man, how is he who has observed the Dvādaśī(-vow) of the dark half and observed a fast, freed from a sin? Tell (us), in what manner the vow is to be observed. O treasure of pity, be pleased, show compassion, and tell (about it).

Śrī Mudgala said:

27. Hearing the words of the messengers, he spoke sweetly : “O messengers, I (shall) tell (you) as I have observed and seen (it).”

Yama said:

28-43. On these foremost (Dvādaśīs) falling in the dark half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the Vaitaraṇī-vow should be duly observed, O messengers. Till the year ends, this should be certainly duly observed. Having done it, O messengers, (a man) is undoubtedly freed. The vow of a fast, pleasing Viṣṇu, should be observed. ‘O great god of gods, today will be my fast.’ He should, on the Dvādaśī day, devoutly worship Viṣṇu; and should pray to him, ‘All that (sin) of mine, committed due to the defect of my indolent senses should be pardoned by favouring me.’ Having made such a restraint, he should go to a holy place in the mid-day. Taking with him clay, cowdung, sesamum-seeds, he should duly go there. For the fulfilment of the vow he should bathe there. He should bath particularly with (the accompaniment of) the hymn *Aśvagrānte*. ‘O earth, you who are trampled by horses and chariots and by Viṣṇu, remove my sin accumulated by me formerly.’ When she removes the sin, he is freed from all sins. The sesamum-seeds, of the form of Viṣṇu, have sprung up in Kāśī. By means of the bath with sesamum, Viṣṇu removes all sins. ‘O goddess, you are born from Viṣṇu’s body. You remove great sins. You remove all sins of all. Salutation to you.’ All the meritorious ones have said that bath, with the utterance of Viṣṇu’s names, and by holding Tulasī-leaf, should be duly taken. Having bathed like this, and having come out, and having put on good garments, he should gratify his manes, and then worship Viṣṇu. Then he should put a jar which

is scratchless, which contains leaves, which has five gems in it, and which is perfumed with divine fragrances, which is full of water, which contains coins, and which is accompanied by a copper-vessel. O king, a man should offer a great worship to god Viṣṇu, god of gods, treasure of penance residing in it, with the full rite. He should also get fashioned an auspicious circle with clay, cowdung, etc. Or he should get it fashioned with white, washed rice, and powders of stone. He should (also) get fashioned (an image of) Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) having limbs like hands etc.

44-54. Then having placed before it, (the representation of) the reddish river Vaitaraṇī, he should separately but duly worship it with invocation. 'I am invoking Yama, lord of gods and of a universal form. O noble Viṣṇu, come here and give your proximity. O lord, Lakṣmī's dear husband, this is water for washing your feet. You who always are engaged in going out into the universe, show me favour.' (He should touch) the feet (of the image saying) 'Salutation to Bhutidā'. (He should touch) the knees (saying 'Salutation to Aśoka.' (He should touch) the thighs (saying) 'Salutation to Śiva.' (He should touch) the waist (saying) 'O Viśvamūrti, salutation (to you).' (He should touch) the penis (saying) 'Salutation to Kandarpa.' (He should) in the same way (touch) the testicle (saying) 'Salutation to Āditya.' (He should touch) the belly (saying) 'Salutation to Dāmodara.' (He should touch) the breasts (saying) 'Salutation to Vāsudeva.' (He should touch) the face (saying) 'Salutation to Śrīdhara.' (He should touch) the hair (saying) 'Salutation to Keśava.' (He should touch) the back (saying) 'Salutation to Śārṅgadhara'. (He should touch) the feet (saying) 'Salutation to Varada'. (He should touch) the head, (uttering) his own name (and saying) 'Salutation to you, the soul of all, and having in your hands a conch, a disc, a sword, a mace and an axe.' Thus it is told. 'Salutation to you, Matsya, Kūrma, and Varāha, Narasimha and Vāmana, (Paraśu-)rāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki. For the destruction of the streams of all sins, I am worshipping you. My repeated salutations to you.' Having by all means meditated upon Viṣṇu with these hymns, he should worship him. 'O Dharmarāja, I salute you. Salutation to you, O Dharmarāja. Salutation to you, O lord of the Southern

direction, O you, whose vehicle is a buffalo. O Citragupta, salutation to you. Salutation to Vicitra (i.e. the lovely one) for the cessation of suffering in hell. Give me my desired objects.'

55-77. He should always salute Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla, and Sarvabhūtakṣaya (destroyer of all beings). (He should always salute) Vṛkodara, Citra, Vicitra, Citragupta, Nila, and Dadhna. Thus with these twelve names the lord Dharmarāṭ should be worshipped. 'O Vaitaraṇī, very difficult to be crossed, sin-destroyer, granting all desired objects, come here, O noble one. Accept the respectful offering made by me.' The well-known river Vaitaraṇī (flows) by the fierce gates of Yama. Beings going beyond birth, death and old age (bathe) in her for emancipation. She is difficult to cross for the sinners and removes the fears of all beings. In her, beings suffering from great pangs bathe through fear. 'O Jayādevī, desiring to cross that fierce one, I repeatedly salute you.' That is the Vaitaraṇī river in which the gods live. She too is devoutly worshipped for pleasing Viṣṇu. She, to whose bank sages and men come, and who removes sins, is also worshipped in the form of a river. I shall give you (a vow) to cross her in order to be free from all sins. For religious merit I shall tell you (about) the river Vaitaraṇā. 'You are devoutly worshipped by me and also for pleasing Viṣṇu. O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Jagannātha, emancipate me from the mundane existence. Merely by means of my uttering your name, remove all my sin. I have made a great sacred thread with nine strands. Accept it, O lord of gods, and being pleased, grant my desired (objects). This is the very charming tām̐būla for you, prepared according to my capacity. O lord of gods, accept it (and) emancipate me from the ocean of the worldly existence. This is the lamp with five wicks (offered to you) for being waved before you. O you the sun (removing) the darkness of illusion, be attached (to us) and remove (our) misery. I have offered you with devotion good food, well cooked food having all the (six) flavours. O lord, accept it. By means of the hymn of twelve letters (viz, *Om namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*), and the muttering done according to the number, may the lord of Śrī be pleased with me, and grant me my desired (object). When the great ocean was churned, five cows sprang up. Repeated salutations to the cow Nandā which is among them.' Having duly worshipped the cow, and being com-

posed, one should offer the respectful offering. 'O Nandinī, O you granter of all desires, O you goddess, removing all destructive (elements), always give me good health and a long (line of) progeny. O Kapilā, worshipped by the intelligent Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, remove my sin accumulated in former (existences). May golden-horned milch-cows, like Surabhi, and those born from her, always remain, like rivers and oceans, in front of me, behind me. May they stand by me in heaven, O goddess, full of all gods, very auspicious, and loving your devotees.' Having thus worshipped he should offer the daily rite to the cow. 'May the daughters of Surabhi, pure, sin-destroying and beneficial to all, may the mothers of the three worlds accept the food offered by me. Salutation to Gaṅgadā, the auspicious one, for the destruction of all sins.'

78-85. With this hymn only the wise one should hold the mace. (Saying) 'Paṁ, salutation to Padmanābha', the very intelligent one should have the lotus. (He should say) 'Caṁ, salutation to the Cakrarūpin Viṣṇu'. Its having said to be due to the disc. 'Śaṁ, salutation to him of the form of the conch. Salutation to you, who bring about happiness.' O messengers, the having (the mark of) the conch said to be done with this hymn. The putting on (of the marks) of the four weapons is declared by the sages. This having the marks burnt (on the skin with red-hot iron on the body) for a brāhmaṇa is as obligatory as the maintenance of the sacred fire and the study of the Vedas. The brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas should especially have (the marks made) by fragrant sandal or gopicandana. By having (the marks) even a cāṇḍāla would be purified. Even if a cāṇḍāla, one who would have the vertical, soft, pleasing (sectarian) mark, would be purified, and is always respected by brāhmaṇas. When, in a house of cāṇḍālas a Tulasi (-plant) is seen, the Tulasi from there should be taken with a devoted heart.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

*The Importance of Gopikācandana**Maheśvara said:*

1-13. That best brāhmaṇa, having heard like this from the mouth of Yama told it to me and the independent sage went (his way). O best brāhmaṇa, that house where there is gopikācandana is of the nature of a holy place. This has indeed been told by Viṣṇu. In the house of that brāhmaṇa where there is gopikācandana, grief and delusion do not stay. Nor is there any inauspicious (event). The ancestors of him (or them) are happy and his (or their) progeny grows in whose house gopikācandana is present day and night. The clay from Gopīpuṣkara is pure and purifies the body. By rubbing (one's body with it) physical and mental diseases that are there, perish. Therefore, it giving salvation and fulfilling desires is put on their bodies by men. The holy places and sacred places roar till that time, O brāhmaṇa, as long as gopikācandana is not seen or heard about. It should be meditated upon, it should be worshipped; it destroys dirt and sins. Merely with its touch a man becomes as pure as a god. It gives salvation and is highly purifying at the time of (one's) death. O best brāhmaṇa, what should I say? Gopīcandana gives salvation. A wise man should rub his body with the mixture of Tulaśī-wood of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, so also the clay at the root (of the tree) and gopikācandana and haricandana also. He who puts on a mark with the fluids (i.e. pastes) of gopikācandana has always visited all holy places in Jambū Dvīpa. Freed from all sins he goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. He has also performed the Śrāddha after having gone to Gayā. So also the man who has put on (the mark with) gopīcandana, (even though) he is a drunkard, or has murdered a brāhmaṇa or a cow or a child, is freed that moment only due to having (the mark of) gopīcandana.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Greatness of Viṣṇu's Devotees

Maheśvara said:

1-9. O Nārada, listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristic(s) of the devotees of Viṣṇu, hearing which people are freed from such sins as the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O best sage, listen. Now I shall tell you of what kind their characteristics are and what their nature is. O best sage, listen. I shall describe to you a man of that kind. Since he belongs to Viṣṇu, he is called Vaiṣṇava. Of all the castes Vaiṣṇava is said to be the greatest. A Vaiṣṇava is (born) in the family of those whose food is excellent (i.e. who eat excellent food). O brāhmaṇa, by merely seeing them, in whom forgiveness, kindness, austerities and truth reside, sin perishes like cotton. He whose mind, free from doing harm, has settled upon Viṣṇu, (so also) he who would always put on (the marks of) a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, so also he who would put round his neck the rosary of Tulaśī-wood, and would always put on the marks of twelve kinds, so also he who knows (the difference between) righteousness and unrighteousness is called a Vaiṣṇava. He is always engaged in (reciting) the Vedas and sacred texts and always performs sacrifices. So also the family of them is blessed, and glory is said to belong to them who repeatedly celebrate the twentyfour festivals.

10-20. In the world those devotees of Viṣṇu in whose family only (i.e. at least) one devotee of Viṣṇu is born, are most blessed. He has repeatedly emancipated that family, O brāhmaṇa. All the stocks like the oviparous, sprouting, viviparous beings should be known as having conches, discs and maces. By merely seeing him the killer of a brāhmaṇa is always purified. But, O divine sage, I shall tell you that more blessed than those are the Vaiṣṇavas seen on the earth, O great sage. Those knowing the truth should look upon them as equal to Viṣṇu. I have heard that they are undoubtedly most blessed in the world in the Kali age. He who has worshipped Viṣṇu, has worshipped all. He who has honoured Viṣṇu's devotees has given a large gift. Those who give fruits, leaves, vegetables, food or garments to Viṣṇu's devotees, are always blessed on the earth. Those who

have worshipped Viṣṇu's devotee, have worshipped all. Those who have worshipped Viṣṇu, are said to be most blessed. Merely by seeing them a man is absolved of sins. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of telling other things repeatedly? Therefore, seeing and touching them gives joy. As is Viṣṇu so is this devotee (of him). There is no difference between them. O child, realising this, a wise man should always honour (a devotee of Viṣṇu). There is no doubt that he who feeds but one brāhmaṇa devotee of Viṣṇu, has fed a thousand brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Vow of Śravaṇa Dvādaśī

Nārada said:

1. O best god, the able ones always have fasts. O sinless one, tell me about one Dvādaśī (only) which is auspicious.

Śiva said:

2-10. The Dvādaśī in the bright half of Bhādrapada, along with the Śravaṇa (lunar mansion) gives everything, is auspicious, and (if) a fast (is observed on that day), it gives great fruit. Having bathed at the confluence of river(s) and fasted on Dvādaśī, a man obtains the fruit of Dvādaśī(-vow) without any effort. That Dvādaśī which is connected with (the rise of) Mercury and Śravaṇa (lunar mansion) is very great. Everything that is done on that (day) becomes inexhaustible. O Nārada, a man having bathed at the confluence of rivers when Dvādaśī is conjoined with Śravaṇa, would obtain the fruit of the gift of a cow. A wise man having placed a pitcher full of water, should put upon it a vessel, having installed (the image of) Viṣṇu in it. Then before it the wise one should offer eatables cooked in ghee. He should also devoutly give, according to his capacity, nine pitchers full of water. Having thus worshipped Viṣṇu, he should keep awake there. (Then) having got up in the spotless morning, and having worshipped Viṣṇu with flowers, incense, offerings of

eatables, fruits and very beautiful garments, he should offer him a handful of flowers and recite this hymn: 'Repeated salutations to you, O Viṣṇu, conjoined with Mercury and Śravaṇa. Destroying the stream of our sins, give us all pleasures.'

11-19. He should duly give pure food to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, and especially to him who knows the Purāṇas. With his mind concentrated, the best man should accomplish all this in this manner on the bank of a river. In this case also they narrate an old account which took place in this great forest. O brāhmaṇa, listen to it. Hearing it a man is freed from great grief. There was a country named Daśāraka, and to its west, O wise one, there was the Maru country, fierce due to all (kinds of) beings. The land there had the sand very much heated. There were also great serpents. (The land there) was full of trees with scanty shadow, and crowded with dead animals. (It was crowded with trees) like śamī, khadira, palāśa, karīra, and pīlu. There were fearful groups of trees full of strong thorns. It was full of men whose vitality was exhausted (i.e. who were very weak). Such region was at places seen there. Yet all beings bounded by karma lived (there). O wise one, there was neither water nor were there clouds, the receptacles of water. O brāhmaṇa, (there) best birds were seen dead, along with their thirsty young ones remaining between their wings.

20-34. Into that country—Marujāṅgala—like that, a merchant missing his caravan through (ill,) luck, entered. With his mind confused and oppressed with hunger, thirst and exhaustion, he did not know as to where a village was, where water was, or where he (himself) stood. Then he saw evil spirits with their senses overcome with hunger and thirst. They were large, wicked, fierce; were fleshless (i.e. very weak) and they were fearful to look at. He saw one (of them) looking ugly and mounted upon the shoulders of an evil spirit and surrounded by many evil spirits. It was not moving, was very fierce, and was accompanied by the sounds of evil spirits. The evil spirit also, having seen the man who had come to that fierce forest, got down from the evil spirit's shoulder and approached him. Having saluted the best merchant, it said these words: "How did you enter this very fearful region?" To it the intelligent merchant said: "I who

missed my caravan, (un-)fortunately entered this forest due to my former deeds. Thirst oppresses me, so also hunger oppresses me very much. My end has come. My words are faltering. I now do not see any remedy by means of which I would live.” When this was said by him, the evil spirit said these words to the merchant: “Wait for a while after resorting to a blossomed śamī. Then being offered a hospitable reception by me you will go at will.” Thus addressed, the merchant, oppressed by thirst, did like that. When it was the mid-day the evil spirit came to that region of the blossomed tree and brought down a beautiful pitcher of water, full of cold water, along with curd and rice and he himself offered it to the guest. Then merely by eating it, he was very much satisfied. And in a moment he became free from thirst and torment. Then the evil spirits came there. He gave a portion from the curd and rice (to all) one by one. The evil spirits were highly satisfied with the curd and rice along with water.

35-42a. Having gratified the guest and all the evil spirits, he himself ate at will, whatever was left of (what they had) eaten. When he was eating the good food and water were exhausted. Then the merchant said these words to the chief of the evil spirits: “This strikes me as a great wonder in this forest. Wherefrom did you secure the excellent food and drink? So also, how did you satisfy with just little food so many of these who are fleshless (i.e. weak) and have their sides broken? How is it that you have made your abode in this very fierce forest? Remove this doubt of me. I have a great curiosity (to know it).” Thus addressed by the merchant, the evil spirit spoke these words: “O sinless one, in my former birth, like me who was devoted to trade, there was no other wicked man in the entire city. Due to greed for wealth, I never gave alms to any one then. Then there was a virtuous brāhmaṇa friend of mine.

42b-54. On the twelfth day of Bhādrapada, when the Śravaṇa (a Zodiacal sign) appeared, he some time went with me to the Tāpī river to bathe. Her confluence with Candrabhāgā was holy. Candrabhāgā is the Moon’s daughter, and Tāpī is the Sun’s daughter. With the brāhmaṇa I got into the lukewarm water of them. Men fasted on the occasion of the Śrāvaṇa-dvādaśī, and gave pitcher of water full of the good Candrabhāgā

water to Brāhmaṇas. I also gave Viṣṇu's image, with curd and rice, with lids, with an umbrella, a pair of sandals, and a garment to principal brāhmaṇas, O very intelligent one. Then for the preservation of my wealth, I, on her bank, and in (keeping with my) vow, gave, after fasting, a charming pitcher of water. Having done that, I came home, and after some time, I expired, and due to my heresy I was reduced to the state of an evil spirit in this terrible forest like the family of snakes. On the occasion of Śravaṇa-dvādaśī, I gave a pitcher of water. The same is received by me at mid-day every day. All other brāhmaṇas who were sinful, who had sexual union with other's wives, and who had plotted against their masters, became evil spirits. Here, in this Maru region, the men were born as goblins and evil spirits; and they have become my friends here. The eternal highest soul, revered Viṣṇu is imperishable. That which is offered with reverence to him is said to be inexhaustible. Though they are repeatedly satisfied with inexhaustible food, they do not at all give up their state of evil spirits and weakness.

55-61. I, after having honoured with food a guest (like) you who have come (here), have become free from the state of an evil spirit, and will obtain the highest position (viz. salvation). But these, abandoned by me, will experience terrible suffering due to their acts in this very fearful forest. O noble one, with a desire to favour me, take down the names and their lineage which are (given by me). There is an auspicious box in your upper garment. Then reaching the Himālaya mountain, you will then obtain a treasure there. O very intelligent one, then go to Gayāśīrṣa, and perform a śrāddha." Having thus instructed the merchant as he liked, he dismissed him. He (too) being eager went away. Having reached his house first, he (then) later went to the Himālaya mountain. Then taking the treasure seen there he came (to Gayāśīrṣa). Taking one-sixth portion of it he went to Gayāśīrṣa.

62-75. The very intelligent one went to Gayā, performed a śrāddha, (so also) a śrāddha offered to the evil spirits duly and as indicated. Taking (i.e. uttering) the names and (mentioning) the families, he offered a piṇḍa to everyone. He whose śrāddha the merchant would perform by day, showed him his body in his dream and said: "O noble one, O sinless one, by your

favour I have abandoned the state of an evil spirit, and have reached the highest condition.” In this way the noble-minded one having duly performed (the śrāddhas) at Gayāśirṣa, later went, repeatedly meditating upon Viṣṇu, to his own house. The very intelligent one, in the bright fortnight of Bhādrapada when it was the occasion of Śrāvaṇa-dvādaśī, with all necessary things went to the confluence of the rivers. Having bathed at the confluence of the rivers, he observed the Dvādaśī fast. Then he bathed there, gave (gifts to brāhmaṇas) and worshipped Viṣṇu. Then he with a concentrated mind gave presents to a brāhmaṇa according to the manner specified in the sacred texts. Then the intelligent merchant returned. When every year the month of Bhādrapada arrived, on the occasion of Śrāvaṇa-dvādaśī (he bathed) at the confluence of rivers. Thus dedicating everything to Viṣṇu, he performed all (the rites). After a long time he died. He obtained a great position which is difficult to be obtained by men. Even now he being waited upon by Viṣṇu’s servants, plays in Vaikuṇṭha. O brāhmaṇa, thus you observe the Dvādaśī-vow. It gives all good fortune in this world and the next. It produces good ideas, it is great, and removes all sins. He who, on the occasion of the Śrāvaṇa-dvādaśī observes such a vow, goes to Viṣṇu’s world due to the efficacy of this vow.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

The Vow of Nadi-trirātra

Nārada said:

1. O lord of gods, O lord of the Universe, O you who give pleasures and salvation, O you greatest god, tell me (that) due to which (a man) does not experience grief.

Maheśa said:

2-10. Listen, O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you the vow of the river observed for three nights, having observed which, men do

not go to hell. A man, having obtained (long) life, (good) health, matchless good fortune, happiness and wealth, so also 'inexhaustible (i.e. continuous) progeny, is honoured in heaven. When the month of Āṣāḍha comes the river is full of water. She is well-known in the Purāṇa to be constantly full of water. In the rainy season, when (the sky) is full of clouds, she should be (served) with a vow. When the river is full with all (kinds of) water, the vow intended for three nights should be carefully observed. As is liked by one*, one should see her for three days. On the bank of a water place, when the river is flooded (he should bathe); or should carry home that water in a black pitcher. O brāhmaṇa, a wise man, having gone to the river in the morning, should bathe there, if he is able to fast for three nights. If he is unable (to fast), he should fast by eating once a day. He should offer lamp regularly, and worship (Viṣṇu) in the morning and evening. Uttering the name of the great river and of Varuṇa, and placing (mentally) Viṣṇu, lying in water,

11-25. (he should say:) "Salutation to the deity, O Gaṅgā, O Gautamī; O river, O Sindhu, Kāverī, Sarasvatī, Salutation to you. Repeated salutations to Tāpī, Payoṣṇī, Pūrṇā, Mehendrasukhadā (delighting Indra), Kāśyapī, Gaṇḍakī and to river Sindhu. Salutation to (you), O Varuṇa, living in water and dear to Viṣṇu. O lord of the aquatic animals, O lord of water, always grant me well-being. Accept the respectful offering made by me. Give me the desired fruit." He should also make offering of food with pumpkin gourds, coconuts, and other auspicious fruits produced in the season. (He should say:) "Salutation to you, O Keśava, O Ananta. Salutation to you lying in water. O lord, protect me. O Govinda, grant me a boon." Thus he should, in proper order, and at proper time, worship (the deity). He being pure, and having observed the three-night vow, should break the fast after worshipping the deity and should use a vessel full of water, with fruits, flowers. O learned one, he should, along with women, children and men, with songs, musical instruments and pitchers full of river (water) and placing it at every watery place worship it with fruits and flowers.* So also with various kinds of grains and sprinklings of water. Having carefully come home laugh-

*The reading is obscure.

ing, singing and dancing, he should worship bamboo-baskets filled with seven (kinds of) grains. According to his capacity he should fill seven, five or three (baskets). Desiring his well-being, he should not drink river water for three nights. At the time of breaking the fast food to be eaten during certain holidays or days of fast should be procured. After bath is taken or worship is done the water of the river should not be used. Give pure food and eatables in three groups. So also (give) seven bamboo-baskets and seven water-pitchers also. He should eat food eaten on days of fast and without acrid or sweet taste. He should carefully avoid food with beans and ground with stone. O best brāhmaṇa, thus the vow should be observed for three years. When the three years are over, he should conclude it in this way:

26-32. O Nārada, he should give a (brāhmaṇa) couple a black cow, with a black (piece of) cloth and sesamum-seeds. Having thus given (these) to a (brāhmaṇa) couple he should also give gold (to the couple) according to his capacity. O Nārada, he should fashion golden image of Varuṇa, as the form of a river, and a fully auspicious circle (in honour) of Varuṇa. He should place there a pitcher along with presents. Having worshipped it that is placed there, he should duly and devoutly worship it and then give it to a brāhmaṇa. He should in accordance with his wealth and capacity feed the brāhmaṇas, so also his preceptor who is of respectable character and who is engaged in (the study of) all sacred texts. When this is done, the vow would be complete, O learned one. He would have unending good fortune, happiness, wealth and children. He never meets with a calamity, and is, for a long time, honoured in heaven. This (vow) was observed by wives of gods and of sages also. Formerly, the nāga-women and siddha-women had observed this vow. This vow of the Nadī-trirātra is matchless. What else do you wish to hear? He certainly always obtains good fortune and children.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Viṣṇu's One Thousand Names

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, O good one, live long. You, of a kind heart, have told us the wonderful dialogue which took place between Nārada and Śiva. O preceptor, tell us who are listening devoutly, how the noble Nārada heard the importance of the lord's names.

Sūta said:

3-5. O best brāhmaṇas, all you sages, listen. I am telling an old account, having heard which devotion to Kṛṣṇa enhances. Once Nārada, quite calm, went to see his father to the peak of (the mountain) Meru which was resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. O brāhmaṇas, Nārada, the best sage, having saluted Brahmā, the lord of the worlds, who was seated there, said to him:

Nārada said:

6-8. O lord of the universe, O master, tell me how much power there is in the name of him, and of what kind is the greatness of the name of the noble one, who, the lord of the universe, is actually Nārayaṇa Hari, the highest soul, Hṛṣīkeśa, united with all beings. All foolish men, being deluded by illusion, do not at all know lord Viṣṇu in this Kali age which is worthless.

Brahmā said:

9-22. O child, please listen, how in this Kali age worship is especially to be done by reciting (his) names. The recollection of Viṣṇu, the conqueror, with an effort, is seen to purify untold sins, and it destroys sins. Knowing everything (else) to be false, a man who recites and mutters Viṣṇu's names, is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's highest position. There is no doubt that those men who always utter the two letters *Ha-ri* become free just by uttering them. All expiations consist in remembering Kṛṣṇa repeatedly. A man who

remembers Kṛṣṇa in the morning, at night and at mid-day, etc. instantly reaches Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of sins. When just by remembering Viṣṇu all the suffering perishes, he attains salvation; he obtains heaven due to his reciting Viṣṇu's name. A man should know that it is an eternal (state for him) whose mind is (engaged) in muttering his names, sacrifices and (his) worship, and the state continues for (the periods of) fourteen Indras. What a great disparity is there between going to heaven which is characterised by returning (i.e. by rebirth), and muttering the names of Viṣṇu, the excellent seed (i.e. source) of salvation? That mouth is a great holy place where Prācī Sarasvatī filling the eddy (as it were) with the words *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* (salutation to Nārāyaṇa) appears. Therefore, the best man, by remembering Viṣṇu day and night, and with his sins in the Kali age destroyed, does not go to hell. O you of the best vow, I have told (you) the truth and the truth (only). Merely by uttering (Viṣṇu's) name a man is free from a great sin. There is no doubt that even that cāṇḍāla who mutters 'Rāma, Rāma, Rāma' has his mind purified. Or he who mutters and recites 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa', has merely by the utterance of that name, visited all holy places like Kurukṣetra, Kāśī, Gayā and Dvārikā.

23-29a. O brāhmaṇa, he who always mutters or recites 'Nṛsimha' with joy, abandons this world and rejoices near Viṣṇu. A devotee of Viṣṇu is freed from a great sin in the Kali age. A man obtains by repeating the names of Viṣṇu in the Kali age, what he obtains by meditation in the Kṛta age, by performing sacrifices in the Tretā age, and by worshipping Viṣṇu in the Dvāpara age. Realising this men are plunged into Viṣṇu, the soul of the world. With all their sins destroyed they go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, so also (Paraśu-)rāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, and after him is said to be (the incarnation of) Kalki. These ten are said to be (Viṣṇu's) ten incarnations on the earth. Merely by (uttering) their names, (even) the killer of a brāhmaṇa is always purified. He, by reciting, muttering, meditating upon Viṣṇu's name in any manner, is freed. There is no doubt that he would be Viṣṇu himself.

Sūta said:

29b-36a. Hearing this Nārada was greatly amazed. He then said to his father: “O best god, why is it said: ‘There are thousands of gods; there are thousands of Rudras. There are hundreds of manes, so also yakṣas and kinnaras. So also goblins, evil spirits, fiends, and those that belong to the species of deities. The greatness of their name is not heard or seen, as I have heard about the greatness of Viṣṇu’s name. There is no doubt that merely by uttering his name, one is freed.’ O god, what is the use of visiting the holy places or wandering over the earth? By (merely) hearing the greatness of his names, one would obtain salvation. That mouth is a great holy place, that mouth is a sacred place, in which the words ‘Rāma Rāma’ are (found). That mouth fulfils all desires. O you of a good vow, which are the names of him (i.e. of Viṣṇu) that should be recited? O grandsire, tell me all that in detail.”

Brahmā said:

36b-44. This Viṣṇu always pervades (everything), is the ancient, highest soul. He has no beginning or end. He is glorious, the soul of beings, the creator of beings. May this Viṣṇu, from whom I am born, always protect (you). This one is the death of death. He is my ancestor. He is imperishable, has lotus-like eyes, and is an intelligent, immutable (great) person. Viṣṇu always lies on Śeṣa. He has a thousand heads. He is a great lord. He occupies all beings and he, Viṣṇu, is actually of the form of the universe. This Viṣṇu is the enemy of Kaiṭabha, is the creator; (this) god is the lord of the world. O best man, I do not know his name, and (about) his family (also). O dear one, though I am the propounder of the Vedas, I never know (this). Therefore, O divine sage, go there where the lord of the universe is. O best sage, he will tell you the entire truth. He, the lord of Kailāsa, is alone the ever-prosperous person. He is the best among all the devotees of Viṣṇu. He is greater than the great. (This) lord of Umā has five faces, and he destroys all miseries. He is the lord of the universe; he is the master of everything; he always loves his devotees. O best among the gods, go there; (that best god) will tell you everything.

45-55. Hearing the words of his father, Nārada proceeded to go there, to the abode (of Śiva) on Kailāṣa, where that god, the granter of well-being, always stays, to learn the importance of Viṣṇu's names. There Nārada saw the god honoured by deities, seated on the peak of Kailāṣa, the god of gods, the preceptor of the world, having five faces, ten arms, and having the trident in his hand, having a skull, having a staff with a skull at the top,¹ holding a sharp spear and a sword, holding the trident, fearful, granting boons, and having the bull (i.e. Nandin) as his vehicle, with his body (smeared) with ash, having charm due to serpents, and having the (crescent-)moon on his head, resembling a dark cloud, and having the lustre of a crore of suns, and sporting there. (Prostrating himself) like a staff he (i.e. Nārada) saluted the lord of gods. Seeing him, the great god, the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, and with his eyes dilated due to amazement, said to the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada): "O best among divine sages, why have you come here?"

Nārada said:

O god, some time I had approached Brahmā. There I heard about the excellent greatness of Viṣṇu. It was told there to me by Brahmā, O best of gods. I heard from Brahmā's mouth how much the power of the names of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) is. Then I first asked about the thousand names of Viṣṇu. Then Brahmā said to me: "O Nārada, I do not know (them). This great Rudra knows (them). He will tell you all." Being very much amazed, I have come to you.

56-67a. In this terrible Kali age men are short-lived. They are engaged in impious acts. And they do not have faith in (Viṣṇu's) name. Similarly brāhmaṇas are heretics and always engrossed in impious acts. They are void of (i.e. do not perform) the Sandhyā (prayer), have fallen from vows, are wicked, and of dirty figures. As are the brāhmaṇas, so are also the kṣatriyas and so also vaiśyas. So also are śūdras and others, but not Viṣṇu's devotees. O lord, the śūdras are out of the fold of the twice-born in the Kali age. They do not know what is righteous, what is unrighteous, and what is beneficial and what is not.

1. Khaṭvāṅga – A club or staff with a skull at the top considered as the weapon of Śiva and carried by ascetics and yogins.

Realising this, O master, I have approached you. And I have also heard the importance of (Viṣṇu's) names from Brahmā's mouth. You are the god of all gods, and are always my lord. You are the enemy of Tripura, the universal soul and the creator, again and again. Favour me, and narrate the thousand names of Viṣṇu, which produces good fortune of men, and always produces great devotion in them. It gives Brahman (the Supreme Spirit or the Vedas) to the brāhmaṇas. It gives victory to the kṣatriyas. It gives wealth to vaiśyas and always gives happiness to śūdras. O Maheśvara, I desire to hear it from you. Among all the devotees of Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu) you are the (most) capable. O you of a good vow, favour me, and tell it to me if it is not a secret. It is very pure. It is always full of all holy places. Therefore, I desire to hear it. O lord, O master of the universe, (please) tell it.

Hearing the words of Nārada, (Śiva) had his eyes dilated with wonder. He was horripilated while recollecting Viṣṇu's names.

The lord said:

67b-68. These thousand names of Viṣṇu are to be kept secret. Hearing these, O child, a man would never have a miserable position. Sometime in the past Pārvatī said to me:

Pārvatī said:

69-71. O lord of Kailāsa, O lord of gods, O you who are endowed with great prosperity, tell me truly what you are muttering. How is it that your body is always smeared with ash, you wear the hide (of an antelope)? How are you having matted hair? O master of the universe, O lord, tell it (to me). You are the god of all gods; you are the superintendent of all rites. You are the lord, O master of the universe, O lord of the universe, O lord of the world.

Mahādeva said:

72-75a. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, I was repeatedly asked by Pārvatī. Then I told everything especially to her. O Nārada, listen. I shall tell (you) what I told Pārvatī, and by which the

lord, giving salvation, will be undoubtedly pleased. He is actually my father, and always my brother. I am always his devotee; and he is always my lord. Therefore, I shall tell (it) to you. Listen to me who am telling (it).

Sūta said:

75b-83. O brāhmaṇas, having thus spoken to Nārada, he told him the thousand names of Viṣṇu, which he had formerly told to Pārvatī. (Thus) they are received by Nārada on the Kailāsa (mountain). Sometime, by chance, he came from Kailāsa to the very wonderful holy place called Naimiṣāraṇya. All the sages residing there, seeing Nārada, the best sage, honoured the noble Nārada. Those best brāhmaṇas, Viṣṇu's devotees, seeing Nārada to have come, had their eyes dilated due to amazement. They showered flowers on him. They offered him water for (washing) his feet, offered him respectful offering, so also waved light before him, offered him fruits and roots and prostrated on the ground like a staff. And they said: "O great sage, we are blessed, since in this region we have had your presence which is pure and which destroys sins. O lord of gods, by your favour we have heard the Purāṇas. O brāhmaṇa, in what way would all (one's) sins perish? How is salvation obtained without giving (gifts), without austerities, without (visiting) holy places, without penance and sacrifices, without (giving) gifts, without meditations, and without curbing the senses, and without (studying) the groups of sacred texts?"

Nārada said:

84. Umā, having saluted (her) dear (lord), the god of gods, the preceptor of the world, i.e. Mahādeva, seated on the peak of Kailāsa (mountain) asked him:

Pārvatī said:

85-88. O highest god, you are the omniscient great lord, revered by all. Even gods like Indra and Sūrya very much adore you. All, having worshipped you, the giver of boons, obtain desired success. You are without birth and death. You are self-born, and are all-powerful. O lord, you, having the quarters as your garment (i.e. naked), the destroyer of Madana,

what do you always meditate upon ? Why do you having matted hair and dusty with ash, practise penance? O lord of gods, what are you muttering? I have a great curiosity (to know it). If I deserve your favour, then tell me (about) that good vow.

Mahādeva said:

89-109. I have not told this to anyone. It is to be kept secret by me. But O good one, I shall tell (to you since) you are devoted (to me) and dear to me. O goddess, formerly, in the Satya-yuga all had pure minds; and knowing Viṣṇu alone to be the lord of all gods, they worshipped him (alone). O dear one, they got great prosperity in this world and in the next. They who were indeed determined, secured that position which all gods and sages suffering pain, did not obtain. Even after having heard from my mouth, gods led by Viṣṇu, did not, through Vedas and various Purāṇic doctrines, understand for certain what the truth is, or which the highest position is, as their minds were confused. O dear one, by means of gold, jewels etc. equal to their weight (given to a brāhmaṇa as a gift), by means of sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, and by means of bathing at holy places like Vārāṇasī or Prayāga, so also by means of offering śrāddhas to their dead ancestors at Gayā etc., by means of Vedic recitals and mutterings, severe austerities, restraints and checks, by means of kindness etc., by means of serving the preceptors (and elders), by means of duties of the castes and stages of life that are to be observed, so also by means of knowledge, meditation etc. duly practised during crores of existences, they do not reach Viṣṇu, the god of all gods, the supreme bliss. Even all religious men do not reach that position which those mortals who with all their thoughts and having no other course resort to that ancient 'best person' Viṣṇu, who even enjoy themselves, who do not have knowledge or detachment, who are without celibacy etc., who have given up all (other) religious acts, but who mutter only Viṣṇu's names, happily reach, O you who subdue your enemies. That Viṣṇu should always be remembered. He should never be forgotten. All sacred injunctions and prohibitions are his commandments. Nevertheless all gods like Brahmā and all innocent sages have, by means of (uttering fearlessly) Viṣṇu's names, reached the position that was

desired by them. I desiring greater than this, and being blessed, did not accept worship offered to me, but properly propitiated Viṣṇu. Then the lord of the world, to whom his devotees are dear, was actually pleased, and he, Keśava, worshipped these as his portions. He, full of pity (worshipped) deities, manes, brāhmaṇas with oblations offered to gods and dead ancestors. Since then in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile all gods like Brahmā are worshipped by the favour of the holder of the Śārṅga bow. He also said to me: “You would be superior to and more venerable than me. O Śambhu, I shall also propitiate you and will always receive a boon from you. Being born in the ages like Dvāpara and among men in the Kali age make the people averse to me with the sacred texts prepared by you. So also censure me so that the world become better and better. I shall produce this delusion which will delude people. You too, O mighty-armed Rudra, produce sacred texts that would delude people. O you of great arms, produce (the texts) that are false and spurious. Manifest thyself and keep me hidden.”

110-116. Then having saluted the highest lord, I said: “How would the sin of the murder of thousand brāhmaṇas perish? Even after hundreds of crores of kalpas you cannot be forgotten. So I vied (with you). O Viṣṇu, how would I be pure? Therefore, O Govinda, tell me the expiation you desire.” Then the lord, being pleased, told the truth about himself, by which, O daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, I became superior to him. Everyday I adore him with penance, I eulogise him and think of him. Viṣṇu alone is the highest one. Knowledge about him is the means of salvation. This is the verdict of the sacred texts. Anything other than that causes delusion. All that is said like: ‘salvation is attained without knowledge’, ‘my equivalence with Viṣṇu’, ‘knowledge is obtained by visiting holy places’, ‘my superiority over Viṣṇu’, or ‘identity of devotees like me with Viṣṇu’, leads to delusion (only and) to nothing else, O chaste lady. Due to that my greatness has become matchless, and I am honoured by the world, O Pārvatī.

Pārvatī said:

117. Then O Śaṅkara, O master, O lord of gods, tell me how I would be the ruler of all and matchless like you.

Mahādeva said:

118-139. O dear one, you have asked well. I shall tell you the principal names of lord Viṣṇu, which would bring about salvation from the three worlds. Of this hymn called *Viṣṇusahasranāma* ('the thousand names of Viṣṇu') Śrī Mahādeva is the poet; the metre is anuṣṭubh; the seed (the cause) is *Hrīm*; the power is *Śrīm*; the pin is *Klīm*. Its application is in the muttering of the names for the attainment of the four goals, viz. moral merit, sensual enjoyments, worldly prosperity and salvation: 'Om, we know Vāsudeva. We think of (that) supreme Brahman; so that Viṣṇu should urge us (on).' When the various assignments of (the parts of) the body, hands would be recited duly, the fruit of that is crore-fold. There is no doubt about it. He (should touch his) heart (saying), 'Śrī Vāsudeva is the highest Brahman'. He (should touch his) head (saying), '(He) is the original source'. He (should touch) the tuft of hair on his head (saying), '(He) is Mahāvarāha'. He (should utter) the mystical syllable 'Hūm-Hūm' (saying), 'He is the banner (i.e. the scion) of the solar dynasty'. He (should touch) his eyes (saying), 'Infancy causing wonder to the world by means of the desired sports of Brahmā etc.' He (should touch) the astra, (saying), 'Yathārtha-khaṇḍita-aśeṣa.' Saying, "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa the noble 'man'," he should have the nyāsa everywhere. 'We think of the supreme Brahman, of a pure, good, abode. Om, hrām, hrīm, hrum, hraiṁ, hrom, hraḥ; Klīm to Kṛṣṇa, to Viṣṇu. Hrīm to Rāma. We think of him, so that the god will urge us on. Kṣraum, we know Nṛsiṁha. Śrīm, we think of Śrīkaṇṭha, so that Viṣṇu should prompt us. Om, we think of Devakī's son, Vāsudeva, so that that Kṛṣṇa should urge us on. Om, hrām, hrīm, hrūṁ, hraiṁ, hraum, hraḥ. Klīm, svāhā (i.e. offering) to Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, dear to the cowherdresses.' Reciting this hymn he should mutter (prayers in honour of) the immutable Viṣṇu, Śrinivāsa and the lord of the world. The wise one should recite the hymn (in honour) of him. Om, Vāsudeva is the highest Brahman, he is the highest soul, he is greater than the great. He is a great lustre, a great light, the great first principle, the highest position. He (is) great Śiva, the great (object) to be pondered over. He is the highest knowledge and the best recourse. He is the highest truth, the highest bliss, the highest joy and

rise. He is greater than the Invisible; he is the highest sky; he is the highest prosperity, the highest lord; he is full, immutable, admitting no alternative, and without a prop. He is unstained, free from fear, unsmearcd, unrestrained. He is qualityless; he is whole; has no end; is fearless; is inconceivable; and is fit for the weak. He is beyond the scope of the senses; he is immeasurable; unlimited; he has no lord; has no desire; is immutable and indestructible. He is omniscient; omnipresent; he is everything; he gives everything; and creates everything. He is the ruler of all; he sees everything; he is adorable to all; and observes all things. He is all-powerful; has all the vigour; is the soul of all; and has faces on all sides. He stays everywhere; has all forms; is the source of all; and removes the misery of all. He has all the wealth; he is auspicious on all sides; he is the cause of all causes. He excels all; he is the head of all, is the lord of all gods. He is *Ṣaḍviṃśaka* (the twenty-sixth principle?); is *Mahā Viṣṇu*; a great secret; and a great ruler. He is always lofty; always diligent; he is always joy; he is ancient. He is the lord of illusion; the lord of abstract meditation; lord of beatitude; and self-born. He is beyond birth, death and old age. He is beyond time and has gone beyond the worldly existence. He is full. He is truth; he is of a pure and enlightened nature. He is always full of intelligence. Abstract meditation is dear to him. He can be known by abstract meditation. He alone frees (the beings) from the bonds of the worldly existence. He is the ancient soul, he is inwardly the spirit. He is *Puruṣottama* (highest person). He is to be known from the *Upaniṣads*. He is difficult to be known. He is free from the three kinds of miseries.¹ Knowledge of the *Vedas* is his resort. He is without a beginning. He is self-illuminated and the master of himself. He can be approached by all. He is neutral. He is *Oṃkāra*. He is equal on all sides. He is the fourth state of the soul (i.e. *Brahman*). He is beyond darkness. He is the supreme soul. He has touched everything. He is beyond the scope of speech or mind. He is *Samkarṣaṇa*. He drags everything (unto him); he is death. He is fearful to all. He

1. *Tāpatraya*—The three kinds of torments: caused by the mind (*Ādhyātmika*), caused by fate (*Ādhidaivika*), and caused by animals (*Ādhibhautika*).

cannot be overcome. He has a wonderful gait. He is Mahā Rudra; he is unconquerable. He is the root cause (of the world). He is joy. He is Pradyumna. He deludes everyone. His divine power is great. He is the only place of happiness. He is desired by all. His pastimes are unending. He subjugates all beings. He is Aniruddha. He is the life of all. He is Hṛṣīkeśa. He is the lord of the mind. The guileless are dear to him. He is Brahman. He directs everything. He is the lord of the life of Brahmā. He supports all beings. He is the lord of the body. He is the soul. He is the origin. He is the lord. He is the Supreme Being. He holds all the threads (of the conduct of the universe). He is the internal soul. He has three abodes. He is the internal witness (i.e. the soul). He has three constituents (viz. sattva, rajas and tamas). He is the lord. He is known by meditating saints. He is Padmanābha (having a lotus arising from his navel). He lies on Śeṣa. He is the lord of Lakṣmī.

140-155. His lotus-like feet are always served by Lakṣmī. He always has Śrī (i.e. Lakṣmī or affluence). He is the abode of Śrī. Śrī (i.e. Lakṣmī) always rests on his chest. He is the treasure of Śrī. He is Śrīdhara (i.e. possesses Śrī). He is Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). He controls Śrī. He is steady. He gives wealth. He is Viṣṇu (literally, one who enters). He has his abode in the Milky Ocean. His chest shines with the Kaustubha (gem). He is Mādhava (the husband of Mā, i.e. Lakṣmī). He removes the afflictions of the world. On his chest is the (mark of) Śrīvatsa. He is the abode of unbounded auspicious qualities. He wears a yellow garment. He is the lord of the world. He is the father of the world. He is the kinsman of the world. He is the supporter of the world. He is the treasure of the world. He is the only one of a sparkling vigour in the world. He is not an egotist. He is full of all wonders. He has accomplished all objects. He is entertained by all. His exertion is never unfailing. Brahmā, Śiva are his excellent consciousness. He is Śiva's grand-father. He is Brahmā's father. He is the superior lord of Indra and others. He is dear to all gods. He is the image of all gods. He is excellent. He is the only resort of all gods. He is the only deity of all gods. He enjoys the sacrifice. He is the creator of the sacrifice. He is the protector of the sacrifice. He is the (chief) man (i.e. deity) of the sacrifice. He wears the garland of wood-flowers.

He is dear to brāhmaṇas. He alone honours brāhmaṇas. He is the family-deity of brāhmaṇas. He is the destroyer of the demons. He destroys all the wicked. He is the only protector of all good men. He is the only belly of the seven worlds. He is the only ornament of the seven worlds. He is the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer (of the world). He holds the disc. His bow is Śārṅga. He holds a mace. He holds a conch. He has the Nandaka (sword). He has a lotus in his hand. Garuḍa is his vehicle. His body cannot be pointed out. He is adored by all. He purifies the three worlds. His fame is endless. His virility is boundless. He is all-auspicious. He resembles crores of suns. He is unconquerable like crores of Yamas. He is the creator of the world like crores of Mayas. He is very powerful like crores of winds. He delights the world like crores of moons. He is a great god like crores of Śambhus. His loveliness is like that of crores of Cupids. He is inaccessible and a destroyer of crores of enemies. He is deep like crores of oceans. He has the appellations of crores of holy places. He is rich like crores of Kuberas. He has amorous pleasures like those of crores of Indras. He is steady like crores of Himālayas. His body contains crores of universes. He destroys sins like crores of horse-sacrifices. He is adorable like crores of sacrifices. He is the cause of satisfaction like crores of (i.e. very large quantity of) nectar. He grants desired objects like crores of desire-yielding cows. His form is of crores of Vedic lores. He is Śīpiviṣṭa (i.e. is pervaded by rays). He is Śuciśravas (literally, of pure ears or hearing).

156-168. He supports the universe. His feet are like a holy place. Hearing and talking about him is meritorious. He is the first god. He is the conqueror of the world. He is the killer of Kālanemi. He is Vaikuṇṭha. His greatness is infinite. He is the great joy of the masters of abstract meditation. He is always content. He is of bright thoughts. He is fearless. He is the destroyer of Naraka. He is the only refuge of the poor and the helpless. He alone removes all calamities. He is always capable of favouring the world. He is kind. He is the resort of the good. He is the master of abstract meditation. He is ever grown. He is free from increase and decrease. He has controlled his senses. He is Viśvaretas (i.e. Brahmā). He is the lord of hundreds of the lords of created beings. His feet are worshipped by

Indra and Brahmā. His lustre surpasses that of Śiva and Brahmā. The Sun and the Moon are his eyes. He enjoys everything. He has mastered everything. He has controlled illusion. He has controlled the universe. He is Viśvakṣena (i.e. he, on seeing whom even the mighty army of gods retreats and scatters away). He is the best of gods. He is the lord of all bliss. He is adorned with divine, invaluable ornaments. He is characterised by all (good) characteristics. He has destroyed the pride of all demons. He is the all-in-all of all gods, and the leader of all deities. He is the armour of all gods. He is the crest-jewel of all gods. He is the fortress of all gods. He is the adamant (protective) cage of all that have resorted to him. He is called 'the remover of the fear of all'. He is Viṣṭaraśravas (i.e. of beautiful and efficient ears). He is the supreme ruler. He is the end of the good of all. He has killed (his) enemies. He gives (one) a position in heaven. He is the lord of the life of all deities. He appoints the brāhmaṇas etc. His life is longer by a parārdha than that of Brahmā and Śiva. He is older than Brahmā. He is a child. He is the supreme Being. He is Virāṭ (i.e. the first progeny of Brahmā). He is dependent on his devotees. He is fit to be praised. He accomplishes the object of (i.e. to be had by means of) a hymn. He obliges others. He knows what is fit to be done. He has always given up acts for his self-interest. He is always glad. He is always auspicious. He is always calm. He is always propitious. He is always dear. He is always content. He is always nourished. He is always adored.

169-188. He is always pure. He is the best among those that purify. He is (to be) concealed by the Vedas. He is Vṛṣā-kapi. He has a thousand names. He is the three yugas. He has four forms. He has four arms. He is the lord of the past, future and present. He is the ancestor of great men. He is Nārāyaṇa (i.e. having the water as his abode). His hair is like the muñja grass. He has spread out by means of all abstract meditation. He is the essence of the Vedas. He is the essence of sacrifices. He is the essence of Sāmans. He is the treasure of penance. He is a Sādhya (i.e. a celestial being). He is the highest. He is an ancient sage. He is solely devoted to steadiness and calmness. He is the destroyer of Śiva's trident. He is the only giver of boons to Śiva. He is the 'man'. He is Kṛṣṇa. He is Hari. He is delighted in righteousness. Righteousness is his life. He is the

first agent. He is all-truth. He removes the pride of all women-gems. He has conquered Madana for all the three times. He is the chief of the sages who produced Urvaśī. He is the first poet. He is Hayagrīva. He is the lord of all the masters of speech. He is full of all gods, Brahmā, and Guru, and the lord of the goddess of speech. He is the source of endless lores. He is the destroyer of the root-ignorance. He knows and gives everything. He destroys the dullness of the world. He is the killer of (the demon) Madhu. He is the master of many crores of hymns. He alone has mastered the Vedas. He is the first learned (being). He is the author of the Vedas. He is the soul of the Vedas. He is the ocean of the holy texts. He has snatched the Vedas (from the demons) for Brahmā. He is the land of birth (i.e. the source) of all worldly knowledge. He is the king of lores. He is the form of knowledge. He is the ocean of knowledge. His intelligence is uninterrupted. He is the fish-god (i.e. the Matsyāvatāra). He has large horns. Being the seed of the world, he looks out. He has easily occupied the entire ocean. He is the propounder of the four Vedas. He is the first tortoise (i.e. the Kūrmāvatāra). He is the prop of everything. He has made the burden of the world (as light) as grass. He has made a stream of gods immortal. He is the cause of the production of ambrosia. He is the support of the soul. He is the support of the earth. He is not a portion of the sacrifice. He holds the earth. He destroyed Hiranyākṣa. He is the lord of the earth. He has fashioned śrāddha etc. He removes the fear of all dead ancestors. He is the life of all the dead ancestors. He alone enjoys the oblations offered to gods and dead ancestors; and he alone gives the fruit of the oblations offered to gods and to dead ancestors. The ocean is concealed in his bristles. He has agitated the entire ocean. He is the great Boar (incarnation). He is the destroyer of those who (try to) destroy the sacrifices. He is the refuge of those who perform sacrifices. He is Śrī Nṛsimha (incarnation). He is a divine lion. He destroys all undesired things and miseries. He is the only hero of a wonderful might. He alone destroys (evil) forces and charms. His lustre is unbearable (even) to Brahmā etc. He, the foremost in ending a yuga, is extremely fearful. His nails are (sharper) than crores of thunderbolts. He has a form which is unbearable for the world to see. He is the lord of

the group of the great(divine) mothers. He is endowed with inconceivable and unfailing power. He is the destroyer of all demons. He is the destroyer of Hiranyakaśipu. He is Death. He is the lord of Saṁkarṣaṇī. He is unbearable even for Yama's vehicle. He destroys all fears. He puts an end to all obstacles. He is the giver (of all kinds) of prosperity. He fulfils all (desires). He is the destroyer of all sins. He is called Siddhimantrādhika (i.e. superior to a hymn giving prosperity). He is the lord of Bhairava (i.e. Śiva). He removes the affliction of Śiva. He is inaccessible to crores of Deaths. He is called Daityagarbhasrāvin (i.e. one tearing asunder the demon-embryos). He roars like the bursting universe.

189-198. He protects everyone that just remembers him. He has a wonderful form. He is great Viṣṇu. He has a body with celibacy as the head. He is the ornament of the upper part of the bodies of the regents of the quarters. He has a string of twelve suns on his head. His anklet is just one head of Rudra. He is the protector of Pārvatī possessed by the Yoginīs (her attendants). He threatens Bhairava. He is the lord of the host of heroes. He is very fierce. He is the enemy of the ecliptic¹. He is the death of Śambara. He is lord of anger. He is the devourer of the wicked (troubling) the retinue of Rudra and Caṇḍī. He is not (at all) agitated by any one. He is the death of death. He keeps off Kāla, the Death. He destroys all incurable diseases. He softens all evil Planets. He destroys the pride of crores of the chiefs of (Śiva's) attendants. He is unbearable to every Indra. He is difficult to be looked at by gods and demons. He is terrible, causing fear to the world. He protects (beings) from all miseries. He devours the devourer of the world. He is Śiva. He is the cat in the form of the sky, the devourer of the rat in the form of Kāla (Time or Death). His staff-like arms hold endless weapons. He is Nṛsiṁha. He is the conqueror of Virabhadra. He is the lord of the secret bevy of witches. He is the eater of the flesh of Indra's enemy. He is Rudra. He is Nārāyaṇa. He is the vehicle of Śaṅkara in the form of a goat. He is the protector of Śiva in the form of a goat. He enjoys a thousand wicked powers.

1. Apama—ecliptic (the sun's apparent orbit).

He is dear to Tulasī (or Tulasī is dear to him). He is a hero. He is the giver of all desired objects to the Vāmācāra (devotees of Śiva). He is Mahāśiva. He has Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī) mounted upon him. He is having a bird. He is the master of the disc. He gives a divine and attractive form to Indra. He gives good fortune to Pārvatī. He is the treasure of illusion. He removes the fear due to illusion. He is full of the lustre of Brahman (or of Vedas). He is full of the glory of Brahman (or of Vedas). He is full of triad (of the Vedas).

199-212. He is Subrahmaṇya. He is Vāmana, the destroyer of Bali. He is Upendra, the remover of Diti's grief. He is the King. He is Viṣṇu. He is the ornament of Kaśyapa's family. He is the giver of his kingdom to Bali. He is the giver of food to all gods and brāhmaṇas. He is Acyuta (i.e. Imperishable). His strides are wide. The holy places are at his feet. He stays at Tripada (i.e. in heaven). He is Trivikrama (i.e. Viṣṇu in his dwarf incarnation). His feet are in the sky. He has purified the three worlds with the water (flowing) from his feet. His feet are fit to be saluted by Brahmā, Śiva etc. He runs quickly with the feet of Dharma. His expanse is inconceivable and wonderful. He is a very strong universal tree. He has cut the upper part of Rāhu's head. He took off the head of Bhṛgu's wife. He is afraid of sins. He is always meritorious. He always cuts off the hope of the demons. He has fulfilled the desires of all gods. He has descended (i.e. has had his incarnations) only for the (good of) the universe. He has always concealed his soul by means of his illusion. He is always the desire-yielding gem for his devotees. He, the sinless one and the giver of boons, has given kingdoms to kings like Kārtavīrya. His unlimited acts are fit to be praised by all. He is Dattātreyā. He is the lord of sages. He is always in close contact with the highest power. He delights in abstract meditation. He is always furious. He has removed the lustre of all the enemies of Indra. He drinks the best nectar. He is the gem of an embryo of Anasūyā. He gives enjoyments and salvation. He is the sun to the family of Jamadagni. He produced wonderful power in Reṇukā. He is unstained by (the sin of) matricide. He is the conqueror of Skanda. He gives a kingdom (even) to a brāhmaṇa. He puts an end to all bodies. He destroys the pride of heroes. He is the conqueror of Kārtavīrya.

He is the giver of (the earth consisting) of seven islands. He gives glory to Śiva's worshipper. He is Bhīma. He is Paraśu-rāma. He is a good preceptor and the enjoyer of everything. He is the encyclopedia of all auspicious knowledge. He is Bhīṣmā-cārya. He is Agni's deity. He is the preceptor of Droṇācārya. He has a bow that conquers the universe. He is the conqueror of Yama. He is a matchless form of penance. The present of (i.e. received by) him is celibacy only. He is the greatest Manu. He is a bridge for the good (to cross the mundane existence). He is great. He is a bull. He is Virāṭ. He is the first King. He is the father of the earth. He is the only one who has milked (i.e. taken) out all gems. He is great. He is exceptionally diligent from the beginning of his existence. He is Speech. He is Wealth. He is Fame. He is self-chosen. He gives courage to the world. He is the greatest among the sovereign emperors. He holds a unique weapon.

213-218. He is to be secured by sages like Sanaka and increases devotion for the lord. He is the author of the duties of the castes and the stages of life. He is a speaker. He is a pro-pounder. He is the banner (i.e. the scion) of the solar dynasty i.e. Rāma, a descendant of Raghu, and the ocean of virtues, (so also) the descendant of Kakutstha, the king of heroes (or the heroic king), the king, and the leader in the kingly duties. He always has an independent abode. He accepts all auspicious things. He sees only auspicious things. He is a gem among men. He is the sea. He is the superintendent of Dharma. He is a great treasure. He is the abode of all the greatest. He has the vitality of the host of the truths of all sacred texts. The world is under his control. He is Daśaratha's son. He is a king, the resort of all gems. He has produced all modes of conduct. He observes all ways of conduct. He destroys all sins. He is superior to Indra. He is beyond metaphysical and profane knowledge. He is the ocean of forgiveness. He is liked by all excellent, eminent people. He is not perturbed by joy or sorrow. He gave up his empire at the behest of his father. He is not afraid of the rise of his rivals. He gave wealth to the country of Guha. He wears matted hair in emulation of Śiva. He got the mountain of gems from Citrakūṭa. He is the lord of the world. He moves in the forest.

219-228. He performs a sacrifice as he likes. All his missiles

are infallible. He destroyed the eyes of the son of the lord of gods. He is the lunar month of Pauṣa¹ having the days like Brahmā and Indra. He is the killer of Mārīca, and the destroyer of Virādha. He purified the entire Daṇḍakāraṇya that was harmed by the curse of Brahmā. He alone is the holder of the only arrow that killed fourteen thousand fierce demons. He is the enemy of Khara. He is the killer of Triśiras. He is the killer of Dūṣaṇa. He is Janārdana. He performed the last ceremonies of Jaṭāyus, and helped him obtain heaven. He is the king of the hymn which is the all-in-all of Agastya. He scattered away the great heap of the bones of Dundubhi with the end of his sportive bow. He destroyed the demon in the nether world dragging and striking him with a saptatāla (tree). He is the giver of the kingdom to Sugrīva. He grants fearlessness with a large mind. He takes up the form of all the monkeys with Hanūmat and Rudra as the chief lords. He agitated the ocean with one arrow, along with the serpents and the demons. He dried and parched the ocean with the tip of just one arrow along with mlecchas. Formerly he built a wonderful bridge over the sea. He is the treasure of glory. He accomplishes what is impossible to be accomplished. He is dexterous in pulling upwards Laṅkā along with its root. He cut off the family of Rāvaṇa, haughty due to a curse, and a cause of poignant grief to the world. He killed Rāvaṇa's son. He cut off (i.e. killed) Prahasta. He pierced (i.e. killed) Kumbhakarna. He is the killer of the pierced ones. He is the only one to cut off Rāvaṇa's head. He has given a kingdom free from fear to Indra. He cuts off (the difference between) what is heavenly and unheavenly. He removes the non-Indra-hood of Indra. He removes the godhead of the demons. He destroys unrighteousness. He is praised by many. He, the enemy of Rāvaṇa, gave the kingdom (of Laṅkā) to Bibhiṣaṇa by means of just being saluted.

229-243. He brought back to life his entire army that was dead by the shower of nectar. He is the only supporter, just by (means of) his name (being uttered), of gods and brāhmaṇas. He is honoured by all gods. He loves Satī offered by the host of

1. Taiṣi—The lunar month of Pauṣa.

Brahmā, Sūrya, Indra, Rudra etc. He is the all-ruler of the kingdom of Ayodhyā. He is charming to all the beings. He favours and punishes like a master. He loves only the good whether low or high. He shows (ways of) justice to those who belong to his side and others. He accomplishes more with a small object. He is the protector of him who behaved improperly under the pretext of a hunter. He does all equal (i.e. impartial) things. He is a free soul due to the superiority of Pārvatī. He is not abandoned by his dear ones. He is the conqueror of Madana's enemy. He is actually the father of Indra etc. in the guise of Kuśa and Lava. He is never conquered. He is the lord of Kośala. His arms are like those of a hero. He abandoned his brothers for truth. He shook the bright globe of the earth by taking an aim with his arrow. He made the deities possessed of a guardian by his proximity desired by Brahmā and others. He has the host of all beings like the cāṇḍālas, who have reached Brahmā's world. He himself led donkeys and horses. For a long time he protected Ayodhyā. He is Sumitrā's son, Lakṣmaṇa, who was accompanied by Rāma and who killed Indrajit. He (i.e. Bharata) a devotee of Viṣṇu, was delighted with the kingdom on getting the sandals of Rāma's feet. He is Bharata who killed a crore of the unbearable gandharvas. He is Śatrughna, the destroyer of Lavaṇa. He is the lord of physicians. He is the master of the herbs (mentioned) in Āyurveda. He always has the rays of nectar (or he always produces nectar). He is Dhanvantari. He is sacrifice. He uplifts the world. He kills Sūrya's enemy. He supports the gods. He is the lord of Dakṣiṇā (south, or the fee given to a brāhmaṇa). He is dear to brāhmaṇas. With his head cut, he is the sun, the lord of those who give good fortune. He gives everything. His form is unhurt, though with the head cut off with a missile(?). He is the fire of the name of Vājapeya etc. He is intent upon following the practices laid down in the Veda. He is the lord of the Śveta Dvīpa. He is the propounder of the Sāṃkhya (system). He is the lord of all accomplishments. He has destroyed the darkness of delusion by the knowledge manifested in the universe. He is the son of Devahūtī. He is Siddha. He is Kapila and the son of Kardama. He is the master of abstract meditation. He reduced to ash Sagara's sons, due to his meditation being disturbed (by them). He is Dharma. He is

the lord of virtue. He is the lord of Surabhi. He is meditated upon by a pure soul. He is Śiva. He obtained stability only after burning Tripura, and carries the chariot of the universe. He is won over by his devotee Śambhu. He is like a well of nectar to the demons. He is penance.

244-264. He is the universe with the great deluge, and the second king of all serpents. He is god Śeṣa. He has a thousand eyes. He has a thousand mouths, heads and arms. He has joined with the drop-like gems of his hood the ocean, the clouds and the earth. He produces death like fire and Rudra. He has a pestle as his missile. He has a plough as his weapon. He has put on dark-blue garments. He looks charming with the spirituous liquor. He removes the blemishes of the speech and the body. He is discontent. He knocked down Rāvaṇa by merely casting a glance at him. He restrained Bali. He is fierce. He is Balarāma. He is the killer of Pralamba. He is the killer of Muṣṭika. He is the killer of Dvivida. He is Bala(-rāma) who dragged Yamunā. He is the husband of Revatī. Due to the lassitude in former devotion he is the elder brother of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). He is the son of Kaśyapa and Aditi, called Devakī and Vasudeva. He is (Kṛṣṇa) the descendant of Vṛṣṇi. He is the greatest among the Sātvatas. He is Śauri. He is the perpetuator of the Yadu family. He is of the form of a man. He is the Supreme Brahman. He is Savyasācin (i.e. Arjuna). He is the giver of boons. His grace is desired by Brahmā etc. and his childhood is a wonder to the world. He killed Pūtanā. He broke Śakata, Yamala and Arjuna. He is the enemy of Vātāsura. He is the killer of Keśin. He is the enemy of Dhenuka. He is the lord of cows. He is Dāmodara. He is the god of the cowherds. He is the giver of joy to Yaśodā. He crushed Kāliya. He is dear to all the cowherds and cowherdresses. He easily held the Govardhana (mountain). He is Govinda. He is a joy to Gokula. He is the destroyer of Ariṣṭa. He is the giver of salvation to the cowherdresses mad with lust. He instantly kills him who hurts the earth. He crushed Cāṇūra. He is Kāṁsa's enemy. He is the great one who put Ugrasena on the throne. He made the earth characterised by auspiciousness. He put an end to Jarā-sandha's power (or army). He threw and broke Jarāsandha. He gave glory to Bhīmasena. He gave (back making it alive) Sāndīpani's child. He is the conqueror of Kālāntaka and others. He is

the emancipator of all hellish beings. He is the conqueror of crores of all kings. He is the husband of Rukmiṇī. He punished Rukmi. He killed Naraka. He is loved by all beautiful women. He is the enemy of Mura. He is Garuḍa-bannered. He, the lord of all, all alone conquered Rudra, Arka (the Sun), Maruts and others. He removed the pride of the lord of gods. He has adorned the earth with the desire-yielding trees. He is the conqueror of the crores of attendants (of Śiva) like Nandin, pierced along with Bāṇa's arms. He easily conquered Śiva. He is worshipped by Śiva only. He is the giver of victory of Arjuna from a total fall, for Indra. He has cut off the head of Kāśirāja. He is the only one who crushed Rudra's power. He, the lord of the universe, casts a favourable glance. He troubled the son of Kāśirāja. He broke the pledge of Śambhu. He is the leader who totally burnt Kāśirāja. He is the killer of the crores of the attendants of the lord of Kāśī. He honours brāhmaṇas instructing the world. He is subjugated by beves of young women. Formerly he granted a boon to Śiva. He is the only giver of stability to Śaṅkara. He worships Śiva, his portion. He is the lord of the vow of lucky maidens. He, in the form of Kṛṣṇa, is the killer of Śiva's enemies. He has the body of Mahālakṣmī. He is the protector of Gaurī. He is the killer of Vaidala Vṛtra. His lustre alone is Mucukunda. He did a desired thing for Kālayavana. He is the lord of Yamunā. He is a brāhmaṇa's son led near and devoted.

265-278. He brought down to the earth Indra's splendour for his poor devotee Śrīdāman. He is the only one giving salvation to the wicked Śiśupāla. He is the lord of Dvārakā. He fashioned the crores of treasures at Dvārakā to be reached by (everyone up to) a cāṇḍāla. He alone gave, as he willed, salvation to his principal devotees Akrūra and Uddhava. He turned the ocean into a well of nectar while sporting (there) with children and women. He gave life to Parikṣit who while in the womb was burnt by Brahmā's missile. He led the daughter of the brāhmaṇa devoted to him. He removed Arjuna's pride. He seized all Kauravas like Bhīṣma with a mysterious figure. He duly cut off all the divine missiles and removed Arjuna's delusion. He removed the fear of the gods and the earth under the guise of a curse to be conceived. He is the enemy of old age and physical diseases, and gives a good condition (to his devotee).

He gives everything that is desired merely when he is remembered. He is god Madana, the lord of Rati. He is Manmatha, and the destroyer of Śambara. He is bodyless (i.e. Madana). He conquered Gaurī's lord (i.e. Śiva). He is the husband of Rati, and is always desired. His arrows are made of flowers. He is Smara (i.e. Madana) who vanquishes everyone. He is dear to Kāmeśvarī (i.e. Rati). He is Uṣā's lord. He is Viśvaketu (i.e. Aniruddha). He is proud everywhere. He is a superior 'man'. He has four souls. He has four modes. He is the author of the four ages. He is the only universal soul of all the four Vedas. He is in crores the portion of everything that is excellent. He is the ancient sage Vyāsa, the author of a thousand branches (Vedic knowledge). He is the creator (i.e. the author) of the Mahābhārata. He is the lord of poets. He is Bādarāyaṇa. He is Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana (i.e. Vyāsa) who is the only teacher of all the (four) goals (of human life). He is the author of the Vedānta. He alone has manifested Brahman. He is the cause of the Puru race. He is Buddha (literally, enlightened). He has won over through meditation the god of all gods. He is without a weapon. He has conquered the world. He is Śrīdhara. He deludes the wicked. He has outcast the demons from the Vedic (fold). He has preserved the meaning of the Vedas and the sacred texts. He is the son of Śuddhodana (i.e. he is Buddha). He is seen and shown. He gives happiness. He is the lord of the assembly. He shows favour to all as they deserve it. He is all void. He gives all that is desired. He has four crores of various principles. He is the lord who has gone beyond intelligence. He is the lord showing the path of the Veda to the heretics. He is the preserver of the texts sacred to the heretics.

279-293. He is Kalki. He is the child of Viṣṇu's glory. He ends the Kali age. He kills all the wicked mlecchas. He has fashioned all the distinguished brāhmaṇas. He propounds the truth. He removes the prolonged hunger of gods and brāhmaṇas. He is Aśvavārādirevanta(?). He destroys the bad condition of the earth. He instantly gives unending glory to the earth. He knows all the ways of life that have perished. Due to his contact with unending gold he is the only brāhmaṇa with entire gold. He is the only ruler of the world that cannot be controlled. He is adorable to the world. He is the banner of victory. He is

the lord of the principle of soul. He is the best doer. He is Brahmā. He is (Śiva) the lord of Umā. He is the best lord. He is the first among the lords of beings. He is Marīci. He is a leader like Janaka. He is Kaśyapa. He is the chief lord of gods. He is Prahlāda, the king of demons. He is the Moon, the lord of stars. He is the Sun, best in lustre. He is Śukra, the lord of the wise. He is the chief of great sages, i.e. Bhṛgu. He is Viṣṇu, the chief among the Suns. He is Bali, and the Supreme Being. He is Vāyu. He is pure fire. He is the greatest. He is Śaṅkara, the chief of the Rudras, and the preceptor. He is the wisest one. He is the chief gandharva, Citraratha. He is the excellent Indestructible (one). He is the first caste. By means of power she is Gaurī, the first lady. He is the best blessing. He is Nārada, the chief divine sage. He is the chief Pāṇḍava, Arjuna. He is the chief discussion and discourse. He is Pavana (Wind). He is the lord of Pavana. He is Varuṇa, the lord of the aquatic animals. He is the best of the sacred places on the Gaṅgā. He plays with dice, the principal among tricks. He is food, the excellent medicine. He is Sudarśana, the best among the missiles. He is the thunderbolt, the best weapon. He is Uccaiṣravas, the lord of horses; Airāvata, the lord of elephants. He is the lord of those having a wife like Arundhatī. He is Aśvattha, the chief among trees. He is metaphysical knowledge, the chief among the lores. He is Om, the best of the sacred texts of the Vedic hymns. He is Meru, the chief of the mountains. He is the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the first among the months. He is the best of times. He is the soul, accomplished in ancient times, of a day etc. He is Kapila. He is the master of Sāma Veda. He is Garuḍa, the first among the birds. He is the desire-yielding cow. He is the best friend, removing affliction. He is the desire-yielding gem. He is the best preceptor. He is the mother. He is the most kind father. He is the lion, the lord of beasts. He is Vāsuki, the lord of serpents, and the king, best among men. He is brāhmaṇa, the chief of the castes. He is the mind, best due to compassion. Repeated salutation (to him). These are the thousand names of Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu. It (i.e. *Viṣṇusahasranāma*) puts an end to all faults.

294-312. It very much enhances devotion. It is an inexhaustible means of the worlds like those of Brahmā, and the only

means to heaven. It is the only staircase to Viṣṇu world. It destroys all griefs. It gives all pleasures. It instantly gives the highest salvation. It fully purifies the dirt of the mind like lust and anger. It gives peace. It purifies even men with great sins. It gives all the desired fruits to all beings. It removes all obstacles. It destroys all evils. It destroys terrible pain. It destroys acute poverty. It removes the three debts. It is a secret. It gives wealth, grains and glory. It gives all affluence. It gives all (kinds of) success. It gives all kinds of auspiciousness. It gives the fruit of a crore of (visits to) holy places, sacrifices, austerities, gifts and vows. It puts an end to the dullness of the world. It is the promoter of all lores. It gives a kingdom to those who are deprived of their kingdom. It removes all the diseases of the sick persons. It gives a son to the barren women. It gives life to those whose (span of) life is diminished. It destroys the (ill effect of) being possessed by ghosts and of poison. It destroys the oppression caused by a Planet. It is auspicious. It is meritorious. It enhances (the span of) life by means of being listened to, being recited and being muttered. The religious merit of him (is as much) as all the Vedas with the Vedāṅgas, crores of hymns, the Purāṇas, sacred texts, Smṛtis (would give) when heard and recited. O dear one, if a man mutters or recites a letter, a verse or a line every day, then all one's desired objects are soon achieved. Then (what would be obtained by listening to or reciting) the entire (text)? Such certainty is not seen in all (other) acts. O good one, this is to be secretly preserved by you and is to be recited only for your own interest. It is not to be given to a non-devotee of Viṣṇu, whose mind is overcome with doubts, who lacks devotion and faith and who looks upon Viṣṇu as an ordinary (deity). It should be given to the son, to a disciple, to a friend with a desire of their good. Those of a dull intellect will not grasp it without my favour. It gives instant fruit in the Kali age. Nārada will take it to the community in (the various) kalpas, by which the misery of unfortunate persons will come to an end. In the Āryāvarta it will live with two or three devotees of Viṣṇu. There is no better abode than Viṣṇu. There is no greater penance than Viṣṇu. There is no greater religious merit than Viṣṇu. There is no hymn that does not pertain to Viṣṇu. There is no greater

truth than Viṣṇu. There is no greater sacrifice than Viṣṇu. There is no greater meditation than Viṣṇu. There is no better recourse than Viṣṇu. For him who has devotion to Viṣṇu, what is the use of many hymns, and very extensive sacred texts and thousands of Vājapeya sacrifices? Viṣṇu is full of all sacred places. The lord is full of all sacred texts. Viṣṇu is full of all sacrifices. I am telling the truth and the truth (only). I have told (you) this which is the full essence of everything up to Brahman.

Pārvatī said:

313-330. I am lucky. I am favoured. I am blessed, O lord of the world, since I heard from you this hymn, this secret which is very difficult to be secured. Oh! how very painful it is that the fools suffer in the mundane existence, when Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all miseries and the lord of gods is present (everywhere), and due to dedication to whom Śiva is seen by people to be naked, having matted hair, with his body smeared with ash and an ascetic. Which (other) god is there who is superior to (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī and the enemy of Madhu? Which better position is there than that Viṣṇu, that principle which is every day thought of by you the lord of abstract meditation? Whom, ignoring him, do the fools, proud of their knowledge, worship? O lord, you have for a long time deprived me, that you have not manifested to me this lord, having the divine powers like you. Oh, Viṣṇu, the lord of all, the best among all excellent gods, the first preceptor of you, is looked upon as an ordinary god! The greatness of the great is that they worship those who deserve worship. Those having forgiveness ignore even those who have become their enemies without any cause. I too, in my childhood saw my father's starving subjects. Unable to nourish them due to difficulty they were supported after having propitiated Lakṣmī. Gods like you, Indra and others with kind-hearted friends and kinsmen shine, due to the subjects in whose proximity she stays. Without her where can godhead remain? Where can glory and possessions remain? All living beings live in anguish. Without her there can be no righteousness, no worldly desires, no (satisfaction of) lust. (Then) salvation too is (far) away. How can the hungry and the unfortunate ones have concentration through abstract meditation? He who controls Lakṣmī, is alone the

essence of the worldly existence, and the only leader of the entire world. Śaṅkara even abandoned her. He, the magnanimous one, is full with humility, purity, handsomeness, wealth, of uprightness and valour surpassing that of all (others). Who can equal that Viṣṇu, god of gods, without whose partial incarnation all this world gets dissolved? But the deluded ones call this to be a fault. He has no birth, no death. Nor has he any desired object to be obtained. But, O lord due to my mind attached to lust etc., due to my having been one with you, due to an error, if I am unable to recite every day these thousand names of Viṣṇu, then tell me, O bull-bannered god, that name, by which I shall get that fruit (obtained by the recital of Viṣṇu's thousand names).

Mahādeva said:

331. O you beautiful one, O you charming one, (recite) 'Rāma, Rāma, Rāma'. The thousand names are equal to that.*

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Merit of Reciting the Viṣṇusahasranāma

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-8. O daughter of the Himālaya mountain, if brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas or śūdras recite this especially every day, they, having wealth and grains go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. By reciting a verse, half a verse, a line, or half a line a man goes to salvation (and stays there) till the universal deluge. O goddess, those best men who recite the thousand names of Viṣṇu with a special commitment, go to the imperishable position (of Viṣṇu). The wealth and the (span of) life of him who recites it once, twice or thrice (a day), increase till the (end of the regime of) fourteen Indras. He would obtain sons, grandsons, and large wealth and affluence. O you beautiful one, what is the use of repeatedly saying other things? The thousand names of Viṣṇu

*Verses like 219b, 239, 260, 261a, 264 are not sufficiently clear.

give the highest bliss. A man who has first offered him worship fully, has offered him worship (every day) for a year, when Viṣṇu is worshipped(?). There should be no distraction especially while reciting (the hymn). If a distraction is had while reciting it, (the span of) the life and wealth (of the reciter) decrease.

9-17. As many sacred places as there always are on the Jambū Dvīpa, (all) those are (present) just there (where) the thousand names of Viṣṇu (are recited). Just there is Gaṅgā. There is Yamunā. There is Venī; there is Godāvarī; there is Sarasvatī. (Thus) all sacred places exist there where are (recited) the thousand names of Viṣṇu. This (hymn) is very pure; it is always dear to the devotees. With the mind full of the feeling of (being Viṣṇu's) servant and with devotion it should always be called to mind. Those wise ones who recite (this hymn) called *Viṣṇusahasranāma* ('the thousand names of Viṣṇu'), reach, after being free from all sins, Viṣṇu's proximity. The (span of the) life, strength and wealth of those who every day recite it at dawn, increase. A devotee of Viṣṇu, keeping awake during the night in the Kali age, obtains salvation as long as fourteen Indras (rule). That worship offered to Viṣṇu, for Tulasī, with (the utterance of) each name of Viṣṇu, should be known to be the worship superior to a crore of sacrifices. O Pārvatī, those brāhmaṇas who recite it while going along the way, have indeed no sins of the journey. O goddess, listen, I shall tell (you) the greatness of Viṣṇu. Those best men who listen to it are meritorious and are of the form of merit.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

Rāmarakṣā Stotra

Mahādeva said:

1-12. Om, the great sage Viśvāmitra is the seer of the hymn called *Rāmarakṣā*. Śrī Rāma is the deity. The metre is anuṣṭup. Application of the muttering of this hymn (is) for pleasing Viṣṇu.

I meditate upon the imperishable Viṣṇu, Śrī Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, resembling atasi flower, wearing a yellow garment and infallible. May Rāma protect (my) heart. May Śrīkaṇṭha protect my throat. May the protector of the sacrifice protect my navel. May the protector of the universe protect my waist. May Daśaratha's son protect my hands. May he, of a universal form, protect my feet. May the excellent god, the lord of Sītā protect my eyes. May the universal soul protect the tuft of hair on (my) head. May he who gives desired objects, protect (my) ears. May the protector of gods protect (my) sides. May he, inaccessible to a crore of deaths, and eternal lord of the universe always protect (my) body. May he who destroys sins and propagates instruction in the world, protect (my) tongue. May Rāghava protect this. May Keśava protect (my) hair. May he, the creator of the universe and called Dattavijaya, protect (my) thighs. A man who would recite this (hymn called Rāma-)rakṣā, endowed with Rāma's power, would have a long life; would be happy, learned, and get divine wealth. (This hymn) the Rakṣā, sacred to Viṣṇu, always protects all beings. A man who would remember 'Rāma, Rāmabhadra, Rāmacandra' is free from sins and obtains eternal salvation. This (hymn) was told by Vasiṣṭha to his preceptor of the form of Viṣṇu. Then from Brahmā it came to me; and I told it to Nārada. Nārada brought it down among the good people on the earth. Those best men who, while resting at home or going along the way, recite this, enjoy religious merit.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Merit Earned through Gifts

Mahādeva said:

1-9a. O goddess, listen. I shall explain to you righteousness (*dharma*) (the excellent way of life), hearing which a man is never born on the earth. From righteousness a man would get the triad of material welfare (*artha*), satisfaction of desires (*kāma*)

and salvation (*mokṣa*). Therefore, that learned man who would desire righteousness through penance, gifts, vows and restraints, is said to be wise. Similarly by means of sincere penance heaven is obtained. He who has come here (i.e. is born on the earth) and is free from anger and greed, would have salvation after an existence and obtains Viṣṇu's position. He becomes passionate (*rājasa*) by means of penance practised through passion (*rajas*). By means of vicious (*tāmasa*) (or ignorant) penance he becomes hard-hearted (*tāmasa*) and does cruel deeds. That is said to be the penance of the demons, giving salvation to those who are of a vicious nature. That penance which is righteous (*sāttvika*) is permanent. Even in a forest blemishes do occur in the case of the passionate one, desiring wealth etc., being controlled by (*rajas*) and ignorance (*tamas*), living in a solitary forest, and subsisting on air. Control over the five senses (practised) even at home is (also) a penance. For him who is not engaged in condemned acts and who is detached from passions, his house is a penance-grove. The householder's stage is said to be (a man's) own duty. It is very difficult to be overcome by (even) those who have restrained their senses. That best auspicious stage (of life) is affected.

9b-15. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, the householder's stage of life is said to be excellent for the wise ones by Brahmā and others. An ascetic after practising penance in a forest and being oppressed by hunger, comes to the house of a food-giver. With devotion he (i.e. the food-giver) gives him food and gets a portion (of the fruit) of his penance. There is no doubt that the man who properly follows the householder's stage, the best on the earth, enjoys human pleasures here (i.e. in this world) and goes to heaven. O goddess, how can sin come to them who always practise (the duties of) a (householder)? The householder's stage is most meritorious. A house is always like a sacred place. In this meritorious stage of a householder gifts should be especially given. In it worship of deities is practised, food is given to guests; it is the refuge of guests. Therefore, it is said to be most blessed. Those men who having resorted to a house(-holder's stage) honour brāhmaṇas, never lack in (long) life, wealth, so also sons. O beautiful lady, listen. I shall tell (you about) a gift which cleanses all great sins,

which brings about every (kind of) wealth, and which gives fruit in this world and in the next.

16-26. When an auspicious time has come, a man, after having duly worshipped his deity, and having performed his obligatory and occasional (duties), should give a gift according to his own capacity. He who having snatched another's wealth would give it to brāhmaṇas and deities, would after seeing (i.e. having gone to) hell, go to the highest position, as Śatānīka was emancipated along with his sons due to having given gifts. So also after having given (gifts) to brāhmaṇas, he will go to heaven as a result of his righteousness. The religious merit of those who have given (gifts) at holy places, has been told. O goddess, listen. I shall tell (you) in brief about the gift of wealth. (Such) a gift purifying the body was never there, nor will be there. Due to it a man becomes free from sins. There is no doubt about it. Having enjoyed pleasures, he then goes to the ancient Viṣṇu. Formerly it was narrated by Brahmā to the magnanimous Bhārgava Rāma, full of sin. During the Sun's passing through Libra and Taurus, the king was engaged in a sinful act. He indulged in killing and binding (men). He was engaged in eating what ought not to be eaten. He caused abortions and violated his preceptor's wife. These and a liar are born in bad stocks. They perform sacrifices for those for whom they should not be performed; they ask for (gifts) from the censurable ones; they are always angry; and are always engaged in troubling the good. They are destroyed through faith, and with their life condemn righteousness. They are full of sins and know that they are dead (i.e. they would soon die). Knowing this, O goddess, they should especially give gifts. On the earth many devotees of Viṣṇu practising righteousness are well-known on the earth.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

The Greatness of Gaṇḍikā

Mahādeva said:

1-11. O goddess, I shall properly tell you the greatness of Gaṇḍikā. O daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, as Gaṅgā is, so she is. Similarly many Śālagrāma stones are found there. So also her greatness is told by the best sages. There are birds, plants, insects and viviparous beings that are meritorious just on account of seeing her, O Pārvatī. That great river Gaṇḍikā rises in the north. O daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain, she, being remembered again and again destroys sins. There god Nārāyaṇa, causing welfare, always exists. Those, holders of conches and discs, who live near him, have, after reaching Death, had four arms and divine forms. Sages stay there, and especially gods, Rudras, serpents, so also yakṣas. No doubt should be raised in this matter. Near it is a place of raised ground, having the form of Viṣṇu. At this place, there is an image of many forms, giving salvation. There are twentyfour species of beings there. One is of the form of a fish and another, a black figure, the giver of salvation, is said to be there at the place called Viṣṇu by the wise. There is (another figure) called Kalki and tawny (in colour), (as is) told by me. Many other figures of various shapes are also seen there. All these various figures, of different forms stand there. She is Gaṅgā. She is great. She is auspicious. She gives merit, desired objects and salvation.

12-26. In that land, Viṣṇu, accompanied by me, definitely stays even now. There is no doubt about this. A man is free merely by her touch from all sins like causing an abortion, killing a child, and especially killing a cow. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, so also (men of) other castes—all of them are freed on seeing the water of Gaṇḍikā. This (river) is holy like (the river) Venī—especially so for the sinners. (Even) the killer of a brāhmaṇa is freed there, what, to say about others! O Pārvatī, always, at all times I go (there). Brahmā has indeed said that this is the king of holy places. Sages have bathed and given gifts there. O beautiful lady, in Āṣāḍha, on an auspicious occasion, I go there. For a month I duly bathe there; I also continuously mutter (the

hymn) which emancipates (a being). Therefore, since I had gone to the place holy to Viṣṇu, I became a devotee of Viṣṇu. This very great holy place was formerly fashioned by Viṣṇu. It gives a good position to Viṣṇu's devotees. It is said to be very purifying. O goddess, it is always very difficult to be born as a human being in this mundane existence. The holy place on (the bank of) Gaṇḍikā is not easily accessible. To reach the place holy to Viṣṇu is (still) more difficult. Therefore, the best brāhmaṇas should go (there) in the month of Āṣāḍha. Having gone there, the best brāhmaṇas should especially put on the marks of conches, discs etc. That is said to be (a) very pure (act). The holy mark of a conch should be (put) on the left (arm), the mark of a disc should be (put) on the right arm. This is said to give salvation to brāhmaṇas. (The marks) should be carefully put on. Especially the brāhmaṇas should put on the marks of conches and discs. When the mark is put on, those men belong to Viṣṇu. O you beautiful lady, there is no other holy place like Gaṇḍakī. There is no other vow like Dvādaśī. There is no other god like Viṣṇu. (I am) repeatedly (telling this). Those best men who listen to the greatness of Gaṇḍikā, enjoy happiness in this world, and (after death) go to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The Hymn Causing Prosperity

Mahādeva said:

1-6a. O beautiful lady, listen. I shall tell you the hymn and the rise due to that. There is no doubt that on hearing it a sinner—killer of a brāhmaṇa, is freed. The Creator told it to Nārada. I am (now) telling it to you. The self-born god of unlimited lustre had told it to him after holding his charming arm. (At the time of) obsequies one should cause (Viṣṇu) to be remembered. (He is:) the revered Nārāyaṇa, with Śrī. The god Viṣṇu has the disc as his weapon. He holds the Śārṅga (bow). He is Hṛṣīkeśa. He is the ancient Puruṣottama. He is Ajita (i.e.

unconquered). He holds a sword. He is Jīṣṇu (i.e. one desiring to conquer). He is Kṛṣṇa; he is eternal. He is the Boar having one horn. You (O god) are of the nature of the past, the future and the present. Rāghava is the immutable Brahman; is the truth and is there in the beginning and at the end. He is the great Dharma of the people. He is Viśvakṣena. He has four arms.

6b-19. He is the general of the army. You (O god), are the protection. You are Viṣṇu, the lord of the world. You are the source. You are immutable. You are Upendra; you are Madhusūdana. You are Pṛṣṇigarbha. You are Dhṛtarcis. You are Padmanābha. You destroy (your enemies) in a battle. Indra and great sages call you to be the refuge of those who seek your shelter. The great sages (also describe you) as the soul of the Vedas, the greatest of Ṛk and Sāman. You are the sacrifice. You are the Vāṣaṭkāra (exclamation). You are Omkāra. You torment your enemies. You are Śatadhanvan (literally, having a hundred bows). You are Vasu. You are the predecessor of Vasus. You are the lord of beings. You are the first creator of the three worlds. You are the self(-born) master. You are the eighth of the Rudras and the fifth of the Sādhyas. Aśvins are your ears. The Sun and the Moon are your eyes. O you who torment (your) enemies, you are seen at the end, in the beginning, and in the middle. They do not know the beginning or the end of him (i.e. of you). (They do not know) who you are. You are seen in all worlds, so also among cows and brāhmaṇas. (You are seen) in all directions, in the sky, on the mountains and in the cages. You have a thousand eyes. You possess Śrī, you have a hundred heads, you have a thousand feet. You support the beings and the earth with the mountains. You are in the (interior of) earth, in water, a great surpente with all beings. You remain supporting the three worlds, the gods, the gandharvas and the demons. O Rāma, I am your heart. Goddess Sarasvatī is your tongue. Gods are the small hair on your limbs. You have created them with your divine power. The night is said to be the closing of your eyes; and the day to be the opening of your eyes. Your body would be (i.e. is) perfection. The entire world is not without you. There is that stability in your body. You are the earth. Fire is your anger. Śeṣa, the glorious Lakṣmaṇa, is your favour. With your ancient strides

you have crossed over the three worlds. You made Indra the king (of gods). You bound (down) the great demon Bali. Having withdrawn all the worlds unto you, you the Death, have just put them in yourself.

20-28. You turn the visible and the invisible into one fierce ocean, and in no other way. You took up an excellent, great, divine body. You killed Hiraṇyakaśipu who created fear among all beings. Being of the form of one having the face of a horse you resorted to the bottom of the nether world. The great oblation was brought together, so also repeatedly the secret (*obscure*). That which is heard to be the greatest one, which is greater than the great, is said to be the highest soul. You alone are said to be the highest hymn, and the highest lustre. You are the pure oblation offered to the gods and to the manes. You are the attainment of heaven and salvation. They describe you who are beyond Prakṛti as the maintenance, the creation, and the destruction (of the world). You are sung by the Vedas to be the sacrifice, the sacrificer, the sacrificial priest reciting the prayers of Ṛgveda at a sacrifice, and the officiating priest, and to be the enjoyer of the fruits of sacrifices. Sītā is Lakṣmī. You are Viṣṇu, god Kṛṣṇa and the lord of the created beings. To kill Rāvaṇa you entered a human body. O you, best among those who uphold righteousness (*dharma*), this should be (i.e. was) done by you. O Rāma, you killed Rāvaṇa, and delighted the deities. O god, your power is infallible. Your valour is never fruitless. Rāma, seeing you is fruitful. Your praise is never fruitless.

29-42. O god, those men who on the earth are attached to you, the ancient, best 'man', will be successful and devout. Those men who will narrate this holy hymn of praise—the old account—are never defeated. How would the best men, devoted to Puruṣottama, be defeated here? O god, (except you) there is none in the world who is a distinguished giver of boons. Even he who is a great sinner should recite thrice (a day) this hymn of praise of the magnanimous Rāghava, which is the best of hymns. At the time of the sandhyā (prayer), and especially at the time of a śrāddha, this hymn should be carefully and with a devout heart, recited by the best brāhmaṇas. This is a great secret; it should never and at no place be told (to anyone). By

reciting it he would obtain salvation, and he would certainly be Viṣṇu. The best brāhmaṇas should recite this hymn first at the end of the worship of the piṇḍas. (A man doing so) would obtain the eternal (fruit of the) śrāddha. It is very pure, and gives salvation to men. He who, after having written it, would preserve it with profound meditation, has his life, wealth, and power increased day by day. The ancestors of an intelligent man who after writing it, would sometime give it to a brāhmaṇa, are free and go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. A man who mutters or recites this hymn obtains the fruit which is obtained by the recital of the four Vedas. O great goddess, the holding of a conch, disc etc. at the time of a śrāddha by brāhmaṇas proficient in the Vedas, would surely be inexhaustible. He should put round his neck a garland sacred to Viṣṇu and should have the marks of a conch, a disc etc. (on his body). Then, muttering and reciting this hymn, he should duly and devoutly perform the śrāddha. Then it becomes perfect, not otherwise. Therefore, a devout man should carefully recite it. A man obtains everything by reciting it, and gets happiness.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

The Vow of R̥ṣipañcamī

Mahādeva said:

1-11. I asked the lord of the world about the vow best among the vows, leading to the prosperity of sons and grandsons, and giving pleasure and good fortune. Now, O beautiful lady, I shall tell it to you. Listen. This account of the excellent vow of the sages is divine. A woman in her menses, a great sinner, is necessarily freed from great sins after observing this vow. O goddess, it becomes inexhaustible to the dead ancestors, and is the means of righteousness, worldly welfare and satisfaction of sexual desires.

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

Formerly there was a brāhmaṇa named Devaśarman, of great arms, master of the Vedas, and always devoted to study. He maintained the sacred fire; he was always engaged in the six¹ duties (of a brāhmaṇa). He was well honoured by all castes; and had sons, animals and kinsmen. The wife of that chief brāhmaṇa was in her menses when the month of Bhādrapada came, and it was the fifth of the bright half. He, with his mind controlled and senses restrained, performed śrāddha of his father. At night he would invite (i.e. he invited) brāhmaṇas, giving happiness and good fortune. When it was the bright morning, he would make (ready) other vessels. He made his wife cook food in all the vessels. It had eighteen flavours, and gave delight to the manes. Then he separately gave invitations to brāhmaṇas. All the brāhmaṇas, the reciters of the Vedas came at mid-day. The best brāhmaṇa gave them respectful offering and water for washing their feet etc. Polluted by the menstrual flow he duly washed (their feet etc.) at that time. All they went into the house, and (sat) upon the seats indicated to them.

12-20. He specially offered them food with sweets. He performed the śrāddha duly and after offering the piṇḍas. He, engrossed in meditating upon his dead ancestors, gave everything to the brāhmaṇas like tām̐būla, gifts and various garments. (Then) he dismissed all the brāhmaṇas, intent on (giving) blessing. Then to his hungry relatives and kinsmen, he duly gave food at the time of the meal. When he had sat at the door of his hut at night, the brāhmaṇa's wife brought water and washed his feet; then the bitch and the bull talked to each other. (The bitch said:) "O dear one, listen to my words—as to how the daughter-in-law acted towards me. I shall tell (just) like that. I shall not tell otherwise (i.e. in a different way). Some time by chance I went into (our) son's house to protect the milk that was there. It was not seen by the daughter-in-law. The milk was drunk by a serpent; and it was seen by me. Then I drank it all. The daughter-in-law saw it. Due to that fault (of me) of touching the milk, my waist was broken for good. O lord,

1. Ṣaṭkarma—The six duties of a brāhmaṇa are: studying, teaching, sacrificing, acting as a priest at a sacrifice, giving gifts, and accepting gifts.

due to that grief, I have been miserable, My waist is broken. I do not relish food.”

The bull said:

21-30. O bitch, listen. I shall tell you the cause of my misery. When this day came, my son gave food to brāhmaṇas, but did not care for me. He did not at all, at any time, give me water and grass. I, a sinner, conceived to be so, have been tied without food. O bitch, this has undoubtedly happened due to my former sin.

O goddess, at that time the words were heard by the wise son. “This is actually my father who has been an animal in my house. And undoubtedly this is actually my mother. Due to (ill) luck she became a bitch. What should I definitely do?” Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa did not get sleep. At night he became very thoughtful and remembered the highest lord. “I have sincerely practised many righteous acts. How shall I have auspicious (things)?” Thinking like this, he again slept at night. When it was the bright morning, he went to the sages. Among them Vasiṣṭha offered him a good welcome. (Vasiṣṭha said to him:) “O best brāhmaṇa, tell the reason of your arrival.” The brāhmaṇa who was thus asked, then saluted (Vasiṣṭha). “Today my existence is fruitful. My acts are fruitful today; my dead ancestors are pleased on (my) having had your sight which is difficult to be had.

31-41. I performed the śrāddha as told (in the sacred texts). I well fed the brāhmaṇas. I gave food to all members of my family. After the meals, the bitch came there and spoke (to the bull, as) we have a bull in our house. O brāhmaṇa, hear from me the words which she spoke to him. “The milk-pot in the house was polluted by a serpent. I saw it, and was undoubtedly very anxious: ‘When with this milk itself, food would be cooked, then due to that food, all brāhmaṇas will die’. O lord, having thought like this, I drank (all) the milk. The daughter-in-law saw it and beat me. Due to that I becoming lame am moving. Being very grieved what do I do?” Knowing her grief, the bull said to the bitch: ‘O bitch, listen. I shall tell (you) the cause of my misery. O bitch, I am actually his father in the former

existence. Today he fed brāhmaṇas, and gave them much food. But he did not place grass or water before me. Due to that grief at that time, I have become miserable.' On hearing this account, I did not get sleep during the night. O best sage, my anxiety started just then only. I am given to Vedic studies. I am proficient in Vedic rites. The two are very miserable. So thinking 'What shall I do?' I have come to you. Remove my grief."

The sage said:

42-47. O Ugrajanman, listen to what you did in the former existence. This one was the best brāhmaṇa in the auspicious city of Kuṇḍanagara. In the month of Bhādrapada, the vow of Pañcamī that fell then, was neglected by him due to the śrāddha of his father etc. On that śrāddha day, O innocent one, his wife had menstruation. She did all like giving food to the brāhmaṇas. The most sinful and wicked one did not know it and performed (the śrāddha). On the first day she is a cāṇḍāla woman; on the second the killer of a brāhmaṇa. On the third she is said to be a washerwoman, and is purified on the fourth day. Due to that sin his wife became a bitch; and O you of good vow, this one was born as a bull due to that act.

Ugrajanman said:

O you of a good vow, tell me especially that vow, gift, sacrifice or (visit to a) holy place, due to which my parents would have salvation.

The sage said:

48-62. In the bright half of Bhādrapada, there is Ṛṣipañcamī. By doing (the vow of) it the sin of the menstrual flow, perishes. It gives sons and grandsons and gives salvation to the dead ancestors. In a river (i.e. on the bank of river), or a well, a tank, or in a brāhmaṇa's house, a circle with cowdung should be fashioned. He should put a pitcher there. On it he should put a vessel which is full of grains used by the sages. So also (he should put) a sacred thread, a fruit with gold. He should also install seven (images) of sages, causing happiness and good fortune. Those who have kept the vow, should invoke all of them and worship them. He (who observes the vow) should, eating once a day, offer eatables

made from the corn used by the sages, and should eat that food (after) worshipping the sages. He should properly, very devoutly and with hymns, worship them. Then with ghee and gifts he should offer the libation. He should duly give (these) to a brāhmaṇa, (saying), 'May this please the sages'. Having listened to the account properly, having gone round (the images), he should separately offer incense, ghee, eatables of five kinds, and a respectful offering. "May the sages always abide by me. May they complete my vow. May they accept the worship offered by me. Repeated salutations to sages. May Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, so also Prācetasā, Vasiṣṭha, Marica, Ātreya accept my worship. Salutation to you." With incenses and charming lamps he should thus offer the worship. By the power of this being done the dead ancestors are at once released. O child, due to the ripening of the former acts and the power of the blemish of menstruation this was done. There is no doubt that he will get release.

For the salvation of his dead ancestors he observed the vow. They, intent upon giving him blessings, went along the path of salvation. Those best men who observe the vow of Ṛṣipaṇcamī, as told to the brāhmaṇa, should be known as meritorious. Those best men who observe this excellent vow of the sages, enjoy many pleasures in this world, and go to Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

The Hymn Called 'Apamānjana'

Mahādeva said:

1-2. I shall hereafter tell you about the excellent vow of the sprinkling with water, as told by Pulastya to the magnanimous Dālabhya. It destroys all faults caused by diseases. It gives auspiciousness. I shall tell it to you. Listen, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain.

Śrī Dālabhya said:

3-4. O revered one, please tell me that by which all beings

can avoid suffering from the troubles caused by poison, diseases etc; they are overcome with leprosy and (evil) Planets, and are always troubled. There are many severe diseases brought about by magic or by female deities¹ having destructive powers.

Pulastya said:

5-13. O best sage, those men who have pleased Viṣṇu with vows, fasts and restraints, will not be afflicted by diseases. Those men who have not observed an auspicious vow, have not given gifts, have not practised penance, have not visited a sacred place, have not worshipped a deity, have not given food in large quantities, are known to be afflicted by diseases and (similar) faults. He who attends upon Viṣṇu, especially obtains undoubtedly whatever he mentally desires like good health or great wealth. He does not suffer from physical or mental disease and is not afflicted by poison or a Planet. He does not have the fear of the contact of the deities having destructive powers. All his sins perish; and the Planets are always auspicious (i.e. favourable) to him. He who has pleased Viṣṇu and looks upon all beings as himself, is invincible even to gods. He has pleased Viṣṇu with a fast etc. When he (i.e. Viṣṇu) is pleased, desires of men are fully satisfied. O best sage, they are free from diseases, are happy. They enjoy pleasures. They have no enemies. Nor do they suffer from diseases and effects of magical forces. No evil act like (the evil influence of) a Planet or a disease takes place in their case. The weapons of Kṛṣṇa, like the disc etc. which are unobstructed, protect him who has waited upon Viṣṇu from all calamities.

Śrī Dālabhya said:

14-15. Tell me especially what the kind persons who see the ancient Vāsudeva in all beings, who look equally upon all, should do for the miserable persons who have not propitiated Govinda and are overcome with grief.

1. Kṛtyā—A female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes.

Śrī Pulastya said:

16-29. O best sage, I shall tell it. Listen with an attentive mind. It removes the evils like diseases and blemishes and destroys fever etc. Having assigned (i.e. supposing that) Śrīdhara (is) in the tuft of hair on the crest of the head, and Śrīkara below it, Hṛṣikeśa in the hair, and the highest Nārāyaṇa on the head, one should assign Viṣṇu above the ears and him who lies in the water on (i.e. to) the forehead. Having assigned the lord to the two eyebrows, and Hari between them, (having assigned) Narasimha to the tip of the nose, and Arṇaveśaya (i.e. he who lies in the ocean) to the ears, and the lotus-eyed one to the eyes, he should assign Bhūdhara below them. He should assign Kalkinātha to the cheeks and Vāmana to the roots of the ears. Having assigned the conch-holder to the bones on the forehead, and Govinda to the mouth, and Mukunda to the row of teeth, Vākpati to the tongue, Rāma to the chin and Vaikuṇṭha to the neck, Balaghna to the root of the arms, the destroyer of Kāṁsa to the shoulders, Aja to the two arms, and Śārṅgapāṇi to the two hands, Saṅkarṣaṇa to the thumb of the hand, Gopa to the rows of fingers, Adhokṣaja to the chest, Śrīvatsa in its middle, (he should assign) Aniruddha to the breasts, and Dāmodara to the belly, Padmanābha to the navel, and Keśava below it. (He should assign) god Dharādhara to the penis, and Gadāgraja to the anus, the wearer of yellow garments to the waist and (should assign) Madhu's enemy to the pair of thighs, the enemy of Mura to the calves of the legs, Janārdana to the pair of knees, Phaṇīśa to the ankles, and (he should assign) Trivikrama to the two feet. The wise man should assign Śrīpati to the toe, Dharaṇīdhara below it, and Viśvaksena to all the pores of the hair. Having assigned Matsya to the flesh, he should assign Kūrma to the marrow, Varāha in the fat and (should assign) Acyuta to all his bones. (He should assign) Dvijapriya (i.e. dear to the brāhmaṇas, or to whom brāhmaṇas are dear) to the marrow of the bones and flesh, Śvetapati to the semen, the sacrificial Puruṣa to the entire body and the highest soul to his soul.

30-43. Having thus made the rite of assignment, he would actually be Viṣṇu. As long as he would not talk anything, he would remain merged in Viṣṇu. He, being calm and creator of

tranquillity here, should take pure darbhas with their roots and tips, and should sprinkle all his limbs with the tips of the darbhas. A devotee of Viṣṇu especially brings about this auspicious tranquillity to a person afflicted by a disease, a Planet or poison. O brāhmaṇa, due to that all diseases are destroyed. (He should pray:) “Om, salutation to Śrī Paramārtha (i.e. the highest truth), to the magnanimous Puruṣa. (Salutation to the) formless one, and to him of many forms, to the pervader, to the Supreme Soul, to Varāha, to Narasiṃha, to Vāmana who gives happiness.” Having meditated and saluted Viṣṇu, he should assign Viṣṇu’s names to the parts of his body. “Having saluted the spotless one, the pure one, the one who removes bodily diseases and sins, Govinda, Padmanābha, Vāsudeva, Bhūbhṛt (i.e. the supporter of the earth), I shall utter words. Let them be successful. (Salutation to) Trivikrama, Rāma, Vaikuṇṭha, Nara, Śrī Varāha, Nṛsiṃha, (and) to the magnanimous Vāmana; to Hayagrīva, to Śubhra; O Hṛṣīkeśa, remove the inauspicious, that which torments others, that which is not beneficial, that magic which is discharged (at me). O ageless one, destroy the employment of the poisonous touch of a great disease. Salutation to Vāsudeva. Salutation to Kṛṣṇa, the holder of the sword. Salutation to Puṣkaranetra, Keśava, Ādicakrin, to you having a yellow spotless garment, O Kiṅjalkavarṇāgrya. Salutation to you who has held Mahādeva on his body, so also a disc, and to cakrin. Salutation to the Trimūrtipati who held the earth on his fang. O Śrīvallabha (i.e. dear to Lakṣmī, or to whom Lakṣmī is dear), salutation to you, to the great sacrifice and (great) Varāha, O you whose ends of hair are like heated gold, and whose eyes are like burning fire. Salutation to you, O divine lion, the touch of whose nails is more (sharp) than that of the thunderbolt. O you having the characteristics of Ṛg, Yajus and Sāman, salutation to Kaśyapa, to Atihrasva.

44-65. Salutation to you, of the form of Vāmana, and going over the earth. O Varāha, destroy all miseries, the fruits of sins. O you of large fangs, destroy that fruit (of sins) O you, Nṛsiṃha, having a thunderbolt-like touch and bright tips of the teeth and nails. With your sound remove his miseries, O you destroyer of affliction, and taking up any desired form through the utterances of the Ṛg (Veda), Yajus (Veda) and Sāma (Veda). May

Janārdana pacify all his sorrows. May Govinda, having broken and cut off his agony (remove) his fever lasting for a day, two days, three days, so lasting for four days, very severe, constant fever, so also fever arising from the vitiated state of the three humours of the body, and accidental fever. (May he remove) the pain in the eyes, headache and stomachache. (May he remove) lack of breath, severe asthma, all round heat (i.e. fever), shivering, diseases of anus, nose, feet, so also leprosy and consumption. (May he remove) diseases like jaundice, so also severe urinary diseases, so also those diseases due to (the humour of) wind (in the body), cuts, boils etc. May they, wiped off by Vāsudeva, perish. (Even) by uttering the name of Viṣṇu, (may) all of them perish. May all of them, struck with Viṣṇu's disc, perish. By means of the medicine of the utterance of the names, viz. Acyuta, Ananta, Govinda, all the diseases vanish. I am telling the truth, (and) the truth (only). May Viṣṇu, when (his names are) uttered, destroy the poison which is immobile, mobile, artificial, so also that which is due to teeth, nails or from the sky (i.e. air), which is due to beings, and which is extremely unbearable. (May he destroy) the imps, the deadly demons, so also demonesses¹ attending upon Durgā, severe (disease of) white round spots² on the face, (divine mothers like) Revatī and Vṛddhirevatī, the imps called Vṛddhika and Mātṛ also. May the account of Viṣṇu in his childhood remove (the influence of) young imps. All the seizures (by imps etc.) of the old and of children perish that moment only when Viṣṇu is seen. Viṣṇu has his mouth fierce due to the fangs, and is fearful to the demons. Seeing him those imps especially go away. O Śrī Nṛsiṃha, O great lion, O you having a row of flames, O you of a bright face, O you bright one, destroy all the imps (etc. affecting) him. (Remove also) those diseases, great portents, enemies, great imps, and those cruel beings, severe afflictions due to Planets, the diseases in the wounds caused by weapons like diseases of the skin, so also the boils etc. and the imps etc. settled on the limbs, O you, who are the protector of the three worlds, and who ward off wicked demons. O Sudarśana of great lustre, cut off (i.e.

1. Sākini—A kind of female being attendant on Durgā, and supposed to be a demon or fairy.

2. Maṇḍalaka—White leprosy with round spots.

destroy) the severe fever. Remove the (effect of) wind, cuts, and severe, great poison. (Remove) the very severe, undoing pain, and the flame of poison with the skin disease Om, Hām, Hām, Hūm, Hūm; kill the enemies with your very sharp axe.

66-84. Salutation to the revered Sudarśana, you having the body destroying miseries. (May) Viṣṇu, the Supreme Soul (remove) all those other wicked (forces) which give pain to beings; salutation to you, O Vāsudeva (who has) taken up some form. O god, O excellent Acyuta, having thrown the Sudarśana disc, fearful due to rows of flames, destroy all the wicked. O you Sudarśana, great disc, O you excellent weapon of Viṣṇu, O you of a sharp edge, O you of a great speed, O you having the brilliance of a crore suns, O you Sudarśana, having great flames, and of a great sound, cut off all calamities, demons, and sins, O you fearful one. O Sudarśana, destroy sins, make (us men of) good health; in the east, in the west, south and north, may Narasimha, the universal soul, protect (us) with his roars. On the earth, in the atmosphere, behind (us), by (our) sides, in front of us, may Viṣṇu, of many forms, protect (us). Since it is a fact that everything consisting of gods, demons and human beings is full of (i.e. pervaded by) him, may the entire misery of this one perish. Since it is a fact that Viṣṇu, the lord of abstract meditation is sung (i.e. praised) among gods, may the entire misery of this one perish. Since it is a fact that the highest soul Viṣṇu is sung (i.e. praised) in the Vedāṅgas, may Viṣṇu, the universal soul give him happiness. May there be peace. May there be auspiciousness; may unhappiness perish, (since) I have sprinkled with darbhas springing from the body of Vāsudeva. O Govind, O you who have cleaned (everything by sending) away (the evil forces), salutation (to you). You are Viṣṇu like that. Yet all miseries perish due to utterance of Hari's (names). When Viṣṇu is remembered, all blemishes, imps (or Planets) and all poisons and ghosts are destroyed. These darbhas have sprung from Viṣṇu's body. I am Viṣṇu myself remaining in front. I have destroyed all his misery. He should be comfortable, since such are Viṣṇu's words. May there be peace, auspiciousness and happiness. Whatever¹ is his misery is thrown into the

1. *Prāṇasyatu sukham* etc. seems quite incongruous.

salty ocean. Let it perish. May he always have comfort due to the recital of (the names of) Viṣṇu. Let the sin go wherefrom it has come." A devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring the good of beings, should do this great sprinkling of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu at the time of diseases. Due to this all miseries completely vanish. For the purification of (i.e. from) all sins, the sprinkling of Viṣṇu is effective. Whatever (blemish), wet, dry, small or big, like the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (there is) all that quickly perishes like darkness at the appearance of the sun.

85-91. As small animals perish from the lion ('s attack), so diseases and blemishes flee away. May imps, fiends, goblins etc. perish on merely hearing the name of Viṣṇu. Those who are very greedy for money should never do it. Having done the sprinkling a man, desiring his good, should not accept (any money etc.). Those who are desireless, and who know the beginning, the middle and the end, and who are always calm, should do it. Otherwise it would not give success.

This sprinkling (in honour) of Viṣṇu is a matchless success of men, a great protection of men; it is a great weapon. It was formerly told by Brahmā to his son Pulastya. Pulastya himself told it to Dālabhya. It is publicised by Dālabhya for the good of all beings in the three worlds. The (narration of) Viṣṇu's sprinkling is over. O goddess, I have told it to you, since you are always devoted to me. A person listening to this devoutly destroys all blemishes and diseases.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

The Importance of Apamāṛjana

Mahādeva said:

1-16. The sprinkling (called *Apamāṛjana*) is divine and very wonderful. It (i.e. the hymn) should be recited especially for fulfilling the desire of having a son. A wise man should recite this hymn for fulfilling all his desires. The life, wealth and

strength of those twice-borns who recite it once, twice or thrice a day, increase. A brāhmaṇa obtains knowledge; and a kṣatriya gets a kingdom. A vaiśya obtains wealth and prosperity, and a śūdra gets devotion—others also get devotion by reciting, listening to, and muttering it. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he gets the fruit (of the recital) of Sāmadeva. Just at that moment only the entire multitude of his sins perishes. O goddess, knowing this, people, being calm, should recite it. Certainly they have sons and full wealth. That devotee of Viṣṇu who, writing it on a birch-leaf, has it (on his person), goes to Viṣṇu's highest position after having enjoyed happiness in this world. He who, having recited one verse, would offer it to Tulasī, has visited all holy places on his having worshipped Tulasī. This great hymn belongs to Viṣṇu and gives salvation. Being recited it resembles the gift of land, and the person (who recites it) goes to the world of Viṣṇu. He should especially recite the hymn with a desire to go to Viṣṇu's world. Men, being composed, should recite it for the (long) life of the children. It brings about peace to the children who are overcome by diseases and imps (or Planets). Being possessed by a ghost, so also (the influence of) poison, perishes just on its recital. That brāhmaṇa who, having put a Tulasī-garland round his neck, would recite it, should be known as a devotee of Viṣṇu, and he goes to the world of Viṣṇu. That brāhmaṇa who has (on his body) the marks of a conch, a disc etc., who has the (Tulasī) garland round his neck, and who always recites this hymn, is said to be a devotee of Viṣṇu. On leaving this world he goes to Viṣṇu's world. He is free from delusion, illusion, hypocrisy and thirst (i.e. desires). A man should recite this divine hymn. He would obtain the highest bliss. Those brāhmaṇas who are known to be the devotees of Viṣṇu are blessed on the earth. There is no doubt that they have emancipated themselves with their family. They, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, are most fortunate in the world. They should always be devoted (to Viṣṇu). They are the followers of the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER EIGHTY

The Greatness of Viṣṇu

Śrī Prāvatī said:

1. O lord of the universe, tell me the greatness of lord Viṣṇu, on hearing which greatness a man is never born again.

Mahādeva said:

2-6. O beautiful lady, I shall narrate the excellent importance of Viṣṇu. By hearing it one would obtain salvation in the end. Yudhiṣṭhira, having saluted with his head put on the ground Bhīṣma, Devavrata who was very wise, who was greatly devoted to acquiring spiritual knowledge, who was the resort of all sacred books, who had conquered his senses, and who was sinless, who, the noble one, was invincible even to gods along with Indra, who was true to his word, who had conquered anger, who was firmly settled in equanimity, who had great faith in Nārāyaṇa, the lord of the world, the refuge, to whom his devotees were dear, by means of his acts of speech, mind, and body, who was the abode of virtues, who was calm, and who was the grandsire of the Kurus, asked him this:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

7-13. Some speak about Dharma (i.e. righteousness) to be great. Some say wealth is great. Some speak approvingly of gifts. Others (recommend) exertion. Some approve of Sāṁkhya, others of the great Yoga. Some speak approvingly of knowledge; some describe the sacred texts to be great; some say detachment is excellent. Some look upon the rites like Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) as great. Some to whom clods, stones and gold are alike, look upon the knowledge of the self as supreme. Some wise men say that curbs and restraints are great (i.e. important). Some others (say that) kindness is great. Some ascetics look upon harmlessness as supreme. Some say purity is supreme, some men say worship of deities is great. Men who are stupefied by sinful acts, are perplexed in this matter. O you who know the way of life, O you the best among those who wield weapons, please tell me

which of these is the supreme act that should be done by the noble.

Mahādeva said:

O chaste lady, for the good of the people I shall tell you that account which took place between Bhīṣma and Yudhiṣṭhira on the earth. Hearing these questions, Bhīṣma then said to Yudhiṣṭhira:

Bhīṣma said:

14. O you son of Dharma, listen to this great secret which releases (a human being) from the worldly existence. You should listen to it properly and understand it well.

15-28. In this matter only they narrate this old, auspicious dialogue that took place between Puṇḍarīka and Nārada, the great sage. Puṇḍarīka was a very intelligent brāhmaṇa endowed with (the knowledge of) scriptures. He was in the first stage of life, and was always under the control of his preceptors. He had conquered his senses, controlled his anger. He was greatly devoted to performing the sandhyā (prayers). He was proficient in the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and expert in all sacred texts. With good oblations and sacred fuel he offered oblations to fire in the evening and morning. Having properly meditated upon lord Viṣṇu, he worshipped the lord of the world. He was engaged in penance and studies actually like Brahmā's sons. With water, sacred fuel and flowers etc. he again and again worshipped his preceptor. He served his mother and father. He lived on alms. He was free from jealousy. He studied the Vedic lore. He was greatly attached to prāṇāyāma (suspension of the breath). He who was the soul of all, who had no desire for the mundane existence, who was noble, had a thought to cross over the ocean of worldly existence. Having abandoned like (blades of) grass his mother, father, brothers, friends, friendly persons, maternal uncles, relatives and kinsmen, his possession like that of Indra, rich with wealth and grains, very costly fields where crops of all kinds grew, the very wise, very happy one, eating only vegetables, roots and fruits roamed over the beautiful earth. He went to Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Gomatī, Gaṇḍikā, Śatadru,

Payoṣṇī, Sarasvatī, Prayāga, Narmadā, and the great river Śoṇa; so also to Prabhāsa, sacred places on the Vindhya and the Himālaya. He went to those hermitages that are situated in the Naimiṣa (forest) or (holy places) like Puṣkara, so also those (situated) in Kurukṣetra, and on Govardhana etc. The great contemplative saint went (to these) properly and at a proper time.

29-41. Once that noble, self-possessed, wise Puṇḍarīka, led by former acts, went to Śālagrāma. It was resorted to by sages knowing the truth and having penance as their wealth. It was a charming abode of sages, and was well-known even in the Purāṇas. It is adorned with discs etc. and the stone slab is marked with a disc. It is charming, solitary, extensive; and always pleases Viṣṇu. Moreover, the beings there are marked with discs and are meritorious-looking. Exhibiting the auspicious, holy places, they move there. That (Puṇḍarīka) of a good vow bathed in the Devahrada holy place on (the bank of) Sarasvatī in that very meritorious place viz. Śālagrāma. (He also bathed) in the Jātiśmaryā, Cakrakuṇḍa, and places situated on Cakranadī. There were other holy places in that village only. There also he wandered. Then the mind of that noble-minded one, due to the power of the holy place and the lustre of the holy places was delighted. That Puṇḍarīka too, with his mind purified by the holy place, devoted to the path of abstract meditation and having penance as his wealth stayed there only. He, all alone, indifferent in regard to opposite pairs of feelings (pleasure or pain), with his senses curbed, eating (i.e. subsisting on) vegetables, roots and fruits, content, viewing everything equally, desiring success, worshipping Garuḍa-bannered god (i.e. Viṣṇu) with great devotion and according to the precepts as told in the sacred texts, lived there only for a long time. By means of restraints and checks, so also (various) postures, suspension of the breath, (visiting) holy places, and constantly restraining his organs, steady abstraction of his mind, contemplation, profound meditation, he, free from blemishes, always properly studied Yoga. He propitiated the lord of all with (rites told in) the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and Purāṇas, and then he obtained purity.

42-51. Free from anger and hatred, as it were being Dharma incarnate, he propitiated the lord of gods with his mind fixed on him. The lord Viṣṇu with his eyes long (i.e. broad) like lotuses

was pleased. The lord (said to) Nārada: "I am pleased with this intelligent one." Then, sometime, Nārada, resembling actually the Sun, and knowing the truth, and very lustrous, went to the lord of gods. The revered one, with his mind full of devotion for Viṣṇu, engaged in the good of Viṣṇu's devotees, desired to see Puṇḍarīka, the treasure of penance. The very intelligent and very generous one saw Nārada adorned with an orb of lustre and the only repository of all Vedas, to have come to him. With his palms joined, he, with his mind pleased, bowed down, and duly offering materials of worship, again saluted (him). 'Who is this of a wonderful form, bright, having put on a charming dress having a musical instrument in his hand, and decorated with an orb (indicating) victory? Is he the Sun, or Fire, or Indra, or Varuṇa?' Remaining thinking like this he spoke to him of great lustre.

Puṇḍarīka said:

Who are you, of a great lustre? Where from have you come? O revered sir, seeing you on the earth is generally very difficult. O Lord, I have never seen a man like you. O sinless one, please tell fully (about) what I have indicated.

Nārada said:

52-55. I am Nārada. Always curious to see a powerful devotee of Viṣṇu like you I have come (here), O brāhmaṇa. The lord's devotee, an excellent brāhmaṇa, or even a cāṇḍāla, purifies (one) if he is remembered, gratified or worshipped by chance. I am the servant of Vāsudeva, the god of gods, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow), having in his hands a conch, a disc, a mace, and the only eye of the three worlds.

Thus addressed by Nārada, with his mind full of devotion, he, very much amazed at his sight, spoke sweetly to the brāhmaṇa.

Puṇḍarīka said:

56-62. I am (most) fortunate among the human beings; I am fit to be very much honoured even by gods. My dead ancestors are happy. Today I have got the fruit of my existence.

O divine sage, especially favour me, your devotee. O learned one, wandering (everywhere), I shall, with my acts, do (what you tell me). Please advise me about the great secret (act) fit to be done by me. You are the asylum of all the beings—especially of Viṣṇu's followers.

Nārada said:

O brāhmaṇa, here (i.e. in this world) there are many sacred texts and many acts. There are many kinds of duties (of men), so also are many minds. O best brāhmaṇa, the diversity in the world is due to that only. Otherwise all beings have either pleasure or pain. Some have understood the world to be just of the nature of intelligence, momentary, having no soul, and not depending upon external objects. Others say that this world springs from the Unmanifest, the eternal one; is eternal and merges into him only.

63-71. The souls are said to be many, eternal and omnipresent. (So say) others, the best among the intelligent, and always greatly devoted to observing it. Others think that the soul lasts as long as the body (lasts). Even in the body of an elephant or an insect the great primordial Brahman exists. Some say, the world will exist at other times as it exists today. This is an eternal stream. Who is the Creator? Others who have conquered their minds say: "That which is perceived by the senses does not exist. Whence can there be heaven etc.?" Some say this (world) has no controller. Others say it has. (Thus) averse to the truth there are extremely varied opinions. In the same way, other cheats, presenting their own logic, according to their intelligence and knowledge, speak with (i.e. about) many differences. O you treasure of penance, being attentive to logic, I shall tell you the meritorious truth, destroying the fierce mundane existence. The gods and men know its source. They are known through a proof. The deluded ones do not (know) the proof. They have not, in accordance with their capacity, understood the future, the past, the very remote, and that which is settled (i.e. dependent) upon the present objects.

72-77. The sages have explained the sacred texts, as they have come down in order in the former form. Those (texts) accomplishing the highest truth should be known as an authority.

O best brāhmaṇa, that knowledge which, removing blemishes like anger and hatred, springs from the power of study is called *Sacred Scripture*. Fruit, action and truth are knowledge, vision and the soul. The characteristic of other sacred texts is that it is without the concept of origin etc. It is the eternal ancient feeling of the self and is beyond the cognizance (i.e. reach) of the senses. It is just intelligence, and should be known as immortal, unending, unborn and immutable, spotless, that has manifested itself and has remained in a manifest and an unmanifest form. It is known to be pervaded by Viṣṇu, and is (also) known to remain separate from him. It is reflected upon by the meditating saints, is not known by those averse to the truth; it is noticed to be different from the minds, separate and so not existing in the soul. O child, O you innocent one and of a good vow, listen. I shall tell you who have asked me what Brahmā formerly said.

78-80. O child, O you innocent one and of a good vow, listen. I shall tell you who have asked me what Brahmā formerly said. Once having duly saluted Brahmā, the grandsire, staying in his world I asked the unborn and the immutable one: "O grandsire Brahman, tell me properly what is said to be the highest knowledge, and what is thought to be the highest Yoga."

Brahmā said:

81-87. O dear one, listen attentively to the acquisition of true knowledge, ample significance of which has sprung up from a few treatises, and the act of adoration of which involves no trouble. It is told by him that the twentyfifth (principle) traditionally described as *Puruṣa* is the soul of all beings. He is Viṣṇu, the resort of the world, the highest, ancient soul. He is engaged in the creation, destruction and maintenance of the world. The ancient one is the supreme god of the three souls. O brāhmaṇa, he should always be propitiated. They (who propitiate) the lord of the world (alone) see him as the support of the world, and after some time as the past, the future, the great and so also separated (from the world). With the eye of knowledge they see him to be gross, subtle, and different. Their mind is fixed on him. Their life has gone to him, and they are highly devoted to Viṣṇu. To those who are dull of intellect, who are wicked, who are

vicious due to their knowledge (based on) wrong logic, who say he is separated from the senses, he appears differently.

Nārada said:

88-89. O sinless one, listen also to something else being told by me. It was formerly told by Brahmā, the lord of the world, himself. Brahmā told about their welfare to gods led by Indra, and to sages who had asked him, O you of a good vow.

Brahmā said:

90-98. Dharma is solely devoted to Viṣṇu. The eternal worlds, sacrifices, so also the various sacred texts are solely devoted to him. So also the Vedas with the Vedāṅgas and other (texts). O wise ones, Viṣṇu, Hari is the lord of the universe. There are the five elements like the earth, and he is immutable. The wise should know the entire world to be full of Viṣṇu. Yet sinful men who are deluded, do not realise that the entire mobile and immobile world is full of his illusion only. (But) he who has his mind fixed on him, his life gone to him, and knowing the truth, realises (this). Viṣṇu, the guardian of the three worlds, is the lord of all beings. In him all this world dwells and (from) him it springs up also. Rudra destroys the world. While maintaining the world he is called Viṣṇu. I am in (i.e. look after) the creation. So also there are other regents of the worlds. He is the support of all. He has no (i.e. he does not require any) support. He is full and without parts. He is subtle and gross. He is higher than the highest—the other one. Submit only to him, doing all the work of annihilation. That Viṣṇu is delared to be our father and procreator.

All gods, thus addressed by Brahmā having the lotus as his source, saluted god Viṣṇu, Janārdana, the lord of all worlds.

99-116. Therefore, O you brāhmaṇa sage, you too become greatly devoted to Viṣṇu. Who else but he, very generous one, would, when solicited, give (to him who solicits)? Accept that Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, the god of gods, only as the father and the mother. One should everyday carefully please the preceptor, the lord of gods with a sacrifice, or with austerities or with study. Inexhaustible pleasures should be had in heaven.

(For that) O brāhmaṇa sage, accept that Puruṣottama only. For him what is the use of many hymns? What is the use of many vows for him? The hymn *Om Namo Nārāyaṇāya* ('Om, salutation to Nārāyaṇa') accomplishes all (desired) objects. A man may put on rags. He may have matted hair. He may have a staff. He may be clean-shaved, O brāhmaṇa. Or O best brāhmaṇa, he may be adorned. No distinguishing mark is the cause of (i.e. represents particular) way of life. Even those who are always cruel, wicked or given to sinful acts, go, on being greatly devoted to Viṣṇu, to the highest position. And Viṣṇu's devotees, free from sins, are not smeared with streams of sins. They, with their minds conquered with harmlessness, purify the entire world. A king known as Kṣatrabandhu, who harmed beings, reached, from Keśava's abode the highest place of Viṣṇu. A very energetic king, Ambariṣa, knower of the highest truth, obtained Viṣṇu's position after propitiating Viṣṇu. Many other brāhmaṇic sages, calm, and with their vows fulfilled, obtain great success after meditating upon the highest soul. Prahlāda, the great joy, formerly waited upon, worshipped and meditated upon Nārāyaṇa Hari, and was protected by him only. A bright and very religious king named Bharata, having waited upon him for a long time, obtained highest salvation. A celibate, a householder, a recluse or a mendicant, does not at all reach the highest position without propitiating Viṣṇu. He who has, during many existences, a thought like this: 'I am the servant of Viṣṇu's devotees', has all his desired objects obtained, and such a man obtains residence in Viṣṇu's heaven. There is no doubt about this. Then what about those whose life is devoted to him, and who have fulfilled their vows? Those who reflect upon the (highest) principle and have their mind concentrated should meditate upon that ancient Nārāyaṇa, the highest soul, who has pervaded the world.

Bhīṣma said:

117-136. Speaking like this, Nārada, the divine sage, knowing the highest truth, and engaged in obliging others, vanished there only. Puṇḍarīka too, who was religious-minded, who had devoted himself to Viṣṇu, muttering the eight-syllabled hymn *Om namo Nārāyaṇāya*, always uttering the words, 'O universal

soul, be pleased with me', establishing Govinda of the nature of nectar in the lotus of his heart, the ascetic free from the pairs (of pleasure, pain etc.), having no possessions, lived all alone for a long time in the pure and pleasing Śālagrāma (village). The very intelligent one does not see anything except Viṣṇu even in a dream. He too did not have sleep obstructing the goals of human life. By means of penance, celibacy, and especially purity, and when the impression of many existences had taken a root in one way or the other, he whose sins had gone away by the grace of the god of gods, and the witness in all the worlds, obtained great success as a devotee of Viṣṇu (would get). He saw Viṣṇu, dark, lotus-eyed, having a conch, a disc and a mace in his hands, wearing a yellow garment and of a good form. Lions, tigers and other beasts harming beings, gave up their natural enmity, and gathered near him; and O son of Pāṇḍu, with the functions of their senses kindly disposed, moved as they liked; and they pleasingly secured one another's welfare. Like that the water of the lakes and rivers was clear; and the seasons also were full of pure force and very pleasing. The breezes had a pleasing touch, the trees were full of flowers and fruits. All objects became favourable to the intelligent one. When Viṣṇu, the lord of the god of gods, who loved his devotees, was pleased with him, the mobile and immobile world was pleased with him. Then, at some time, the lord, the master of the world, having long eyes like lotuses manifested himself before the intelligent Puṇḍarīka. He had a conch, a disc and a mace in his hands. He wore a yellow garment. He was very bright. His eyes were large like lotuses. His face was like the orb of the moon. He had (on his person) bells, ear-rings, necklaces, armlets, and had a thread round his waist. He had the mark of Śrīvatsa, wore a yellow garment, and was adorned with Kaustubha. His body was surrounded with (i.e. he had put on) a garland of wood-flowers; his crown and ear-rings were shining. He shone with a bright sacred thread and with a hanging necklace of pearls. The god of gods was waited upon with chowries and fans by gods with Indra, siddhas, gandharvas, excellent sages, yakṣas, best nāgas, and groups of celestial nymphs. The sinless Puṇḍarīka having seen the lord of gods recognized the noble Viṣṇu; and bowing with folded palms, and with his mind pleased praised him.

Puṇḍarīka said:

137-146a. Salutation to you, O Viṣṇu, (to you) who are unstrained, eternal, qualityless and noble, and the only eye of the world. You are the lord of all beings, and you have no lord (who controls you). You are Govinda, you are Garuḍa-bannered, and destroy fear and affliction by favouring the beings. They say that all this rests in you who take up many forms. Everything is full of you. You are different from this world. You have created the world. O you having produced a lotus from your navel, salutation to you. Salutation to the mighty soul known from all the Upaniṣads. O destroyer of Kaiṭabha, O lord of all gods, you alone are the cause (of everything). Be pleased, O you living in my heart and holding a conch, a disc and a mace. Salutation to him who was the origin of all beings and who supports the earth. (Salutation to him) who takes up many forms, (to him) the strong Viṣṇu whose greatness gods, lords of gods, like Brahmā etc. do not realise, and which can be measured (only) with penance. I salute you, the greatness of whom, not being within the scope of words, is not had (i.e. known). You are not touched by birth etc. You are always to be truly reflected upon; in the same way, due to compassion for your devotees, you, O Puruṣottama, are seen in forms like Matsya (the Fish), Kūrma (the Tortoise) etc.

Bhīṣma said:

146b-148. O hero, Puṇḍarīka praised that Puruṣottama, the lord of the world, whom he desired to see for a long time—Padmanābha, Trivikrama, Viṣṇu. Trivikrama Viṣṇu spoke to Puṇḍarīka, the noble one, in a serious voice:

The lord said:

149-150. O child, O very intelligent Puṇḍarīka, I am pleased with you. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon. I shall give you whatever you have in your mind.

Hearing these words spoken by the lord of gods, the very intelligent Puṇḍarīka requested him like this:

Puṇḍarīka said:

151-153. What a great disparity between you (always) wishing the good (of all) and me of a wicked intellect? O Mādhava, O lord of gods, order that which is beneficial to me.

Thus addressed, the lord, being much pleased, spoke to the noble Puṇḍarīka standing by him with folded palms. "May you be happy. O you of a good vow, come along with me. You, helping (others), and an eternal soul, will always be with me."

Bhīṣma said:

154-169. When Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, spoke like this, drums sounded in heaven, and a shower of flowers fell down. Similarly gods like Brahmā said, 'Good, good'. Siddhas, gandharvas and especially kinnaras sang. There only the lord of gods, the lord of world took him, and mounting on Garuḍa, and being saluted by all people went. Therefore, O best king, you too, full of devotion to Viṣṇu, setting your heart and soul on him, engaged in doing good to his devotees, resort to him, after having duly worshipped him. Listen to his account which destroys all sins. O best king, adopt that means in great detail, being full of devotion to Viṣṇu, by which the universal soul will be pleased. Men averse to Viṣṇu do not reach him even after having performed hundreds of horse-sacrifices and Vājapeya sacrifices. He who has (but) once uttered the two letters *Ha-ri* has girt up his loins (i.e. is ready) for going to salvation. They in whose heart Viṣṇu, dark-blue like a lotus, abides, profit and succeed. Whence would they be defeated? He who, being composed, would listen to or recite this everyday, is free from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's world.

O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, having heard this greatness of the names (of Viṣṇu), religious merit, worldly prosperity and salvation undoubtedly accrue (to him). A brāhmaṇa who is born in a pure family and who is greatly devoted to the Vedas, who is Viṣṇu's devotee is of the nature of Viṣṇu and never any other brāhmaṇa. That man who utters the name (of Viṣṇu) in (i.e. with) his mouth, who is intent upon meditating upon Viṣṇu in his heart, who has (the marks of) a conch and a disc, wearing Tulasī-garland, should be known, O learned one, to be liberated while living. Having enjoyed many

pleasures, he delights, along with twentyone (members of) his family, in Viṣṇu's world. Undoubtedly Puṇḍarīka, according to his capacity, got salvation. Due to devotion Viṣṇu is permanently pleased. At the time of the worship of a deity and penance, the singing of (the praise of) Viṣṇu, especially in one's own house in the Kali age, is said to be equivalent to the chanting of Sāmans.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

The Importance of Gaṅgā

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O you very intelligent one, tell (me) again the importance of Gaṅgā, having repeatedly heard which, all the sages are free from attachment. O lord, O master of all, what kind of greatness is of her? I have formerly learnt about her origin. I have (however) not heard about her greatness. You are the first among all beings and the ancient god.

Mahādeva said:

3-11. The sages came to see Bhīṣma, resembling Bṛhaspati in intelligence, Indra in valour, and lying on the bed of arrows. (The sages were:) Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Aṅgiras, Gautama, Agastya, and Sumati, the wise one; Viśvāmitra, the omniscient Sthūlaśiras, the chief of the Prama-
thas, Raibhya, Bṛhaspati, Vyāsa, Pavana, Kaśyapa, Dhruva, Durvāsa, Jamadagni, Mārkaṇḍeya, Gālava, Uśanas, Bhārad-
vāja, Kratu and Āstika also, Sthūlākṣa, Sarvalokākṣa, Kaṇva, Medhātithi, Kuśa, Nārada, Parvata, Sudhanvā and the brāh-
maṇa, Cyavana, Matibhū, Bhuvana, Dhaumya, Śātānanda, Kṛtavraṇa, Jāmadagnya Rāma, Ṛcika and others. Dharma's

son, along with his younger brothers duly saluted him, and duly honoured them, venerable to the world. The noble ones, with penance as their treasure, when honoured, were seated comfortably, and had talks about Bhīṣma and divine way of life. At the end of the talks of the sages of purified souls, Yudhiṣṭhira, having saluted Bhīṣma by (bowing) his head, asked this:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

12. O grandsire, tell me which countries are very holy, which mountains and hermitages should always be resorted to by those who seek religious merit.

Bhīṣma said:

13-23. In this matter only they relate the history—the dialogue between (Śibi) gleaning ears of corn and a siddha, O king Yudhiṣṭhira. A siddha having walked about this entire earth, reached the house of the noble Śibi, (living by) gleaning ears of corn. He knew the essence of metaphysics; he had always curbed his senses. He had given up attachment and hatred, and was proficient in wise acts. He was always the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu. He was very much devoted to holy acts about Viṣṇu. He did not censure Viṣṇu's devotees. He was always devoted to righteousness. He was always engaged in yogic practices. He wore (the marks of) a conch and a disc. He knew the truth of worshipping the deity three times a day, and he was always devoted to Viṣṇu. He deliberated about what is right and what is wrong with those learned in Vedic lores. He always recited the Vedas; and always honoured (his) guests. Thinking of (visiting) a holy place, he always subsisted on gleaned corn. That brāhmaṇa having the form of Viṣṇu, knew all that was reflected upon and sung by the self-born one. He was proficient in the significance of various ways of life, and was always inclined to the Immutable. Once he went to Śibi's house. The noble-minded (Śibi) seeing him, offered him due hospitality. (Then) Śibi asked him the cause of the auspiciousness of the regions. (Śibi) who gleaned ears of corn, said: "O best brāhmaṇa, please tell me affectionately (i.e.

due to your affection for me), which countries, regions, mountains, and hermitages are auspicious.”

The siddha said:

24-42. Those countries, regions, mountains, and hermitages in which the best river Gaṅgā is always present, are auspicious. That good position (i.e. obtaining heaven) which one would get by resorting to Gaṅgā is not obtained by penance, celibacy, sacrifice and gifts. That pleasure which is had by those self-governed people bathing in Gaṅgā, is not had by means of hundreds of sacrifices. A man swimming (i.e. bathing) in the water of Gaṅgā shines after removing his sins, as the sun shines at his rise by dispelling darkness. O brāhmaṇa, as a heap of cotton having reached (i.e. come in contact with) fire perishes, similarly a dip in Gaṅgā removes all sins. He who would drink the Gaṅgā-water heated by the sun's rays, is equivalent to one free from mist and is superior to fire. The man who has bathed in Gaṅgā is superior to the man who has observed the Cāndrāyaṇa vow standing on one foot. The best man who uses the Gaṅgā-water for a month (is superior to) the man who stands with his head down for a myriad years. Being free from (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder he goes to Viṣṇu's (position). This Gaṅgā destroys sins like the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī. By merely remembering her, the killer of an infant is freed in a moment. That Prayāga, the lord of the holy places, is difficult to be secured by the devotees of Viṣṇu. Having bathed there a man would quickly go to Vaikuṇṭha. He does not know (i.e. care for) what is dear and what is not dear. He does not obtain religious merit or sin. Having bathed in Gaṅgā, one is freed from a great sin. He who would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even from hundreds of yojanas (away from Gaṅgā), is free from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A killer of a brāhmaṇa, of a cow, a drunkard, a killer of an infant is free from all sins and quickly goes to heaven. He also sees excellent Viṣṇu. He who bathes at the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī goes to Vaikuṇṭha. As darkness vanishes when the sun rises, in the same way sins perish just by bathing in her. By bathing at

Gaṅgāvarta, Kuśāvarta, Gallika, Nīlaparvata, at the holy place of Kanakhala, there is no birth. O king, the best man, knowing like this, and repeatedly bathing in Gaṅgā, is freed from sin. Viṣṇu is always the best among gods, horse-sacrifice among sacrifices, Aśvattha among all trees, similarly Gaṅgā is always (the best among rivers).

THE
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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA: SECTION VI: UTTARAKHAṆḌA (CONTINUED)

82. The Greatness of Viṣṇu's Devotees	2633
83. The Swing Festival	2636
84. The Damanaka Festival	2638
85. The Śayana Festival of Viṣṇu	2641
86. The Investiture of the Sacred Thread	2643
87. Monthly Offering of Flowers to Viṣṇu	2646
88. Dialogue Between Satyabhāmā and Kṛṣṇa	2648
89. An Account of Satyabhāmā's Former Birth	2652
90. Kārtika Best among Month's and Ekādaśī among Days	2654
91. The Greatness of Prayāga	2656
92. Rules for the Vow of Kārtika	2658
93. The Bath Rite	2660
94. Restraints during the Kārtika Vow	2663
95. Bringing the Vow to Conclusion	2665
96. The Birth of Jalandhara	2667
97. The Conquest of Amarāvati by Jalandhara	2670
98. Viṣṇu Promises not to Kill Jalandhara	2672
99. Rāhu Acts as Messenger of Jalandhara	2675
100. Śiva's Attendants Fight the Demons off	2678
101. The Fight Goes on	2680
102. Jalandhara Plays a Trick	2682
103. Vṛndā Curses Viṣṇu	2684
104. The End of Jalandhara	2687
105. The Greatness of Dhātrī and Tulasi	2689
106. The Kalahā Episode	2691
107. Kalahā Is Emancipated	2694
108. King Cola and Brāhmaṇa Viṣṇudāsa	2696

109. King Cola and Viṣṇudāsa Become Attendants of Viṣṇu	2698
110. The Story of Jaya and Vijaya	2700
111. The Greatness of Kṛṣṇā and Veṇī	2703
112. Portions of Merit and Demerit That go to Others	2705
113. Dhaneśvara's Story	2708
114. The Seven Hells Shown to Dhaneśvara	2710
115. Aśvattha and Vāṭa Praised as Gods in Disguise	2712
116. Alakṣmī's Episode	2715
117. The Importance of Bathing in Kārtika	2717
118. Śiva Answers Kārtikeya's Queries	2720
119. In Praise of a Fast for a Month	2724
120. The Greatness of Śālagrāma	2728
121. The Importance of Offering Lights etc.	2734
122. The Celebration of Dipāvalī	2736
123. Instructions Concerning the Fast	2743
124. Haribodhinī, Bhīṣmapañcaka etc.	2746
125. The Importance of Māgha As Told by Bhṛgu	2752
126. The Importance of Māgha As Told by Dattātreyā	2763
127. The Release of a Demon	2768
128. The Hymn Yogasāra in Praise of Viṣṇu	2779
129. The Deliverance of the Five Gandharva Maidens and Vedanidhi's Son from Imphood	2799
130. Kinds of Devotion to Viṣṇu	2817
131. Worship of the Śālagrāma Stone	2819
132. Remembering Viṣṇu	2820
133. The Holy Places in Jambūdvīpa	2830
134. The Greatness of Vetravatī	2833
135. The Greatness of Sābhramatī	2835
136. The Greatness of Nanditīrtha	2842
137. Vikīrṇatīrtha and Śvetodbhava	2844
138. The Greatness of Gaṇatīrtha	2845
139. The Greatness of Agnipāleśvara	2846
140. Hiraṇyāsaṅgamatīrtha	2849
141. Madhurāditya	2850
142. Kambutīrtha and Kapitīrtha	2853
143. Ekadhāra and Saptadhārātīrtha	2854
144. Brahmavallī and Khaṇḍatīrtha	2856
145. Saṅgameśvara	2858

Contents

146. Rudramahālayatīrtha	2859
147. Khaḍgatīrtha	2860
148. Mālārkatīrtha	2860
149. Candaneśvara	2861
150. Jambūtīrtha	2862
151. Dhavaleśvara	2863
152. Bālāpendratīrtha	2868
153. Durdharṣeśvara	2871
154. Khaḍgadhāreśvara	2873
155. Dugdheśvara	2878
156. Candreśvara	2880
157. Pippalādatīrtha	2881
158. Nimbārkadevatīrtha	2882
159. Koṭaratīrtha	2883
160. Vāmanatīrtha	2884
161. Somatīrtha	2885
162. Kapotatīrtha	2886
163. Gotīrtha	2888
164. Kaśyapatīrtha	2888
165. Bhūtālaya, Ghaṭeśvara and Vaidyanātha	2889
166. Pāṇḍuāryā-tīrtha	2890
167. Caṇḍeśa, Gaṇatīrtha	2891
168. Vārtraghnīsaṅgamatīrtha	2891
169. Varāhatīrtha	2896
170. Saṅgamatīrtha	2897
171. Ādityatīrtha	2898
172. Nīlakaṇṭha	2898
173. Durgāsaṅgamatīrtha	2899
174. The Rise of Nṛsimha	2899
175. The First chapter of the Gītā: The Anecdote of Suśarman	2906
176. The Second Chapter of the Gītā	2910
177. The Story of Jaḍa: The Importance of the Third Chapter	2914

Contents

178. The Forth Chapter: The Story of Two Girls	2918
179. The Fifth Chapter: The Story of Piṅgala	2921
180. The Sixth Chapter: The Story of Raikya	2922
181. The Seventh Chapter: The Story of Śaṅkukarṇa	2928
182. The Eighth Chapter: Bhāvaśarman's Story	2930
183. The Ninth Chapter: A Goat's Story	2933
184. The Tenth Chapter: A Swan's Story	2937

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

*The Greatness of Viṣṇu's Devotees**Pārvati said:*

1. O lord of the universe, O master, tell what are said to be the characteristics of Viṣṇu's devotees, and what is their importance.

Mahādeva said:

2-9. Since he belongs to Viṣṇu, he is looked upon as a follower (or devotee) of Viṣṇu. Brahmā should be known as the source of all and as one who has taken up a form. From him brāhmaṇas, masters of the Vedas, are born. They should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees and never the others. He who possesses purity, truth, forgiveness, who is free from attachment and hatred, who knows the ideas contained in the Vedic lore, is known as a devotee of Viṣṇu. He who is always engaged in keeping the sacred fire, who always honours his guests, who is devoted to his father and mother, is called a devotee of Viṣṇu. He who is having the virtue of compassion, who is averse to sins, who is marked with a conch and a disc, is called Viṣṇu's devotee. He who wears a garland round his neck, who always utters (the name of) Rāma with his mouth, who would always devotedly sing (Viṣṇu's praise), is said to be Viṣṇu's devotee. Those men who are always devoted to the Purāṇas, who are always engaged in (performing) sacrifices, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees, and are dear to all sects. Those sinful men who censure them, repeatedly go to (i.e. are born in) bad stocks after their death.

10-17. Those brāhmaṇas who always honour the image named Gopāla, fashioning it from a metal only with four hands, and well decorated, worship it, are known to enjoy religious merit. Those brāhmaṇas who after having fashioned an image (of Viṣṇu) from stone and called Kṛṣṇa and beautiful in form, worship it, should be known to be of meritorious forms. Where there is the Śālagrāma stone, where there is the stone from Dvārakā, or where there is the combination of these two, there is salvation. There is no doubt about this. If after install-

ing the image with (i.e. to the accompaniment of) a hymn, one worships it, then that worship gives a crorefold merit. It leads to religious merit, acquisition of worldly prosperity, satisfaction of sensual desires and salvation. Devotion of nine kinds¹ should be shown for Viṣṇu. Therefore, you should make the image of stone or metal. Devotees should meditate upon it and worship it. A devotee should offer to the image worship with kingly attendance. One should always remember lord Viṣṇu, the soul of all, the only refuge of the helpless and the poor, and the cause of the existence of the worlds. One should always remember (Viṣṇu), destroyer of great sins, (as present) in that image and say 'This is Gopāla, so also Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma.'

18-30. He who worships (the lord) properly, is a man of the lord. The best men, the followers of Viṣṇu, should fashion the form (of the image) like that as was taken up by Keśava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu) in Gokula. A wise man should fashion his form for self-gratification. By (doing) this, ample devotion is produced. There is no doubt about this. In that image should be fashioned especially a conch, a disc, a mace and (other) weapons of Viṣṇu according to (proper) measure. One should get fashioned an image having four arms, two eyes, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, wearing a yellow garment, beautiful, very large, wearing a garland of wood-flowers, and with bright ear-rings of lapis lazuli, having gems on the crown, and always shining with Kaustubha. (It should be) of gold, silver, copper or brass. (He should) get it installed especially by best brāhmaṇas with Vedic hymns as given in the sacred texts. After that it should be worshipped according to the (injunctions in) holy texts. The worship should be duly offered with hymns and in sixteen ways² of doing homage. When Viṣṇu is worshipped, all deities are worshipped. Therefore, the great lord should be worshipped in this way. The god without beginning and end,

1. Navadhā Bhakti—Listening to the praise of Viṣṇu, narration of his virtues, remembering him, serving his feet, worshipping him, saluting him, servitude to him, his friendship, and offering oneself to him.

2. Śoḍaśopacāra—Sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity etc: Offering a seat, reception, offering water for washing feet, for rinsing the mouth, respectful offering, giving water for sipping, madhuparka, bath, garments, ornaments, sandal, flowers, incense, lamp, eatables, salutation.

holding a conch, a disc, a mace, and the lord of all gives everything to his followers, of the nature of merit. As is Viṣṇu, so is Śiva. There is absolutely no difference between the two. O goddess, knowing like this, the fashioning of the images of both should be done. There is no doubt that he who worships Śiva and is given to censuring Viṣṇu, lives in the Raurava hell. I am Viṣṇu, I am Rudra, I am Brahmā, the grandsire. I repeatedly and constantly live in all beings.

Pārvatī said:

31. O Maheśvara, tell me properly about the characteristics of those who are said to be the servants and followers and devotees of Viṣṇu?

Mahādeva said:

32-39. Śūdras are his servants, Nārada and others are his followers, and O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, Prah-lāda, Ambariṣa and others are his devotees. He who is always engaged in a rite in honour of the Supreme Being, who recites the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, and has the marks of a conch and a disc is said to be a Vaiṣṇava. That śūdra who is always engaged in serving brāhmaṇas, who always worships Viṣṇu, and listens generally to the Purāṇas that are acceptable to the Vedas, is said to be Viṣṇu's servant, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. He who resorts to (i.e. looks upon himself as a child of) five years and is devoted in many ways, is called Viṣṇu's devotee, and is approved of among (i.e. by) all good men. O you beautiful young lady, Dhruva and others, so also Ambariṣa and others are said to be devotees of all times by the sages. In the Kali age śūdras very much devoted to meditation on Viṣṇu, are most blessed. They enjoy happiness in this world, and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. That śūdra who has the marks of a conch and a disc, and who is devoted to Viṣṇu, and who celebrates especially the four festivals, is the servant of Viṣṇu, as it is seen and heard.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

The Swing Festival

Pārvatī said:

1-3. O Maheśvara, tell me about the rites (performed) in all months. A great festival is to be celebrated (in these months). Which is the accepted manner (in which the festival is to be celebrated)? O lord of gods, tell me which the deity is who is to be worshipped, what his greatness would be, and on which day (of the month) it is to be performed. What is told to the devotees of Viṣṇu of meritorious deeds about the month? I am blessed, I am fortunate, I am lucky on the earth, that I (shall) hear the story of Viṣṇu (from you) by seeing you and coming in your contact.

Śiva said:

4-18. I shall, O sinless one, tell you the mode of the festivals, hearing which you will be delighted as by songs and musical instruments. First, especially on the Ekādaśī of the bright fortnight of the very auspicious month of Caitra one should worship (Viṣṇu) mounted on a swing. O goddess, one should always devoutly celebrate the festival according to the rule. They (who) see Kṛṣṇa, remover of the blemishes of the Kali age, mounted upon the swing, are, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, free from thousands of offences. The sins committed during crores of existences remain as long as one would not swing god (Viṣṇu), the lord of the universe, the master of the universe. Those who in the Kali age see Janārdana mounted upon the swing, are freed even though (they have committed) the sin of killing a cow. What then can be said about others? Gods, along with Rudra, being delighted at the swing festival, jubilantly dance, sing, and play upon musical instruments in the courtyard. Sages, the attendants of Śiva, gandharvas, the groups of the celestial nymphs like Rambhā, so also the serpents led by Vāsuki, so also deities and chief gods, desiring to see Viṣṇu come to the swing (festival). On the swing (festival) day in the vernal season beings are present for (i.e. at the time of) the swing festival, and O great goddess, those

belonging to a heavenly stock also certainly go (there) when (the image of) Kṛṣṇa is (placed) on the swing. Seeing Viṣṇu on the swing, there is a festival for the three worlds. Therefore, giving up a hundred other occupations celebrate a festival on the swing (festival) day. Prahlāda comes there. Viṣṇu mounts on the swing, O great goddess. Remembering him who grants a boon (one should celebrate the festival). Those who keep awake (on that night) remembering Kṛṣṇa on the swing, receive the fruit of all their religious merit in a moment. Those who see Viṣṇu on the swing in the spring, being saluted by the god of gods, play with Viṣṇu. One seeing (the image of) the god facing the south and mounted on the swing, O goddess, is free from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa on seeing Viṣṇu (just) once. 'Om, we know the god mounted on the swing. We think of Mādhava. May that god urge us on'. This is the worship with the Gāyatri (hymn).

19-34. 'Repeated salutations to Mādhava, Govinda, Śrī-kanṭha'. The worship should be done to the accompaniment of the hymn and according to the rule. Being composed he should give a gift to his preceptor according to his capacity. He should devoutly sing (the praise) of Viṣṇu; then the (worship) will be complete. O you beautiful lady, what is the use of repeatedly saying other things? Viṣṇu remaining on the swing removes all sins. He, worshipped properly by men, always gives everything. Where (Viṣṇu) remains on the swing, gods, and kinnaras with gandharvas come there. There is no doubt about this. There he should worship Viṣṇu with the hymn, *Om, Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya* ('Om, Salutation to the lord Vāsudeva'). With this hymn he should worship (Viṣṇu). He should do the worship according to the rule and in sixteen ways of doing homage (to Viṣṇu). All his desires for virtue, material welfare etc. would certainly get fulfilled. O you of a good vow, all that like the assignment of (the various parts of) the body, hand etc., should be done with (i.e. to the accompaniment) of this hymn. The festival should be celebrated with the hymn as told in the holy text. He should keep (the image of) the deity (Viṣṇu) along with Lakṣmī on the swing. In front of (the image of) the deity he should install (the images of) Nārada etc.—the divine sages. So also the devotees like Viśvakṣena should always be installed in

the front. The wise one should wave the light with the sound of five musical instruments. O goddess, in every watch he should be carefully worshipped. He should offer him respectful offering with coconuts and white banana plants. He should be carefully worshipped, O goddess. 'O god of gods, O lord of the world, O holder of a conch, a disc and a mace, accept the worship. Favour me.' The remnants of the offering should be given to Viṣṇu's devotees. The devotees of Viṣṇu should play upon musical instruments and dance there. Then especially the swinging (of the swing) should be done. O goddess, all the holy and sacred places that are there on the earth, come there to witness (the festival) on that day. Knowing like this, O goddess, the great festival should be celebrated. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and all other castes should be looked upon to be holding a conch, a disc, a mace.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

The Damanaka Festival

Mahādeva said:

1-19. In this month of Caitra itself, the Damanaka festival should be celebrated; and especially on the twelfth day the rite should be properly performed. (This festival) meritorious and enhancing the joy of the people, should be devoutly celebrated by the devotees of Viṣṇu. The blossom of Damanaka that has originated from the joy of gods should be offered by the devotees, the followers of Viṣṇu, desiring the fruit of the entire worship on the twelfth day of the bright half of Caitra, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. With the mind fixed on the great festival a man should celebrate it with great devotion. O you sinless one, having first gone to a grove, (a man) should worship (the deity) with Rati, according to the preceptor's order (saying), 'Salutation to you, O Kāmadeva, deluding all. I shall look out (for you) for Viṣṇu. (Please) favour me.' He (i.e. his image)

should be brought home to the accompaniment of the sounds of singing and musical instruments. O best among the gods, Viṣṇu's devotees should devoutly worship him at night after preliminary consecration of his image at night. Then before him (i.e. his image) an auspicious circle should be drawn all round. Then he should install him there with Rati. The wise one should (then) cover the image with a white (piece of) cloth; and should place damanaka. The best brāhmaṇas, the devotees of Viṣṇu, should perform the worship there only. 'Klīm, salutation to Kāmadeva. Hrīm, salutation to Rati also.' A wise man, after installing (the image of) Kandarpa in the quarter of Indra (i.e. the east), should worship (the image). O chief among gods, at night offering of sandal, flowers, so also incense, lamp, waving of lights should be devoutly and in the proper manner done. (Saying) 'Salutation to Madana' (he should) worship in the east. (Saying) 'Salutation to Manmatha' (he should) worship in the south-east. (Saying) 'Salutation to Kandarpa' (he should worship) in the south. (Saying) 'Salutation to Anaṅga' (he should worship) in the rakṣa (i.e. the south-west) direction. (Saying) 'Salutation to him whose body was reduced to ash' (he should worship) in the west. (Saying) 'Salutation to Smara' (he should worship) in the north-east. (Saying) 'Salutation to Īśvara' (he should worship) in the north. (Saying) 'Salutation to Puṣpa-bāṇa' (i.e. having arrows of flowers) (he should worship) in the north-east. In all the four directions he should worship (the image of) him. Then worshipping damanaka with sacred rice grains, incense, lamps, offerings of eatables, tāmbūlas, he should salute damanaka after consecrating it with the recitation done one hundred and eight times of the Kāma-Gāyatrī (hymn): 'We know that Puruṣa, Kāmadeva. We reflect on him. May that Anaṅga urge us on'. (Then he should say:) 'Salutation to Puṣpabāṇa giving joy to the world; (salutation) to Manmatha, the eye of the world, and to him who delights Rati. Salutation to you, O god of gods. O Śrī Viśveśa (i.e. the lord of the universe), salutation to you. Salutation to you, O lord of Rati; salutation to you, O ornament of the universe. O lord of the world, salutation to you. Salutation to you, O origin of everything.' With such various types of hymns, especially with those that are told in the sacred texts, Janārdana, along with Lakṣmī, should be carefully worshipped. Then the

wise (man) should report the act (to the lord), and keep awake. (He should say), 'O god of gods, O lord of the world, O you who give the desired objects, O you dear to Kāmeśvarī, O Viṣṇu, fulfil the desire in my heart'. Śrīnivāsa, Jagannātha (i.e. Viṣṇu) who desires the good of his devotees, should be carefully worshipped with many such hymns. He should offer damanaka to deities like Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu. Then (he should offer) a great worship with incense etc. And a great festival should be celebrated with songs, musical instruments, dancing etc. A pitcher is placed before the deity. Having poured water from the pitcher on the feet of the deity, he should have water-sport on that day. Then he should devoutly worship his preceptor with garments, ornaments and money. Then he should eat along with his kinsmen—the devotees of Viṣṇu.

Mahādeva said:

20-31. Then he should worship Viṣṇu with damanaka-sprouts. When Viṣṇu is worshipped, I am always worshipped. O goddess, on seeing the damanaka festival, he who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or snatched away gold, or is a drunkard, or eats flesh, is freed from the sin. O goddess, those good devotees of Viṣṇu who have worshipped the deity with damanaka, with damanaka-sprout, have visited all the sacred places. He who has worshipped Viṣṇu with a (damanaka-)sprout, has studied the Vedas, all holy texts, and maintained the sacred fire. His family—whether of a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, śūdra or (of) any other (caste)—is lucky, is said to be very lucky. Being born in a family in which the damanaka festival is celebrated, is blessed. So also he who has worshipped Viṣṇu. O goddess, having worshipped (Viṣṇu) with damanaka when spring has arrived, he gets the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows. He who would with great devotion worship Viṣṇu with jasmine flowers in the spring, would obtain salvation. Maruka and damanaka instantly pleased Viṣṇu. Therefore, the best men, Viṣṇu's devotees, should worship (Viṣṇu with these). When he has worshipped Viṣṇu, he has made (a gift of) a thousand cows, has given his daughter (in marriage to a worthy groom), has given the gift of the earth. Of him who, having taken but one damanaka-sprout, worships the lord of gods when spring has come, O daughter

of the (Himālaya) Mountain, I do not know the measure of his religious merit. He having four arms enjoys the fruits of merit, worldly objects, sensual desires here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world, and enjoys Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

The Śayana Festival of Viṣṇu

Mahādeva said:

1-11. A devotee of Viṣṇu should devoutly and with joy worship and celebrate the festival of the lord of the world lying in water on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. Having had songs, (having played upon) musical instruments, having danced and celebrated the auspicious great festival, he should, being delighted, see the best god on the Ekādaśī (day). Devoutly singing a song in praise of Viṣṇu, he should celebrate the auspicious festival. 'O lord of gods, lie in this water. When, O lord of gods, you are asleep, the world also is asleep.' On the advent of the rainy season, those men who put Viṣṇu in water, have no torment in hell, O best goddess. The bed called Viṣṇu, should be made in a golden vessel, or a silver vessel, or a copper vessel, O best goddess. Or it should be made in an earthen vessel. Having put there cold water made fragrant, the wise man should install in that water (the image of) Viṣṇu. The image should have the name of Gopāla or of Rāma. Or especially a Śālagrāma stone should be installed. Or an image of that stone (should be put). Its merit is unending. As long as the earth, the people on it, the moon and the sun are there, no one in his family would be a hellish being. Therefore, O great goddess, he should worship Viṣṇu in water. The man, free from torment, would exist till the final deluge. During the time of Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha he should worship Viṣṇu covered with a Tulasī leaf in very cold water.

12-20. Those who worship Viṣṇu remaining in water with various flowers during the time of Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha, are free

from Yama's torment. As water is most dear to Viṣṇu, as he lies in water, as he likes water, so, especially in summer, (a man) should worship Viṣṇu remaining in water. He who, after making the image of Śālagrāma stone of the deity lie in water, has worshipped it, would emancipate his family. He, O beautiful one, who has devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in water when the Sun is in Cancer (the fourth sign of the Zodiac), or especially when he is in Gemini (the third sign of the Zodiac), and he who has offered worship to the lord remaining and lying in water, has performed crores of hundreds of sacrifices. Those men who in the month called Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) worship (the image of) Viṣṇu after putting it in water are gods on the earth. He who having prepared (the mixture of) sandal and water in a pot, would put (into it the image of) Viṣṇu, and worship it at night on Dvādaśī, would get salvation. These five—one who has no faith, one of a sinful mind, an atheist, one whose doubt has not been removed, and one who acts from a (selfish) motive—do not enjoy the fruit of the worship. In the same way, O great goddess, a man who everyday worships the lord of the world while he is in water, is freed from great sins.

21-30. O chief goddess, the worship to him is said to be offered with (i.e. to the accompaniment of) the hymn, 'Om, Hrīm, Hrīm, salutation to Rāma. Om, Klīm, salutation to Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, dear to the cowherdresses'. With this hymn, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he should consecrate the water. (He should say:) 'O god of gods, O noble one, O you having the mark of Śrīvatsa, O great god, salutation to you. O cause of the world, salutation to you. O god, accept the respectful offering and always give me salvation'. With flowers of various kinds he should worship Viṣṇu. Free from all troubles he would be absorbed into Viṣṇu. Being very much concentrated he should keep awake on Dvādaśī. He should devoutly worship the immutable and inexhaustible god, Viṣṇu. Those who are intent on devotion and desire devotion should celebrate the festival called Viṣṇu(-festival) in the month of Vaiśākha. He should perform the rites in it as told in the holy texts. When this is done, O great goddess, it is equal to the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. He being free from attachment and hatred and turning away great delusion, goes to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu

after having enjoyed happiness in the world. A brāhmaṇa who on the earth devoutly celebrates (this) festival, gets free from sins, and certainly goes to Vaikuṇṭha. A man deprived of Vedic studies and without the study of holy texts gets Viṣṇu's position on having devotion for Viṣṇu. He would be delighted in self, would always be free, and would have conquered his self. He goes to Viṣṇu's position (and remains there) as long as the Moon and the Sun (exist).

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

The Investiture of the Sacred Thread

Mahādeva said:

1-19. When the month of Śrāvaṇa comes the rite of the investiture of the sacred thread should be performed, having done which divine devotion is produced. O Pārvatī, the wise ones should perform, with faith, Viṣṇu's investiture of the sacred thread. (By doing that) his worship in the rainy season becomes complete. On Viṣṇu's investiture of the sacred thread one gets pleasure. One would get various pleasures on having always properly worshipped Viṣṇu. Having brought a thread, a garment spun by a brāhmaṇa woman (he should do the rite). Or he should use there (i.e. for this rite) thread spun by himself. Or similarly he should get a thread spun by a good śūdra woman. Or he should properly have one through sale. The rite of the investiture (of the thread) should be done with silken cloth only. So also (the sacred thread for) god Viṣṇu should be made of silver. Or, O chief goddess, it should be especially made of gold according to the rule. In the absence of all metals the wise ones should take (a cotton) thread. The thread reaching the feet is said to be the best. The one up to the knees (is said to be) middling. The one reaching the navel (is said to be) inferior. A wise one should have the investiture (of any one of these threads). The thread should have the knots numbering the days of the year, or half the number, or one hundred and eight. O

Pārvatī, it is also proper (to have one) having half the number. On the phallus it is known as liṅga, and should be accompanied by Gaṅgā and the serpents. O goddess, on the image the sacred thread should be of wood flowers. It should be prepared beautifully, by which Viṣṇu is pleased. One good sacred thread called *gandha* should always be prepared by men, Viṣṇu's devotees, and it should have only one strand. In the same way the thread sacred to the deity Viṣṇu is also said to be (so) for the gods. So also (for) the devotees like Ambariṣa and Dhruva. Then, O Pārvatī, sacred threads should be offered here (i.e. in this rite). The first day is recommended for investiture with the sacred thread of Kubera. The second is said to be the best of days for goddess Lakṣmī. The third for you, and the fourth for Gajānana. The fifth is for the Moon, and the sixth for Kārtikeya. The seventh is said (i.e. recommended) for the Sun; for Durgā the eighth is told, the ninth for the divine mothers and similarly the tenth is (recommended) for Yama. The eleventh is (recommended) for all (deities), and the twelfth for Viṣṇu. The thirteenth is for Madana, and the fourteenth is said to be for Śarva. Similarly the fifteenth (day of the fortnight) is recommended for Brahmā's worship.

20-27. These are said to be the proper days of investiture with the sacred thread. Twelve is said to be inferior. Double (the number) is said to be middling; and thrice the number (i.e. thirtysix) is said to be the number of knots on the sacred thread. Have it dyed with camphor and saffron, sandal and turmeric. Having dyed all this, and having put it in a new casket, all those should be placed like a deity (at the place) where the worship of the deity (is to be performed). First, worship of the deity should be done. (Then) garment with the thread (should be put on). After the sacred thread is put on, the worship is said to be done. In the sacred threads the deities would be in proximity. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Rudra are the three deities of the sacred thread. Kriyā, Pauruṣī, Virā, the fourth (being) Aparājitā, Jayā and Vijayā, Muktidā, so also Sadāśivā, the ninth (is) Manonmanī, and the tenth Sarvatomukhī—these are the deities of the knots. He should install them on the threads. Then with (appropriate) finger position according to the rule of

the holy texts, he should invoke them. This is said to be properly placing them in proximity.

28-35. The placing in proximity is done by the finger position (called) *sannidhi-mudrā*. Then having protected them with (the finger position called) *rakṣā* (i.e. protection)-*mudrā* and having immortalised them with (the finger position called) *dhenu-mudrā* he should bring them before the deity. Taking water from the pitcher he should sprinkle them with hymns from the sacred texts. The sprinkling (should be done) with the hymn: 'Klīm, to Kṛṣṇa'. Then having offered sandal, incense, eatables, having given tāmbūla etc., having worshipped the deities of the sacred thread in the sixteen ways of doing homage, having incensed the fragrant sacred thread, and facing the deity he should consecrate it with (the finger position) called *namaskāra-mudrā* (i.e. *mudrā* of salutation): 'O Mahādeva, with the goddess and attendants etc. you are invited by means of these hymns. O lord Viṣṇu, come along with the regents of quarters and attendants for the fulfilment of the rite. In the morning we shall worship you. Be constantly in the proximity.' Having put in the morning that sandal and sacred thread at the feet of god Rāghava, Viṣṇu, and having performed his rite(s) and with the repetition three times of the words, 'This is an auspicious day' and with the preliminary religious rite and with words of victory and with the auspicious sounds of bells, musical instruments and of drums he should offer the worship. He should worship in the proper order: first the seniormost, then the middling and (lastly) the inferior. With the hymn 'We know Vāsudeva, we think of god Viṣṇu; may the god urge us on', or with his own hymns he should offer the great delightful worship, having offered which Viṣṇu, the soul, is pleased. All round illumination should be done according to the rule. The wise man should also get prepared four kinds of food. O beautiful one, then the sacred threads that are worshipped should be given (to brāhmaṇas). Then he should especially worship his teacher with devotion. The great preceptor should be worshipped with the rite (of offering) garments and ornaments. After having worshipped his preceptor he should wear the sacred thread. Then having given tāmbūlas to those who are Viṣṇu's devotees and a full oblation to Agni, he should report the act to Śrīnivāsa, Śrī

Kṛṣṇa. (He should say:) ‘O Viṣṇu, may that (act of having) worshipped you without the (proper) hymns, the (proper) acts, and without devotion, be certainly well completed’. Then having called (his relatives) he should eat the cooked food with his dear relatives, Viṣṇu’s devotees, and brāhmaṇas. Those best brāhmaṇas who listen to this divine worship are free from all sins and go to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

36-41. There is no doubt that as long as the Moon shines, the Sun shines, he who has investiture of the sacred thread shines like them. On having the investiture with the sacred thread all the gifts and restraints that there are on the earth, become perfect. This rite of the investiture of the sacred thread is the king of festivals. A killer of a brāhmaṇa is purified by it. No doubt should be raised about this. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, what is said is the truth, the (absolute) truth. The religious merit that is said (to result) from the investiture of the sacred thread is also said (to be had) from seeing it. O noble one, the śūdras who have devoutly performed this rite of the investiture of the sacred thread, are said to be most fortunate. I am lucky, I am blessed, I am fortunate, (as) the devotion I had for Viṣṇu, gives salvation.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Monthly Offering of Flowers to Viṣṇu

Maheśvara said:

1-13. In Caitra Viṣṇu who removes sufferings should be carefully worshipped with campaka or jasmine flowers. One should worship the lord of the worlds, the lord of the lords of all, viz. Viṣṇu, with damanaka, maruka, and bilva flowers. Or (one) being very calm, should (worship him) with divine, red lotuses. O chief goddess, men worship Viṣṇu in the month of Caitra. O goddess, and in Vaiśākha the great lord should always be worshipped. He who has devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, taking (i.e. with) a ketakī-leaf, when the Sun is in the sign

Taurus of the Zodiac, is pleased for a hundred ages of Manu. When the month of Jyeṣṭha comes, he should worship (Viṣṇu) with various flowers. When the lord of gods is worshipped, all gods are worshipped well. They too, (even) after having committed thousands of (minor) sins and hundreds of major sins, will go there where Viṣṇu dwells with Lakṣmī. When the month of Āṣāḍha comes, they should especially worship (Viṣṇu). Those men who always worship Viṣṇu with (flowers of) karavira, red flowers and lotuses, are meritorious. Those who will worship Viṣṇu with gold-like flowers and kadamba flowers, have no fear from (Śani) the Sun's son. Viṣṇu worshipped with kadamba flowers at the advent of the rainy season, gives desired objects as long as the fourteen Indras (last). Viṣṇu, the creator of the world, becomes as pleased on having kadamba flower(s) as by obtaining Lakṣmī. O best goddess, Viṣṇu worshipped with Tulasī, black Tulasī and aśoka flowers, always removes (the devotee's) affliction. (Viṣṇu is pleased with them) who worship him when the month of Śrāvaṇa comes with hemp-flower or dūrvā-blade.

14-27. He should especially be carefully worshipped with various flowers. He gives many desired objects till the final deluge. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, listen. When the month of Bhādrapada comes, he who worships Viṣṇu with campaka flowers, white flowers and red sindūra flowers, with white lotuses, O great goddess, would obtain the fruit of all his desires. In the auspicious month of Āśvina worship to Viṣṇu should be offered with jasmine flowers, so also with various kinds of flowers. (Viṣṇu) should be carefully and devoutly worshipped by all people. Those men who by bringing lotuses only worship Viṣṇu, obtain on the earth religious merit, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyments and salvation. When the month of Kārtika comes, the great lord should be worshipped. As many seasonal flowers as are there should be offered to Viṣṇu. With sesamum and sesamum flowers he should offer worship. When the lord of gods is pleased, the man obtains unending fruit. Those who worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika with bakula flowers, punnāga and campaka flowers are gods, and not men. In Mārgaśīrṣa the lord should always be worshipped with various flowers, offerings of eatables, incense and waving lights. In

Mārgaśīrṣa he should worship Viṣṇu especially with divine flowers. O great goddess, in the month of Pauṣa good worship with various Tulasī leaves and water mixed with musk should be done, and when the month of Māgha has come, he should worship Viṣṇu with various flowers. When the supreme lord of the gods is worshipped, a man certainly gets his desired object. The worship should be done with camphor or various eatables like sweetmeats. When Phālguna comes, Viṣṇu's worship should be done. He should fully perform the vernal worship after bringing flowers, or, O chief goddess, he should worship him with new flowers. When the lord of the world is worshipped, a man gets the eternal position of Viṣṇu by Viṣṇu's favour.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Dialogue Between Satyabhāmā and Kṛṣṇa

Hereafter (the narration of) the importance of the month of Kārtika is commenced.

Sūta said:

1-17. Once the sage (Nārada) came taking with him divine flowers and (those) of the desire-yielding tree to Dvārakā to see Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa welcomed and honoured Nārada. Offering him a seat, he said: "This is a respectful offering; this is water for washing your feet." And Nārada offered those flowers to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa distributed them among (his) sixteen thousand wives. The lord, forgetting Satyabhāmā, gave them to all (other wives). Then getting angry Satyabhāmā entered the anger-chamber. Calm Kṛṣṇa knowing that went there and bringing Satyabhāmā, he mentally recollected Garuḍa. By merely being remembered, Garuḍa, coming there, stood before him. Having quickly mounted on the bird, the lord said to his dear (wife Satyabhāmā): "O Satyā, do not be angry; for you, opposing the lord of gods with the deities, I shall plant the desire-yielding tree in your courtyard. O noble

one, pardon my fault.” Making a pledge like this with Satyabhāmā, he quickly went to the world of deities (i.e. heaven) where that god (Indra), the killer of Vṛtra, was. Being solicited for the desire-yielding tree, (Indra) replied to the lord: “O god, O lord, it is not proper for you to take this tree to the earth.” Then the large-armed (Kṛṣṇa) took out the tree from (i.e. with) the root, and the very strong one put it on his vehicle (i.e. Garuḍa). Then the wielder of the thunderbolt (i.e. Indra), the strong (god), speedily raised the thunderbolt and struck Garuḍa (with it saying:) “Leave the desire-yielding tree”. Then Garuḍa, to honour the thunderhold, dropped one feather. Due to that stroke of the thunderbolt, three birds (animals?) sprang up: the peacock, the mongoose and the blue jay. Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā. Having come, he planted it in Satyabhāmā’s house. Then only Nārada came and was very much honoured by Satyā.

Satyabhāmā said:

(Please) tell me how I should get such a desire-yielding tree and such a husband as the lord in every existence.

Thus asked, Nārada, the best sage, then said: “O Satyabhāmā, he is obtained by means of the gift of tulāpuruṣa.” Then Satyabhāmā having weighed Kṛṣṇa according to the precept in the holy text, gave (the articles equal to his weight) along with the desiring-yielding tree to Nārada. Taking all the articles, Nārada went to heaven.

Sūta said:

18. When Nārada had gone after bidding farewell to Kṛṣṇa, Satyā with her face blooming with joy said to Kṛṣṇa:

Satyabhāmā said:

19-25a. I am blessed; I am fortunate. My existence is fruitful. My parents who certainly produced me as the (most) favourite wife in the three worlds, are lucky in being the cause of my birth, as I am (most) dear to you among (your) sixteen thousand wives. (I am lucky) since I duly gave, according to the rite as told (in the holy text), (the articles equal to the weight of) the

lord of creation with the desire-yielding tree to Nārada. That desire-yielding tree whose account the beings on the earth perhaps know, now stands in my house(?). I am also very dear to Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the three worlds. Therefore, O Madhusūdana, I desire to ask you something. If you are my benefactor, then tell this in detail. Hearing] that I shall again do what is beneficial to me, so that, O god, I shall never be separated from you till (the end of) the kalpa.

Sūta said:

25b-27. Hearing these words of his dear (wife), Kṛṣṇa, with a smile on his face, put his hand into that of Satyā, and went with pleasure to the foot of the desiring-yielding tree with his beloved after having forbidden his attendants (to follow them). Having laughed and called Satyā, the lord of the worlds with the hair on his body bristling and with horripilation spoke (to her) to please and delight her.

Kṛṣṇa said:

28-30. O dear one, out of my sixteen thousand wives no beautiful lady other than you is dear to me. You are (just) like my life. For you I had a quarrel with (Indra) the lord of gods along with the (other) deities. Listen, O dear one; (I shall give you) whatever is solicited by you, whether it is small or big, even if it cannot be (easily) given, done, or expressed. Then, O dear one, how shall I not tell (i.e. give the answer to) the question put by you? Ask everything that is in your mind. I shall tell (i.e. answer) it.

Satyā said:

31-33. Formerly (i.e. in my previous existence) which gift (did I give), which vow (did I observe), or which penance did I practise, that I, a mortal, have become like Pārvatī in this mortal (world), and that I always occupy half (the portion) of your body, always ride Garuḍa, and went with you to the abode of deities like Indra? Therefore, I desire to ask you, what auspicious (act) I did in the other (i.e. previous) existence, what (kind of) character I had, and whose daughter I was.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

34-45. O dear one, listen attentively. I shall tell you all about the auspicious vow you observed in your former existence. At the end of the Kṛta age in Māyāpurī there was an 'excellent brāhmaṇa of Atri's family, Devaśarman by name, who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He was hospitable. He attended (sacred) fire. He was greatly devoted to the vow (in honour) of the Sun. Actually being like another Sun, he every-day propitiated the Sun. The old man had a daughter, Guṇavatī by name. Being sonless, he gave his daughter to his disciple named Candra(śarman). He (i.e. Devaśarman) looked upon him as his (own) son, and he who had controlled his passions, looked upon him as his father. The two, desiring to collect kuśas and fuel, once went to a forest. The two then roamed in the forest at the foot of the Himālaya mountain. Then they saw a fierce demon coming (to them). With their entire body overcome by fear, and unable to run (away), they were killed by the demon with Death-like form. My attendants, moving with me, took them to Vaikuṇṭha-abode due to the efficacy of the region and their religiousness. I was indeed very much pleased with them by virtue of just that act of them, viz. they, as long as they were alive, worshipped the Sun etc. As the rain-water goes to the ocean, the followers of Śiva, the Sun, Gaṇeśa, Viṣṇu, so also the worshippers of Śakti come to me only. I am one, born in five ways, and play with names—as one Devadatta calls his sons etc. with (various) names. Then the two lived in my house; moved in an aeroplane; had the brilliance of the Sun; resembled me in form; were near me; enjoyed divine beautiful women and pleasures like (being smeared with) sandal.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

An Account of Satyabhāmā's Former Birth

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

1-4. Then Guṇavatī, after hearing that the two were killed by a demon, being overcome by grief for her father and husband, lamented piteously: "O lord, O father, where have you gone leaving me (and) without me? Today without you what should I, a young helpless girl, do? Who will affectionately look after me who am adept in nothing, who am grieved, who am living in the house with food, covering etc.? I am unlucky; my happiness is destroyed; my lord is killed; my life is doomed. To whom should I, a helpless young (woman), resort to today?"

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

5-14. Thus having very much lamented like a much afflicted osprey she, being dispirited, fell on the ground like a plantain tree struck by (stormy) wind. Having revived after a long time and lamenting on the ground very piteously, she plunged into the ocean of grief and was overcome by it. She, doing auspicious acts, sold all domestic articles and performed the rites beneficial to the two in the next world. She, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, calm, truthful, pure and with her senses controlled, lived in that city only and sustained her life. From birth till death she properly observed two vows: the vow of Ekādaśī and the vow of (i.e. relating to) Kārtika. O dear one, this couple of vows is very dear to me. It properly brings about pleasures and salvation, and sons and wealth. Those, even being great sinners, who, in the month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra, bathe everyday in the morning, are released. Those men who sweep their house and present (the auspicious sign of) svastika etc. to Viṣṇu and worship Viṣṇu, are liberated while alive. Those men who bathe, keep awake, offer lights, resort to the Tulasī-grove in Kārtika are the forms of Viṣṇu. Those who do like this even for three days in Kārtika, are venerable even to gods. What to say of them who have done it from birth!

15-30. In this way Guṇavatī, always devoted to Viṣṇu's followers, and having fixed her mind on him, passed every year.

O dear one, once she who was emaciated due to old age and was tormented by fever, slowly, somehow, went to Gaṅgā to bathe. When, after she got into the water, she trembled and was oppressed by cold and frightened, she saw an aeroplane that came from the sky. From the sky it approached with (beings) having Viṣṇu's form, having conches, discs and maces in their hands, and properly marked with banners having (the pictures of) eagles. She got into the aeroplane served by a bevy of celestial nymphs. The attendants took her being fanned by chowries, to Vaikuṇṭha. Then she, like the flame of a blazing fire, who was in the aeroplane, obtained my proximity due to the religious merit of the Kārtika vow. Then all the attendants went with me coming to the earth by the request of the deities like Brahmā. O beautiful young lady, all these Yādavas are my attendants only. Your father became (i.e. was born as) this king Satrājīt. He who was Candraśarman (became) Akrūra, and you are that Guṇavatī, O auspicious one. Due to the merit of the Kārtika vow, you very much enhance my love. At my door you had formerly made this Tulasī grove. From that this desire-yielding tree has come up in your courtyard, O auspicious one. Since formerly in Kārtika you made illumination, therefore, this Lakṣmī living in your house, has become steady. Since you offered all that vow etc. to Viṣṇu of the form of your husband, therefore, you have become my wife. Due to that vow only which you formerly (i.e. in the former existence) observed in Kārtika, from birth till death, you will never be separated from me. Thus, those men who are highly engrossed in the Kārtika vow, also come near me, as you, causing delight to me (have come). Men performing sacrifices, giving gifts, observing vows, practising penance do not indeed get even a portion of the merit which one gets by the Kārtika vow.

Having thus, at that time, heard (the words) of the lord of the world, Satyā, delighted due to the grandeur produced in the former meritorious existence, saluted the lord of the universe, Kṛṣṇa, who was the only cause of the three worlds, and spoke (those) words.

CHAPTER NINETY

*Kārtika Best among Months and Ekādaśī among Days**Satyā said:*

1-2. To him of the nature of time, all the parts of time are equal. Then how is Kārtika the best among the months? O lord of the god of gods, how is it that to you Ekādaśī among days and Kārtika among months are dear? Tell (me) the reason for this.

Śrīkrṣṇa said:

3-4. O Satyā, you have asked well. Listen with a concentrated mind a dialogue between Vena's son Pṛthu and the divine sage Nārada. What you have asked, O dear one, formerly Nārada was also asked by Pṛthu. The omniscient sage told the reason for the superiority of Kārtika.

Nārada said:

5-17. Formerly there was a demon, the son of the Ocean, named Śaṅkha. He was able to destroy the three worlds and had great power and valour. The great demon, having vanquished the gods, drove them out of heaven. He also snatched the powers of the regents like Indra. Due to his fear gods along with the ladies in their harems and with Indra went to the cave of the Meru mountain and lived there for many years. When the gods who lived in the cave of the Meru mountain, could not be subjugated by the demon, he thought: 'Even though the gods have been vanquished and their powers snatched by me, yet they are full of power. What should I do now? Today it is known (i.e. realised) by me that the gods are endowed with the power of the Vedic hymns. I shall snatch them. Then all of them will be powerless.' Then the mighty demon thinking like this and noticing Viṣṇu to be asleep, quickly snatched from the Satya world the group of the Vedas. He took the Vedas. Due to his fear they moved out, and with the sacrifice and hymns they entered the water (of the ocean). Śaṅkha also, looking for them and wandering in the interior of the ocean, did not notice them

anywhere seated at one place. Then Brahmā with the gods sought the shelter of Viṣṇu. Taking the materials of worship he went to Viṣṇu's house. There the gods performed acts like singing, playing upon musical instruments, and repeatedly (offered him) sandal, flowers, incense and lights. Then the lord devoutly pleased by them, got up. He, having the lustre of a thousand suns was seen there by all the gods. The gods then having worshipped him in sixteen ways fell (i.e. prostrated themselves) on the earth like a staff. Then Viṣṇu said to them:

Viṣṇu said:

18-31. O groups of gods, by means of the auspicious (acts) like singing and (playing upon) the musical instruments, I (am pleased and) will grant you boons. I shall give you all objects desired by your mind. From the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Āśvina till the Udbodhinī Ekādaśī men will daily do as you did with the auspicious (acts) like singing, (playing upon) musical instruments etc. They (will) do what is dear to me, and will ever remain in my vicinity. Since what you did—(offering) water for washing the feet, respectful oblation, and (offering) water for sipping,—has had wonderful effect, it has become the cause of your happiness. O gods, all the Vedas snatched by Śaṅkha remain in water. Having killed the Ocean's son, I shall bring them (back). May the Vedas with the basic hymns and sacrifice always rest in water from today in the month of Kārtika every year. From today I (shall) also remain in water. Along with the chief sages you may also come with me. There is no doubt that those best brāhmaṇas who during this period bathe (daily) in the morning, have well performed the ablution at the end of a sacrifice. O Indra, those men who everyday properly observe the vow in Kārtika, should be always brought by you to my house on their death. And by my order they are always to be protected from dangers. O Varuṇa, you should give them progeny—sons and grandsons etc. O Kubera, you have to increase their wealth by my order. Those men, liberated while alive, actually have my form. Those (men) who have from birth to death observed this best vow according to the rule laid down (in the holy texts), should also be honoured by you. Since you awoke me on the day of Ekādaśī, therefore, this day is always

venerable and gives me joy. This couple of vows, properly observed by men, always gives Kṛṣṇa's proximity. No other vow (does it). O best gods, gifts, (visits to) holy places, austerities, sacrifices, do not always give (i.e. lead to) heaven.

CHAPTER NINETYONE

The Greatness of Prayāga

Nārada said:

1-4a. Saying so, Viṣṇu taking up a form resembling a small glittering fish fell into the hollow of the hands of Kaśyapa at his residence on the Vindhya (mountain). The sage kindly and quickly put him into (his) water-pot. When it could not contain itself there, he put it into a well. When it could not contain itself there, he put it into a lake. In this way it was (in the end) put into the sea. It grew there also. Then Viṣṇu, having the form of the fish, killed Śaṅkha. Then taking him in his hand he came to the Badarī-forest. Calling all the sages there, he ordered them (like) this.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

4b-6. Remove the Vedas dropped into the water. Quickly bring them with the Upaniṣads from the interior of the water. Till then I, with the group of deities, shall live at Prayāga.

Nārada said:

7-11. Then all the sages, endowed with the power of penance, lifted the Vedas with the six Vedāṅgas and with sacrifices. Since then that sage who got a portion of them (i.e. the Vedas) became the seer of that (much portion), O king. Then all the sages together went to Prayāga. They presented the Vedas obtained by them to Viṣṇu with the Creator. Brahmā, obtaining the Vedas with the sacrifices was delighted; and with the group of deities and sages he performed the horse-sacrifice. At the end of the sacrifice lords of gods, siddhas, serpents,

yakṣas fell (i.e. prostrated themselves) like a staff, and requested (Viṣṇu).

Gods said:

12-15. O god of gods, O lord of the world, O master, listen to our request. This is time for our joy. Therefore, be a giver of a boon. O Ramā's lord, the sages themselves have brought to this place the lost Vedas. Due to your favour we have received shares in the sacrifice. May this place always be, by your grace, the best one on the earth. It should increase religious merit and give pleasures and salvation. May this time also be highly meritorious, and may it purify the killers etc. of brāhmaṇas. May it give inexhaustible (objects). Grant us this boon.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

16-28. O gods, I think in the same way as you have said. Let it be so. May this (place) be famous as *Brahmakṣetra*. A king born in the solar dynasty will bring Gaṅgā here. She will be here united with Yamunā, the daughter of the Sun. All of you, Brahmā and others, (should) live here with me. This holy place will be well-known as *Tirtha-rāja* ('king of holy places'). May acts like (giving) gifts, (practising) penance, (observing) vows, (offering) a sacrifice, muttering (hymns), and worship give inexhaustible fruits. May they always give proximity with me. May sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa committed during many existences perish the very moment at the sight of this holy place. Similarly the wise cast their bodies in my vicinity. Those men enter my body only and not a new existence. May the groups of the dead ancestors of those who come here and offer a śrāddha intended for the dead ancestors, have the same world as mine. May this very auspicious period also be always fruitful to men. The sin of those who bathe (here) when the Sun has entered Capricornus, perishes. Merely on seeing those who bathe (daily) in the morning in Māgha when the Sun is in Capricornus, sins go away, as darkness on (the appearance of) the Sun. As a result of the (daily) bath in Māgha when the Sun is in Capricornus, I grant men the triad, viz. the same world, the same form (as mine), and proximity (with me) in this order. O best sages, listen all of you. I am the giver of boons to you. I,

the omniscient one, always live in Badarīvana. That fruit which you get after ten years by (practising) penance at other place, is always got here by you within a day. Those best men who see that place, are liberated while alive. Then no sin resides in them.

Sūta said:

29-30. Having spoken like this to the gods, the god of gods vanished there only with Brahmā. All gods also lived there in portions. And those (gods), Indra and others, vanished. That best man of a pure heart who would listen to this religious verse or make others listen to it (i.e. tell it to others), would obtain the fruit which is obtained in the lord of holy places, Badarīvana, and (would) also (obtain) me¹.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

Rules for the Vow of Kārtika

Prthu said:

1. O sage, you told me the great fruit of the vows of Kārtika and Māgha. O Nārada, you also (told me) properly about the rite of bathing and about the restraints. (Now) please tell me in due order the bringing to completion (of that rite).

Nārada said:

2-15. You are born from a portion of Viṣṇu. (Therefore) nothing is unknown to you. Yet, O son of Vena, listen properly to the importance from me who am telling it. A man, being careful, should observe the rule about the vow of Kārtika, when it would be the Ekādaśī of the bright half of the month of Āśvina. When a quarter of the night is left, he, the observer of the vow, with a vessel containing water should go out of his house in the south-west direction. By the day and in the evening

1. 'Me' here standing for Sūta obviously has no relevance.

after having placed his sacred thread on his ear, after having covered the ground with grass, after having covered his head with a garment, having carefully controlled his mouth, without spitting or panting, he should pass urine or feces after facing the north. If it is night he should face the south. Having held his organ of generation he should get up. Taking pure clay, he should carefully make purification (i.e. wash) by which the smearing and odour will vanish. He should apply (clay) to his organ of generation once, to the anus five times, to the left hand ten times, to both the hands seven times, and to the feet thrice (and then wash them with water). Twice this (number) is told for a celibate, and thrice for a hermit, four times for an ascetic. Half (the number should be used for) purification at night. Half of it (should be employed when he is) travelling. Half of it is (recommended) for women and śūdras. All the acts of him who does not go through the act of purification, are useless. The hymns of one not having his mouth pure, are said not to give the (desired) fruit. After that he should carefully cleanse his teeth and tongue, 'O tree, give us (long) life, power, success, vigour, progeny, animals and wealth.' Uttering this hymn, (he should take a piece of) wood of the length of twelve fingers of the kṣīra tree¹ without fasting on the diminutive day (*obscure*) (and he should cleanse his teeth). He should not cleanse his teeth on the first day, the new-moon day, the ninth day, the sixth day, a Sunday and at the time of the lunar or solar eclipse. He should avoid cleansing his teeth with (a stick of) the kaṇṭakī tree, cotton tree, nirguṇḍa tree, palāśa tree, bilva tree, castor oil plant, and iṅgudī tree.

16-30. Then he, with a pleased mind and devoted, should go, taking with him sandal, flowers, good tām̐būlas to the temple of Viṣṇu and Śiva. Then having separately offered articles (and modes) of worship like water for washing the feet, respectful oblation etc., and bowed again, he should do auspicious things like singing. He should also honour the good dancers having musical instruments made of bell-metal, lutes, tabors etc., so also he should honour the singers with fragrant flowers and

1, Kṣīravṛkṣa—Name of the four trees, viz. Nyagrodha, Udumbara, Aśvattha and Madhūka.

tāmbūlas, since they are the forms of Viṣṇu. In the Kali age penance, sacrifice, gifts made with devotion to the good lord of the world, always give delight. O king, I asked, “O lord of gods, where do you live?” Viṣṇu, pleased with my devotion then spoke to me thus: “I do not live in Vaikuṇṭha, nor in the heart of the yogins. O Nārada, I stay there where my devotees sing (my praise). Those foolish men who, after hearing a good narrative from a Purāṇa or the singing of my devotees, do not long for me, are hated by me. Men (should) worship them (devotees) with sandal, flowers etc. By that I am so much pleased as I am not pleased with my worship,” Viṣṇu should not be worshipped with the flowers of śirīṣa, dhattura, hill-plantain, jasmine, śālmali, sun-plant, karṇikāra and with sacred rice grains. So also Śiva should not be worshipped with the flowers of japā, kunda, śirīṣa, jasmine, white jasmine, ketakī. One should not worship Gaṇeśa with Tulasī-leaves and Pārvatī with dūrvās. A man desiring wealth should not, in the same way, worship the Sun with damanaka flowers. Always he should use fragrant and best flowers for worship. Having thus offered the worship, he should apologise to the god of gods: ‘O lord of gods, may whatever I have offered as worship without hymns, rites and without devotion, be complete. Then having gone round (the deity by keeping the deity) to his right, he should salute (i.e. prostrate himself) like a staff. He should again apologise to the deity and the singers etc. Those men who, on a night in Kārtika, properly worship Viṣṇu or Śiva, have their sins completely destroyed, and their ancestors go to Viṣṇu’s abode.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

The Bath Rite

Nārada said:

1-10. When the night is left as much as two nāḍikās (i.e. fortyeight minutes), he, being pure (i.e. having purified himself),

should (taking) with (him) sesamum-seeds, sandal, sacred rice grains, flowers, lights etc., go to a pond. The bath in an artificial pond, a natural pond, in a river or at a confluence of two rivers, is said to be giving tenfold merit in (the succeeding) order. (A bath taken) at a holy place is said to give unending fruit. Having remembered Viṣṇu, he should take the solemn vow of bathing. He should offer respectful oblations to the holy places, deities etc. in (proper) order. (He should say): "Om, salutation to Kamalanābha. Salutation to him lying in water. Accept (this) respectful offering. Salutation to you. Since Viṣṇu moved in Vaikuṇṭha, Prayāga and Badarikāśrama, he planted his foot in three ways. With all those sages and deities, may gods protect me for this reason that from here Viṣṇu moved on. In Kārtika, to please (you), O best god, Dāmodara, lord of the god of gods, I shall bathe in the morning (everyday). (Be) with me. O lord of gods, O Dāmodara, I am eager to bathe in this water after having reflected on you. May my sin perish due to your grace. O Hari, with Rādhā accept the respectful offering made by me at (the time of) an obligatory or occasional (rite) in the sin-destroying Kārtika in the Kali age. O Hari, with Rādhā accept the respectful offering given by me who observe a vow in the month of Kārtika, of me who have bathed duly."

11-19. After having remembered Gaṅgā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, the Sun, he should enter the water. He who observes the vow, should, standing in water deep up to the navel, bathe duly. A householder should bathe with (i.e. after applying) the powder of sesamum-seeds and āmalaka. For the hermits and ascetics the clay at the root of Tulasī (is recommended). He should not bathe with (i.e. after applying) āmalaka fruits and sesamum-seeds on the seventh, the new-moon day, the ninth of both (fortnights) and on the tenth day. First he should bathe with dust (i.e. applying clay etc.). Then he should bathe with the (recital of) hymns. For women and śūdras (the bath is) not (recommended) with (the recital of) Vedic hymns, (but only) with the Purāṇic ones. (Now follow) the hymns at the time of bathing: "May Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all sins, who formerly for the mission of the gods divided himself into three due to devotion for them, now protect me compassionately. For this Kārtika vow may all gods having

received Viṣṇu's order, always protect and purify me. May all the Vedic hymns along with their seeds, secrets and power, so also sages like Kaśyapa, always purify me. May all rivers like Gaṅgā, the big rivers giving water, all tanks with the seven seas, purify me. May chaste women like Aditi, yakṣas, siddhas with serpents, herbs, mountains, beings in the three worlds quickly purify me."

20-32. Having bathed with (the recital of) these hymns, the observer of the vow, putting a ring of kuśa grass on (the fourth finger of) his hand, should properly offer libations of water to gods, sages, human beings and (his) dead ancestors. Then the observer of the vow, having come out of the water and having covered himself with a pure garment, should, after having finished rites proper for the morning, again worship Viṣṇu. Being diligent and with his mind fixed on him (i.e. Viṣṇu), he should, after remembering the holy places etc. and deities, again offer worship with sandal, flowers and fruits. The prayer at (the time of making) the respectful offering is: "O destroyer of the lord of demons, accept the respectful oblation given by me—(oblation) of me who have properly bathed (in the morning) in the month of Kārtika." Then devoutly (honouring) the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas with sandal, flowers and fruits, he should feed them and salute them again and again. By worshipping the brāhmaṇas, the holy places residing in the right foot, the Vedas residing in the mouth, and the deities residing in the entire body, would be worshipped. The brāhmaṇas are the forms of the unmanifest Viṣṇu on the earth. By one desiring (one's) good they should never be humiliated; they should never be opposed. The observer of the vow should worship Tulasī, dear to Viṣṇu. With a concentrated mind he should go round and salute Tulasī. "O Tulasī, you have been formerly created by gods. You have been worshipped by the best sages. Salutation, obeisance to you, O Tulasī. O you dear to Viṣṇu, remove my sin." Then the devout observer of the vow, of an affectionate mind, should listen to Viṣṇu's account (as told) in the Purāṇa, and should honour that brāhmaṇa, the brāhmaṇa sage (who reads or tells the account). A devout man who properly performs the complete rite which is told before, obtains the same world as of Viṣṇu. On the earth

there is no vow other than that of Kārtika and dear to Viṣṇu, which removes diseases, which destroys sins, which is great, which gives good thoughts, which is the means of sons, wealth etc., and which is the cause of salvation.

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

Restraints during the Kārtika Vow

Nārada said:

1-17. O king, listen fully to the restraints told for men observing the Kārtika vow, which (will) be told by me. The observer of the Kārtika vow should not at all eat any kind of flesh and meat, honey, jujube fruit and beans etc. The observer of the Kārtika vow should avoid corn (whose seeds have) two portions, sesamum oil, so also food polluted by tears, polluted by (bad) thoughts, polluted by (bad) words. The observer of the Kārtika vow should not accept others' food, should not hate others, should not be an adulterer, should not accept gifts at a holy place. He who observes the vow in Kārtika should avoid the censure of the god of gods, brāhmaṇas, (his) preceptor, (another man) observing the vow, of women, kings, and great (men). The limb of an animal, meat, powder, jambīra among the fruits, flesh, masūrikā (a kind of pulse) among corns, and stale food, are said to be avoided. So also milk etc. other than that of a goat, a cow, a buffalo, āmiṣa, all liquids purchased by a brāhmaṇa, and rock salt. Gavya (i.e. milk, curds etc.) kept in a copper-vessel, water collected in a small pool, and food cooked for oneself is said to be 'āmiṣa' by the wise. The observer of the (Kārtika) vow should observe celibacy, should sleep on the ground, should eat from a plate made of leaves. He should eat during the fourth part of the day. He should always do this. On the Naraka Caturdaśī day the observer of the Kārtika vow should smear his body with oil. He should not smear his body with oil on any other day (than the Naraka Caturdaśī day). The observer of the Kārtika vow should

avoid onions, garlic, pot-herb, mushroom, small red variety of garlic, lotus-stalk, radish, so also asafoetida. The observer of the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu should avoid bottle-gourd, egg-plant, pumpkin-gourd, and the fruit (of the plant) of bṛhatī, so also śleṣmātaka fruit and wood-apple. The observer of the Kārtika vow should not talk with a woman in her menses, a man of the lowest caste, a non-Aryan, a fallen person, an out-cast, and those out of the fold of the Vedas and the (three) twice-born castes. The observer of the Kārtika vow should avoid the food seen by dogs and crows, food prepared by a woman who has recently delivered, and food cooked twice, and burnt food. He who avoids smearing his body with oil, (sleeping on) a bed, others' food, eating from a bell-metal vessel in Kārtika, would be one who fully observes the vow. The observer of the vow should also observe the Kṛcchra vow etc. according to his capacity. (From the first day) he should avoid in order pumpkin gourd, egg-plant, root of bṛhatī, bilva-fruit, kaliṅga fruit, dhātrī, coconut, large-sized bottle-gourd, (species of cucumber called) paṭola, badarī fruit, bhūrja-fruit, vikataka-fruit, lotus-stalk and vikaṭa-fruit.

18-28. From the first day (onwards) these vegetables are to be avoided in the order (given here). Similarly, a householder should always avoid (eating) dhātri-fruit on Sunday. From among these also the man should avoid what pleases Viṣṇu. Having given that to a brāhmaṇa, the man should always eat. In the same way the observer of the vow should have restraints in Māgha also. He should keep awake and observe the rite as is told. Seeing the man observing the Kārtika vow as told (in the holy texts), Yama's messengers run away like elephants tormented by a lion. This vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu is superior to a hundred sacrifices. The performer of a sacrifice goes to heaven; the observer of the Kārtika vow goes to Vaikuṇṭha. All the holy places giving enjoyments and salvation, that are there on the earth, remain in the house of the observer of the Kārtika-vow. A bad dream, or whatever bad deed is done through mind, speech and body, goes away that moment only on seeing the observer of the Kārtika vow. Like the servants of a king, Indra and others urged by Viṣṇu's words protect the man who observes the Kārtika vow. Imps, ghosts, goblins etc. do not

remain there where the observers of the Viṣṇu vow are always honoured. Even Brahmā, with his four mouths, would not be able to describe the religious merit of him who observes the Kārtika vow as told (in the holy texts). (If) a man observes, along with restraints, the vow in Kārtika, which is dear to Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which gives sons, wealth, grains and prosperity everywhere, (then) what is the use of visiting and paying homage to sacred places for him?

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Bringing the Vow to Conclusion

Nārada said:

1-9. O king, now listen properly to the rite of bringing to conclusion—what the rite is—being told by me in brief. The observer of the vow should bring to conclusion the vow on the fourteenth of Kārtika for pleasing Viṣṇu. Above the Tulasī he should put up an auspicious pavilion with a good arched doorway and beautified with flowers and chowries. At the doors he should separately honour the door-keepers. He (should have) Jaya and Vijaya, meritorious and of good character. At the root of the Tulasī he should draw (an) auspicious (circle) all around. It should be properly beautified and ornamented with four colours. Above it should be a covering (decked) with five jewels. Having placed there a pitcher with a big fruit, he should worship there the god of gods holding a conch, a disc, a mace, having put on a silken yellow garment and with Lakṣmī. The observer of the vow should also honour in the circle the regents of quarters like Indra, since he was awakened by the gods on Dvādaśī along with Trayodaśī. He was seen to be honoured on the fourteenth. Therefore, he is more venerable. A man, calm and of a restrained mind, should devoutly fast on that day.

10-24. With his preceptor's consent he should worship the golden (image of) the lord of the god of gods in sixteen ways of worship with several eatables. By means of auspicious (acts

like) singing and (playing upon) musical instruments, he should keep awake at night. Those who on (the night of) keeping awake in honour of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), sing devoutly, are free from heaps of sins due to hundreds of existences. That fruit (which is obtained) by those keeping awake on the day of Viṣṇu, and singing and dancing, is said to be the fruit of those who give a thousand cows. He should sing, dance etc. and should present spectacles. Of him who keeps awake on the night of keeping awake for Viṣṇu, in front of Viṣṇu, he who amuses Viṣṇu's devotees by reciting Viṣṇu's accounts, who produces the sounds of musical instruments with his mouth, and who presents free talks, who with these dispositions keeps awake in honour of Viṣṇu, his religious merit everyday is said to be equal to (a visit to) crores of holy places. Then on the full-moon day he should invite thirty or more brāhmaṇas with their wives according to his capacity. Since having given boons Viṣṇu took up the form of fish, therefore, whatever is given, offered into fire or muttered is said to be of an inexhaustible fruit. Therefore, the observer of the vow should feed those brāhmaṇas with sweetened milk etc. He should (saying) *Ato deva*, offer sesamum-seeds and sweetened milk to two separately for pleasing the god of gods and deities. Having then worshipped the god (Viṣṇu), Tulasī and (other) deities, he should give them presents according to his capacity and salute them. Then the observer of the vow should duly worship there a tawny cow. Having honoured his preceptor instructing him in the vow with garments, ornaments etc. and having honoured him with his wife, he should give the cow to him. 'Due to your grace may the lord of gods be always pleased with me. May all that sin committed by me during seven existences, perish due to this vow, and may my progeny be stable. Due to the worship may my desires be always fruitful. On death may I obtain Viṣṇu's position very difficult to be secured.'

25-31 Having thus apologised to and pleased the brāhmaṇas, he should dismiss them. Then the observer of the vow should give (the materials of) the worship with the jewels to his preceptor. Then the devoted one should eat with his friends and elders. The rite is said to be like this in Kārtika or Māgha. A man who thus duly observes the Kārtika vow, is free from

sins, and getting release he would go into Viṣṇu's proximity. The fruit due to the proper observance of this vow should be known to be a crore times more than that of all vows, (visits to) all holy places and all gifts. Those who are engrossed in devotion to Viṣṇu and who observe the Kārtika vow are lucky and very meritorious, and get all the fruits. Sins remaining in his body have deliberation through fear of him. They say, 'If this man observes this vow, where shall we go?' Those devotees who in this way listen to the restraints, and those who narrate them before Viṣṇu's devotees, would obtain the fruit due to their having properly observed the vow, and have all their sins destroyed.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

The Birth of Jalandhara

Prthu said:

1-3. O brāhmaṇa, (after listening to) the vow of Kārtika that you told in detail, and the worship of Viṣṇu at the Tulasī root that you told, I desire to ask about the greatness of Tulasī. How is she so very dear to the god of gods, Viṣṇu, Śārṅgin? How and at what place has she sprung up, O Nārada? (Please) tell this in brief. I look upon you as omniscient.

Nārada said:

4-11. Formerly when Rudra hurled down the Ocean's son, the lord of demons, gods like Brahmā bowed to Rudra with their heads (bent). O king, listen. I shall tell you the greatness of Tulasī. I shall tell you all the old account with its history. Formerly, Indra surrounded by all deities and waited upon by celestial nymphs, went to Kailāsa mountain, to see Śiva. When he went to Śiva's house, he quickly saw there a man of fearful deeds and fierce due to his fangs and eyes. He asked him: "O, who are you? Where has the lord of the world gone?" When asked repeatedly like this, he did not speak. O king, Indra got

angry, reproached him, and said (these) words, “O, though asked by me you have not given a reply. Therefore, I shall kill you with the thunderbolt. O you wicked one, who is your protector here?” Speaking like this, then Indra struck him hard with his thunderbolt. Due to that (stroke) his throat became dark blue and the thunderbolt was reduced to ash. Then Rudra blazed, as it were burning with lustre. Seeing (this), Br̥haspati quickly joined the palms of his hands. And Indra prostrating like a staff on the ground started praising (him).

Br̥haspati said:

12-14. Obeisance to Devādhīdeva (i.e. god of gods), to Tryambaka (i.e. having three eyes), to Kapardin (i.e. having braided and matted hair), to Tripuraghna (i.e. the destroyer of Tripura), to Śarva; salutation to the killer of Andhaka. Salutation to Virūpa (i.e. the deformed one), to Atirūpa (i.e. having a superior form), to Bahurūpa (i.e. the multi-formed one), to Śambhu, to the destroyer, and the giver of the fruit of the sacrifices. (Salutation) to the destroyer of Death, to Kāla (i.e. Death), to him, having a deadly snake; salutation to him who destroyed Brahmā's head; repeated salutations to the brāhmaṇa.

Nārada said:

15-16. Thus praised, Śiva, withdrawing the flame capable of burning the three worlds, said to the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. (Br̥haspati): “O brāhmaṇa, ask for a boon. I am pleased with this praise of (i.e. done by) you. Be famous as (i.e. by the name) ‘Jīva’ as you gave back (i.e. saved) Indra's life.”

Br̥haspati said:

17. If, O god, you are pleased, (then) go to Indra who has sought your refuge. May this fire, risen from the (third) eye on your forehead be quelled.

The lord said:

18. How can this (fire) enter the eye on the forehead? I shall cast it (far) away so that it would not trouble Indra.

Nārada said:

19-24a. Saying so, and holding it in his hand, he threw it into the salt Ocean. It fell at the confluence of the river Gaṅgā and the Ocean. Then it got a child's form and wept. Due to the sound of its weeping the earth repeatedly trembled. Heaven and Satyaloka became deafened due to that sound. Hearing it, and being very much wonderstruck, Brahmā went there (saying): 'What is this?' Just then he saw the child on the lap of the Ocean. Seeing Brahmā coming, the Ocean too, joined the palms of his hands, and bowing to him with his head (bent) put the boy on his lap. Then Brahmā said (these) words: "Whose wonderful child is this?" Hearing (these) words of Brahmā, the Ocean said (these) words.

Brahmā said:

24b-25a. O you lord of the rivers, wherefrom did you get this very strong boy, by whose sound gods, demons and great serpents are frightened?

The Ocean said:

25b-27. O Brahman, this is my boy born on the river Gaṅgā. O lord of the world, perform for him the ceremonies (performed) at the birth of a child etc.

Ocean's son seized Brahmā's beard, and repeatedly shook it. From the eyes of him whose beard was (thus being) shaken, tears came (out). Somehow getting his beard freed, Brahmā said to the Ocean.

Brahmā said:

28-30. Since he held these tears from my eyes, therefore, he will be famous by the name 'Jalandhara'. Now only he will be a youth, master of all weapons and sacred books and will not be killed by any being except Rudra; and he will go where a born one goes.

Nārada said:

31-33. Speaking like this and calling Śukra he consecrated

him on the throne. Taking leave of the lord of rivers, Brahmā vanished (from there). Then, the Ocean, with his eyes blooming with joy on seeing him, solicited Kālanemi's daughter Vṛndā for (being) his wife. Those demons, led by Kālanemi, were glad and gave that daughter to him (i.e. to Jalandhara). He, the mighty and powerful one, aided by Śukra, getting them as best friends, ruled over the earth.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

The Conquest of Amarāvati by Jalandhara

Nārada said:

1-6a. Those demons living in the nether world and formerly vanquished by gods, became fearless and came to the earth to serve him. Some time seeing Rāhu with his head cut off, the lord of the demons asked the brāhmaṇa, viz. Śukra: "O lord, who has done this?" Bhārgava told him (the account of) the cutting off of Rāhu's head and the churning of the ocean for nectar done by gods. So also the snatching of the jewels and the defeat of the demons. Hearing about that churning of his father, his eyes were red with anger. He sent a gluttonous messenger to Indra. The messenger, going to heaven, quickly reached the assembly of gods, (and) with his head not bent due to pride, said to the lord of gods.

The messenger said:

6b-8. The Ocean's son Jalandhara is the lord of all demons. I am the messenger sent by him. Listen to what he has said: "Why did you churn my father with a mountain? Give back quickly to me all those jewels taken (by you)."

Hearing these words of the messenger, the lord of the gods was amazed. And with fear and anger he spoke to the fearful, voracious (messenger):

The lord said:

9-12. Listen, O messenger, since the mountains afraid of me were put by him to his side, I formerly churned the Ocean. He also protected my other enemies, the sons of Diti. Therefore, I took away all that collection of the jewels. Formerly Śaṅkha, the Ocean's son, hated gods. He too, struck by my younger brother (i.e. Viṣṇu), entered the interior of the Ocean. So go and tell him fully the reason of the churning (of the Ocean).

Nārada said:

13-23. The messenger, thus dismissed by Indra, came home. He then told the words (i.e. the message) of Indra to his king. Hearing it, the demon, with his lips quivering with anger, quickly exerted (himself) with a desire to conquer the gods. In that exertion of (conquering) Indra, the sons of Diti came in hundreds and crores from the directions and the nether world. The demon (Jalandhara) with crores of generals of the army like Śumbha and Niśumbha, went to heaven and stood for the war. Gods, furnished with armours for the war, went out of Amarāvati. Seeing the demon-army, they stood surrounding the city. Then the war between the armies of gods and demons took place with (the use of) pestles, iron clubs, arrows, maces, axes and (the weapons called) śakti. Rushing to one another, they struck one another. In a moment the two armies were wet with the stream of blood. The battlefield appeared like the evening with the cover of clouds, due to the elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers that had fallen and that were being knocked down. Bhārgava brought back to life the demons killed in that war with drops of water consecrated with the magic formulas bringing back the dead to life. In the same way Bṛhaspati also brought the gods back to life in that war after repeatedly bringing the herbs from the region of Droṇa (mountain). Seeing gods again coming back to life in that war Jalandhara, being angry, said (these) words to Bhārgava:

Jalandhara said:

24. How is it that the gods killed by me in the war again come back to life? It is well-known that your science of bringing back (the dead) to life does not reside anywhere else (i.e. is not known to anyone else).

Bhṛgu said:

25. Bṛhaspati, bringing herbs from the Droṇa mountain, brings back the gods to life. Quickly snatch away the Droṇa mountain.

Nārada said:

26-33. The lord of the demons, thus told, quickly took the Droṇa mountain and threw it into the ocean and again came back to the great battle(field). Then seeing the gods killed, Guru went to the Droṇa mountain. He, honoured by the gods, did not see the lordly mountain there. Knowing that Droṇa was snatched by the demon, he was sad and overcome by fear. He with his body overcome by breathlessness (i.e. panting), spoke from a distance: "Flee, flee; he cannot be conquered. He is born of the portion of Rudra. Remember Indra's act." Hearing his words, gods, overpowered by fear and being killed by the demons, ran in the ten directions. Seeing the gods rent, the demon, the Ocean's son, entered Amarāvati with the sounds of conches, drums and shouts of victory. When the demon entered the city, gods led by Indra and tormented by the demons, reached a cave in Meru and lived there. Then having separately made the excellent demons like Śumbha in-charge of Indra etc. he (i.e. Jalandhara) again went to the cave on the golden mountain (i.e. Meru).

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

Viṣṇu Promises not to Kill Jalandhara

Nārada said:

1. Seeing the demon to have come again, gods with Indra trembled with fear and started praising Viṣṇu.

Gods said:

2-4. Obeisance to you who are always ready for (serving) the purpose of the devotee by (taking) many forms like that of the

Fish or the Tortoise; (to you) who remove affliction, who are the author of the Creator etc., the creation, maintenance and destruction (of the world); who have in your hands a mace, a conch, a lotus etc. We bow to you, lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī), the killer of the demons, the lord of the first among the serpents (i.e. Śeṣa), (to you) wearing a yellow garment, maturing the rites like a sacrifice etc., the great author (of everything), fit to be resorted to. Salutation to that Viṣṇu, the thunderbolt of Indra for destroying the mountain of the grief of the gods tormented by the demons, (to Viṣṇu) lying on the bed of the lord of serpents, having two eyes in the form of the Sun and the Moon. We salute him.

Nārada said:

5-7. He who would everyday recite (this) hymn, destroying calamities, is never troubled by calamities due to Viṣṇu's grace. When the gods thus praised (Viṣṇu) the enemy of the demons, Viṣṇu came to know about the calamity of the gods. The enemy of the demons, getting up quickly with his mind dejected through pity, quickly mounted upon Garuḍa, and said (these) words to Lakṣmī.

Viṣṇu said:

8. Your brother Jalandhara has played havoc among the gods. Invited by them, I shall quickly go to fight.

Lakṣmī said:

9. O you treasure of compassion, O my lord, if I am always dear to you and your devotee, then how should my brother be killed by you in a battle?

The lord said:

10. Due to his being born from a portion of Rudra, due to Brahmā's statement (about him), and due to your love (for him), Jalandhara shall never be killed by me.

Nārada said:

11-19. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu holding a conch, a disc, a mace and a sword, mounted upon Garuḍa, and went there

where the gods were praising him. The demons tormented by the wind (produced) by the very strong wings of (Garuḍa) whose younger brother is Aruṇa wandered like the clouds in the sky turned round by a storm. Then Jalandhara, seeing the demons tormented, did not utter a word, (but) angrily came to Viṣṇu. Then a great fight took place between Viṣṇu and the lord of demons, making the sky having no room in it with their arrows. With volleys of arrows Viṣṇu cut off the demon's banner, umbrella, bow and horses and struck him on his chest with one arrow. Then the demon having a mace in his hand, jumped quickly, struck Garuḍa on his head and knocked him down on the ground. Viṣṇu laughed and cut off the mace with his sword. (Just) then he struck on Viṣṇu's strong heart (chest) with his strong fist. Then the two very strong ones had a hand-to-hand fight, resounding the earth with their arms, fists, and knees. Having thus fought for a very long time, the brave Viṣṇu spoke with a deep-sounding voice to the king of the demons.

Viṣṇu said:

20. O lord of demons, ask for a boon. Due to your valour I am pleased with you. I shall even give you what cannot be given—(ask for) whatever is in your mind.

Jalandhara said:

21. O brother-in-law, if you are pleased with me, then grant me this boon—with that my sister (Lakṣmī) and with your attendants, you stay in my house.

Nārada said:

22-29. Saying "Let it be so", the lord with all his divine attendants went with Lakṣmī to the city named Jalandhara. Jalandhara also putting the gods in the custody of the demons, gladly again came back to the earth. The Ocean's son brought under his control whatever jewels belonged to the gods, gandharvas and siddhas. The strong one having placed the very strong Niśumbha in the Pātāla-abode took Śeṣa and others to the earth. Making the multitudes of gods, gandharvas, siddhas, yakṣas, demons and human beings the residents of his city, he ruled over the three worlds. Having thus subjugated the gods he righteo-

usly looked after his subjects like his own sons. When he was (thus) ruling righteously, no one was sick, no one was afflicted; similarly no one was weak, no one appeared helpless. When thus the lord of demons was righteously and properly ruling over the earth, some time, by chance, I went (to that city) to see his prosperity and to serve (Viṣṇu), Lakṣmī's husband.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Rāhu Acts as Messenger of Jalandhara

Nārada said:

1. O best king, that lord of demons having duly and very devoutly honoured me, laughed and said (these) words.

Jalandhara said:

2. O sage, tell me why have you come here, O brāhmaṇa; so also what you have seen and where, and why you have come here.

Nārada said:

3-16. O lord of demons, I had, by chance, gone to the peak of Kailāsa (mountain). There I met Śiva seated with Umā in the great forest of desire-yielding trees extended over a myriad of yojanas, crowded with hundreds of desire-yielding cows, and well-lit with the desire-yielding gem. Seeing the great wonder a thought then arose in my mind. Such abundance may or may not be anywhere in the three worlds. O lord of demons, great opulence is collected by you. With a desire to see that I have come here to you. Seeing this prosperity, except the jewels in the form of women of you, I certainly think that there is none else (as) rich as Śiva. Though celestial damsels and nāga damsels are under your control, yet they are not certainly like Pārvatī in beauty, in whose ocean of beauty formerly Brahmā got murged and lost his fortitude. Who else can be compared with her? Formerly by her in the form of a bhilla woman was subjugated

by means of penance (Śiva) who was without any attachment, who was Madana's enemy, on whom the universe depends at his pleasure, (but) who wandered in the forest of her beauty. On repeatedly seeing her form at the time of creation, the Creator created the celestial nymphs. (But) no one resembled her. Therefore, she, the best one, is the prosperity of him, the enjoyer of the gems of women. O you lord of demons, you, the lord of all gems, (do) not (have a gem) like that.

When, having talked like this, I took his leave and left, the lord of the demons had his body tormented with the 'fever' of love on hearing about her beauty. Then he sent Simhikā's son (Rāhu) as his messenger to Śiva. Then being deluded a little by Viṣṇu's Māyā (illusory power) Rāhu went to Kailāsa, having the lustre of the moon in the bright half. But he obtained the lustre of the moon in the dark half through the totality of (the lustre) from his body (i.e. he fully resembled the moon in the dark half of the month). Śiva was informed (of his arrival), and by his order he was taken in by Nandin. Urged by the indication of the creeper-like brow (of Śiva), he said (these) words.

Rāhu said:

17-19. O bull-bannered god, listen to the command of the lord served by serpents, master of the three worlds, master of all gems. "How can you, the naked one living in the cremation ground, wearing a string of heads, have this charming wife, the daughter of the Himālaya Mountain? I am the lord of jewels; and she is called a gem among women. Therefore, she is proper for me and not for you eating (i.e. subsisting on) alms."

Nārada said:

20-26. When, at that time Rāhu was speaking like this, a fierce man, with a voice like that of the violent thunderbolt was produced from the space between the eye-brows of Śiva. His face was like that of a lion; his tongue was moving; his eyes were fiery; he was great; his hair was erect; his body was dry; he was, as it were, another Nṛsiṃha. He set about to eat him. Seeing him Rāhu overcome by fear, speedily ran out; but he

seized him (i.e. Rāhu). Then that Rāhu of big arms said to the lord of the god of gods with a grave voice like (the sound of) the clouds: “Protect me who have sought your refuge. He has come to eat me, a brāhmaṇa, O Mahādeva. O you, who love those that seek your refuge, protect me from him.” Hearing the words of that brāhmaṇa, Mahādeva then said: “He should not be killed, since, being a messenger, he is dependent upon another. Leave him” The man hearing these words, left Rāhu in the sky. Leaving Rāhu the man respectfully said to Mahādeva.

The man said:

27. O master, hunger oppresses me. I am fully emaciated with hunger. O lord, order what I should eat.

The lord said:

28a. Quickly eat the flesh of your hands and feet.

Nārada said:

28b-30. When the man thus ordered by Śiva ate up the flesh of his hands and feet, and when he remained with the head only, Śiva, seeing him with the head left, was very much pleased, and with amazement said to that man of fierce acts:

The lord said:

31. Having the name of ‘Kīrtimukha’ always remain at my door. Those who do not honour you, do not do what is dear to me.

Nārada said:

32-34. Since then Kīrtimukha remains at the door of the lord. The worship of those who do not honour him would be in vain. That Rāhu who was left by him fell on the Barbara region. Therefore, on the earth he is known as *Barbarodbhūta*. Then Rāhu, thinking that he was reborn here, told all this done by Śiva to Jalandhara after approaching him.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Śiva's Attendants Fight the Demons off -

Nārada said:

1-4. Hearing that Jalandhara with his body overcome by anger went out surrounded by crores of (soldiers in the) army of the demons. Śukra went before him. Rāhu remained within (the range of) his sight. His crown quickly slipped and fell on the ground. The entire sky shone with hundreds of aeroplanes occupied by the army of the demons as with clouds in the rainy season. Then seeing his exertion, gods led by Indra and with their hurry unnoticed, respectfully said to Śiva:

The gods said:

5. O master, how do you not know that the gods are respectfully speaking to you. For our protection kill the Ocean's son.

Nārada said:

6. Hearing these words of the gods Śiva laughed and calling the great Viṣṇu said these words to him:

The lord said:

7. O Viṣṇu, how (i.e. why) did you not kill Jalandhara in the battle? Afraid of him, you left your Vaikuṇṭha and went away.

Lord (Viṣṇu) said:

8. In the battle I did not kill the demon, since he was born from your portion, and since he is also Lakṣmī's brother. (Now) you (please) kill that demon.

The lord said:

9. He, of a great lustre, cannot be killed by me with these weapons and missiles. All the gods should give me a portion of their lustre.

Nārada said:

10-17a. Then gods, led by Viṣṇu, gave their own lustres.

The lord saw a great lustre (formed) by their coming together suddenly. Mahādeva fashioned an excellent weapon, the disc (called) Sudarśana, very fierce(-looking) because of a series of flames (issuing forth). Then Śiva fashioned the thunderbolt with the remaining lustre. (Just) then Jalandhara was seen at the region at the foot of Kailāsa (mountain).

He was surrounded by crores of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers. Seeing him as he came there, the gods being delighted went (to fight). (Śiva's) attendants hurriedly got ready to fight. All the attendants led by Nandin, Gajānana, Kārtikeya, and maddened to fight, got down from Kailāsa by Śiva's order. Then on the land at the foot of Kailāsa a war between the lordly Pramathas (Śiva's attendants) and the demons took place. It was fierce, and full of weapons and missiles. The earth that resounded with the sounds of multitudes of drums, tabors, conches, giving joy to the heroes, so also with the sounds of elephants, horses and chariots, trembled.

17b-26. With the multitudes of śaktis, iron clubs and arrows, with pestles, barbed missiles and sharp-edged spears, the entire sky shone, as if it was covered with meteors. The entire land shone with the chariots, elephants and horses that were struck down. (The ground) was as it were covered with the tops of mountains struck by thunderbolt. The ground was inaccessible due to the multitudes of demons killed by Pramathas (attendants), and with marrow, blood, mire of flesh etc. Bhārgava brought back to life the multitudes of demons killed by Pramathas. Seeing (Bhārgava) bringing repeatedly back to life by the power of the Sañjīvanī-vidyā those that died in the battle, all the attendants (of Śiva) were perplexed and struck by fear. They told the lord of the god of gods all that Śukra had done. Then from Rudra's mouth a destructive, very fearful deity was produced. Having shanks like tāla (trees), fat, crooked, and pressing the trees with her breasts, she reached the battlefield, and ate the great demons. Seizing Bhārgava in her hand she went and vanished. Seeing Bhārgava seized the divisions of the demon-army had their faces dejected; (but) maddened for fighting, they struck through pride. Struck by the fear of (Śiva's) attendants, the demon army was dispersed

like the scattered heap of grass struck by the speed of wind. (Śiva's) attendants seeing the demon army broken, rejoiced.

27-32. The three very powerful ones—the two generals viz. Niśumbha and Śumbha and the brave Kālanemi—warded off the army of the attendants. They discharged arrows as clouds (discharge water) in the rainy season. Then the volleys of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the demons, like swarms of locusts, blocked the sky and all directions, and they made the entire army of (Śiva's) attendants tremble. The attendants pierced by hundreds of arrows and shedding showers of blood appeared like kiṁśuka (trees) in spring season. Nothing could be clearly seen. Then (Śiva's) attendants fell, were knocked down, cut off and pierced. Leaving the battlefield, they all turned back. Then Gajānana, lordly Nandin and Kārtikeya, overpowered for long, seeing their army broken and unable to stand (the demon-force) forcibly warded off the excellent demons.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

The Fight Goes On

Nārada said:

1-19. Those demons on seeing the chiefs of the attendants like Nandin, Gajānana and Kārtikeya, impatiently ran (to them) for duels. Kālanemi, Śumbha and Niśumbha, (each) equipped with an armor, speedily ran (respectively) to Nandin, Gajānana and Kārtikeya. With five arrows Niśumbha pierced Kārtikeya's peacock on his chest with speed and he fell down unconscious. Then, when the angry Kārtikeya took his (missile called) śakti, Niśumbha forcibly knocked him down with śakti. Then Nandīśvara pierced Kālanemi with arrows. With seven he pierced his horses and banners, and with three his charioteer. Kālanemi who was angry, cut off Nandin's bow. Throwing it off, he firmly struck him on his chest with a spear. He, with his chest pierced by a spear and with his horses and charioteer killed, took off

the mountain's peak and threw it at Nandin. Then Śumbha and Gajānana, having a chariot and a rat as their vehicles, fighting with each other, pierced each other with volleys of arrows. The lord of the attendants (i.e. Gajānana) struck Śumbha in his heart with an arrow and knocked on the ground his charioteer with five arrows. Then Śumbha, being extremely angry, pierced Gajānana with sixty arrows, (his) rat with three, and thundered like a cloud. The rat, with his limbs pierced with arrows, walked painfully. Gajānana got down (from the rat) and became a foot soldier, O king. Then Gajānana, having struck Śumbha on his chest with a spear, knocked him down on the ground, and again mounted the rat. Kālanemi and Niśumbha both simultaneously struck Gajānana through anger with arrows, like a great elephant with a goad. Seeing him being troubled, the very strong Virabhadra, along with a crore of imps, speedily ran (to him). Kuṣmāṇḍas, Bhairavas, vampires, goblins, bebies of witches and (other) attendants followed him. Then the earth, resounding with kilakila sound (expressing joy), roars like those of lions, growlings, (beatings of) drums, trembled. Then the imps ran and devoured the demons. They jumped and fell and danced on the battlefield. Nandin and Kārtikeya hurriedly came (there) and struck the demons with continuous volleys of arrows in the battle. The army, cut off and broken with the demons killed, knocked down and threatened (by the attendants) was perplexed, and had a dejected face at that time.

20-31. Seeing (his) army destroyed, the strong son of the Ocean, in a chariot with a superior banner, marched against the attendants. Then in both the armies there were loud noise, sound of conches and drums, and roars like those of lions. Then with volleys of arrows, as with covers of mist, Jalandhara blocked the space between heaven and earth. Piercing Gajānana with five (arrows), Nandin too with five, and Virabhadra with twenty, he thundered like a cloud. Then Kārtikeya quickly pierced the demon with his (missile called) śakti. Pierced with the śakti he, with his mind a little agitated, rolled about. Then, with his eyes full of anger Jalandhara struck Kārtikeya with a mace. He too fell on the ground. In the same way he speedily knocked down Nandin on the ground. Then the angry Gajānana cut off his mace with his axe. Virabhadra pierced the demon on his chest with

three arrows, and cut off with seven (arrows) his horses, banners and concealed bow. Then the very angry lord of demons raising a fierce śakti, knocked down Gajānana and got into another chariot. Then, full of anger, he speedily marched against Virabhadra. Then the two, resembling the sun, fought with each other. Virabhadra knocked down his horses with arrows. The lord of demons cut off (his) bow, and with an iron bar as his weapon, fought. That demon, quickly attacking Virabhadra, struck him on his head with an iron club. The demon too, with his head pierced, and ejecting blood, fell on the ground.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

Jalandhara Plays a Trick

Nārada said:

1-12. Seeing that Virabhadra fallen, Rudra's attendants leaving the battle through fear and crying came to Śiva. Then hearing the uproar of his attendants, Śiva having mounted on his bull and laughing a little, came to the battle. Seeing Śiva coming, the attendants roaring like lions, again returned (to the battlefield). In the battle they struck the demons with showers of arrows. All the demons, seeing the fierce Śiva, ran away as sins run away through fear on seeing him who observes the vow of Kārtika. Then Jalandhara, seeing the demons fleeing on the battlefield, angrily ran to Śiva and discharged thousands of arrows. Śumbha, Niśumbha, Aśvamukha, Kālanemi, Balāhaka, Khaḍgaroman, Pracaṇḍa and Ghasmara went (i.e. rushed) to Śiva. Śiva, seeing the army of his attendants covered with the darkness caused by the arrows (of the demons), cut off the volley of arrows and with his own arrows covered the sky. He then troubled the demons with the hurricanes of his arrows. With fierce and continuous volleys of arrows he knocked (them) on the ground. Similarly he angrily cut off the head of Khaḍgaroman with a battle-axe. With a club having a skull at the top he also cut into two Balāhaka's head; and binding the demon

Ghasmara with a noose, he knocked him down on the ground. Some were struck by the bull; some were driven away by the arrows. The demons, like elephants tormented by lions, could not stand (before Śiva). Then Jalandhara with his mind full of anger and a voice sharp like (the sound of) thunderbolt, quickly challenged (Śiva) in the battle.

Jalandhara said:

13. Fight with me today. What is the use of striking these? O you having matted hair, show me whatever might you have.

Nārada said:

14-27. Speaking like this he struck Śiva with seventy arrows. He, laughing a little, cut them off before they reached (him) with sharp arrows. Then with seven (arrows) he cut off his horses, banners, umbrella and bow. He the powerful one, with his bow cut off and without his chariot, took a mace. Śiva ran (to him) and cut into two his mace with arrows. Yet, raising his fist he went to kill Śiva. (Just) then Śiva drove him away up to a krośa with the volleys of arrows. Then the demon Jalandhara, thinking Śiva to be stronger, created a gāndharvī illusion which was wonderful, and deluded Śiva. Then gandharvas and bebies of celestial nymphs sang and danced. They sounded musical instruments made of bell-metal, lutes and tabors with one another. Seeing that great wonder Rudra was deluded by the sound, and he did not even notice weapons dropped from his hands. The demon seeing Rudra concentrated, was overpowered by sexual desire, quickly went where Pārvatī was seated, after putting the very strong Śumbha and Niśumbha in (charge of) the battle. That Jalandhara became one having ten staff-like arms, five faces, three eyes, matted hair, and mounted upon a mighty bull. Then seeing Rudra coming, his beloved came from among her friends, and remained within the range of his sight. When the lord of demons saw Pārvatī of a charming body, he ejected his semen and his body became dull. Then Pārvatī, recognising him to be the demon, was overcome by fear, and vanished and went to Uttaramānasa. Not seeing her in a moment like a streak of lighting, he again quickly went to the battle(-field) where god Śiva stood. Then Pārvatī also

mentally recollected the great Viṣṇu. Then the goddess saw him seated by her.

Pārvatī said:

28. O Viṣṇu, the demon Jalandhara has done a great wonder. Do you not know the act of that wicked-minded (demon)?

The lord said:

29. We are following the path shown by him only. Otherwise, he well-protected by (his wife's) chastity would not be fit to be killed.

Nārada said:

30-32. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu again went to Jālandhara city. And Śiva, followed by gandharvas remained in the battle. Seeing the illusion to have disappeared, he awoke. Then Śiva, with his mind amazed, again angrily went to fight Jalandhara. The demon too seeing Śiva to have come back again, covered him with volleys of arrows in the battle.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

Vṛndā Curses Viṣṇu

Nārada said:

1-12. Viṣṇu having gone to Jālandhara broke through his cover and decided to break (i.e. spoil) the vow of chastity of Vṛndā. Respectable Vṛndārakā saw in her dream her husband mounted upon a buffalo, smeared with oil, naked, adorned with black flowers, and waited upon by groups of eaters of raw flesh, (saw him as) having gone to the southern direction clean-shaved and covered with darkness. (She saw) her city plunged into the ocean with herself. Then the young lady, (trying to) ascertain (the meaning of) her dream, awoke. She repeatedly saw the sun that had risen, as having holes and steady. Know-

ing it to be undesirable, she, overcome by fear and weeping did not find pleasure at the principal gate and upper story. Then with two (of her) friends she went to the city-garden. The young lady, even after having gone there, did not get pleasure anywhere. Going from forest to forest, she was not at all aware of herself. Then the young lady who was wandering, saw two demons very fierce, having lion-like faces, and fierce fangs and eyes. Seeing them, she being extremely alarmed, became wholly engaged in running. She saw a calm ascetic observing silence with his disciples. Then putting, through fear, her creeper-like arm round his neck she said: "O sage, protect me who have sought your shelter." The sage, seeing her alarmed and followed by the demons, angrily turned away the fierce demons just with a *hum* sound. Vṛndā, seeing them to have gone to the sky due to his *hum* sound, fell (i.e. prostrated herself) on the ground like a staff and spoke (these) words:

Vṛndā said:

13-14. O you treasure of compassion, you have protected me from a terrible fear. So I desire to say something respectfully. Kindly listen to it. O lord, O you of a good vow, my husband Jalandhara has gone to fight with Rudra. Tell me how he is (faring) in the battle.

Nārada said:

15-18. The sage having heard the words looked about with compassion. Just then two lordly monkeys came and saluting him stood before him. Then ordered by the indication of his creeper-like brows, they went to the sky. Having gone, the monkeys returned within half a moment and stood before him. Seeing them having in their hands the head and trunk of the Ocean's son, she, afflicted by the grief for her husband, fell unconscious on the ground. She was sprinkled over with the water from the pitcher and was brought back to consciousness by the sage. Putting her forehead on that of her husband, she, being dejected, wept.

Vṛndā said:

19-20. O lord, how is it that you who formerly amused me

with pleasing news, are not talking to me, your innocent beloved. How is it that you, the conqueror of the three worlds, who vanquished gods with gandharvas and Indra, were killed by an ascetic (i.e. Śiva)?

Nārada said:

21a. Thus weeping, Vṛndā said (these) words to the sage.

Vṛndā said:

21b-22. O you treasure of penance, O best sage, his life is very dear to me. I think you alone are capable of bringing him back to life.

Hearing her words the sage laughed and said :

The sage said:

23. It is not possible to bring back to life him who is killed by Śiva in a battle. Yet full of pity for you, I shall revive him.

Nārada said:

24-26. Speaking like this, when he just vanished, just then the Ocean's son, with his mind pleased, embraced and kissed Vṛndā. Then Vṛndā too seeing her husband, delighted in mind; she lived in the forest with him, and enjoyed with him for many days. Once, at the end of the coitus seeing him to be Viṣṇu only, Vṛndā getting angry censured him and spoke (these) words:

Vṛndā said:

27-31. O Viṣṇu, fie upon the conduct of you, molesting another's wife! I have recognized you to be actually an illusory ascetic. The two door-keepers of you whom you showed me through your Māyā (illusion), shall become demons and kidnap your wife. You too, afflicted with the grief due to your wife and assisted by the monkeys wander in the forest with him, the lord of all who has become your disciple.

Speaking like this, Vṛndā, though prohibited by Viṣṇu, not having any mental attachment for him, entered fire. Then Viṣṇu,

repeatedly remembering her, and having covered himself with the ash of Vṛndā's funeral pyre, remained there only; and though advised by the groups of sages and siddhas, did not obtain peace.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

The End of Jalandhara

Nārada said:

1-15a. Then Jalandhara seeing Śiva having wonderful valour, fashioned (an) illusory (form of) Pārvatī to delude Śiva. At that time Śiva saw her mounted upon the chariot, weeping, and being killed by Śumbha, Niśumbha and other demons. Seeing Pārvatī like that, Śiva too, with his mind dejected, remained silent with his face hung down and forgetting his valour. Then Jalandhara speedily pierced Śiva in his head, chest and belly with arrows plunging up to their feathered ends. Then being instructed by Viṣṇu, he realised the illusion. He became one having a fierce form, very fierce due to a series of flames. Seeing his extremely fierce form, the demons could not stand before him and took to the ten directions. Then the god gave a curse to Śumbha and Niśumbha: "After having gone away from the battle with me, you will be killed by Pārvatī." Again Jalandhara speedily showered (Śiva) with sharp arrows, so that a great surface of the earth was covered with darkness due to the arrows. While Rudra quickly cut off his arrows, the mighty one quickly struck the bull (Nandin) with an iron bar. Due to that stroke, the bull turned away from the battlefield. Though dragged by Śiva, he did not remain on the battlefield. Then Śiva having a fierce form, and very angry, speedily discharged the Sudarśana disc, bright like the sun. Reaching Jalandhara speedily, it burnt heaven and earth. It took (i.e. cut) off his head with big, long eyes from his body. Resounding the earth his body fell from the chariot; and from his body a lustre came out and merged into Śiva's body. Seeing the lustre coming

out from his body and merging into (the body of) Śiva, gods like Indra with their eyes blooming with joy, saluted Śiva with their heads (bent down) and told him about Viṣṇu's act. •

The gods said:

15b-16. O Śiva, you have protected the gods from fear of the enemy. Something else has come up. What should we do there? Deluded by Vṛndā's beauty, Viṣṇu is stupefied.

The lord said:

17. O gods, to remove Viṣṇu's delusion resort to the fascinating Māyā, fit to be resorted to. She will do your work.

Nārada said:

18. Saying so, the god along with the imps and attendants vanished; and gods praised the Mūlā Prakṛti (literally, the original source) to whom the devotees were dear.

The gods said:

19-21. We bow to that pure (cause called) Prakṛti, from which the constituents, sattva (goodness), rajas (activity) and tamas (darkness or ignorance) have come up, which is the primary cause of creation, maintenance and destruction (of the world), by whose desire all this existence and non-existence is spread. O lady with benumbing missiles, the twentythree divisions (principles), that formerly remained in the entire world, are the forms and acts of that (i.e. of you). We bow to her. We bow to that nature of Viṣṇu, which always loves the devotees, and men devoted to whom never meet with poverty, delusion, defeat etc.

Nārada said:

22-29. To him, who, with a concentrated mind, recites this hymn thrice a day, poverty, delusion, difficulties never touch (i.e. come). Those gods who were praising like this, saw in the sky, (Māyā) abiding in an orb of lustre and pervading the atmosphere with a series of flames. They all saw Bhāratī moving in the sky from its midst: "I alone, divided in three ways, remain

with the three constituents. (My three forms are) Gaurī, Lakṣmī and Svarā (respectively endowed) with sattva, rajas and tamas. Go there, O gods; they will do your work.”

Nārada said:

O king, when the gods with their eyes blooming with joy due to amazement, were hearing like this, the lustre disappeared. Then all the gods prompted by those words went and, greatly devoted, saluted Gaurī, Lakṣmī and Svarā. O king, then they, loving their devotees, saw the gods bowing down (to them), gave them seeds and said (these) words:

The goddesses said:

Sow these seeds in that place where Viṣṇu remains. Then your undertaking will succeed.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

The Greatness of Dhātrī and Tulasī

Nārada said:

1-15. O best king, from the seeds that were thrown (i.e. sown) there, three plants came up: Dhātrī, Mālatī and Tulasī. Dhātrī is said to have come up from Dhātrī (the earth), Mālatī from Lakṣmī, and Tulasī from Gaurī (having) the qualities (constituents viz.) sattva (goodness), rajas (activity) and tamas (darkness, ignorance). O king, Viṣṇu, deluded by the excellence of Vṛndā's beauty, seeing the herbs in the form of women got up in confusion. Then, with his mind attached to (i.e. full of) passion, he saw them. Tulasī and Dhātrī also looked at him with love only. Since formerly Lakṣmī gave the seed deceptively, therefore, the woman who came up from it, became jealous of him. Therefore, she is called Barbarī (i.e. low), and is very much condemned by Viṣṇu. Due to his love for them Dhātrī and Tulasī have always delighted him. Then Viṣṇu, forgetting his grief, went to Vaikuṇṭha with them. He was delighted and

was saluted by all gods. Therefore, Viṣṇu's worship is ordained at the time of the conclusion of the Kārtika (vow), since it is said always to cause delight (when done) at the root of Tulasī. O king, the house of him in whose house stands a Tulasī-grove, is of the nature of a holy place. Yama's servants do not come (there). Those best men who plant a Tulasī-grove which destroys all sins, which is auspicious, which satisfies desires, never see (Yama) the Sun's son. The three, viz. seeing (i.e. visiting) Narmadā, bathing in Gaṅgā, and contact with Tulasī-grove, are said to be equivalent. Due to men's planting, protecting, sprinkling, seeing and touching Tulasī, Tulasī removes their sin committed through speech, mind and body. He who would worship Viṣṇu with Tulasī-blossoms, does not go to the abode of embryo (i.e. is not reborn), and gets salvation. There is no doubt about this. In the Tulasī-leaf live holy places like Puṣkara, so also rivers like Gaṅgā and gods like Viṣṇu. O best king, if a man dies with a Tulasī-leaf (on his person), he obtains absorption with Viṣṇu. This is the truth (and the only) truth.

16-29. Even Yama cannot look at him, even though he is full of hundreds of sins, who dies with Tulasī-clay smeared (on his body). He who would put on the sandal from Tulasī-wood, great sin, though committed by him, does not touch his body. O king, a man should offer śrāddha wherever there would be the shade of a Tulasī-grove. (Śrāddha) offered there becomes inexhaustible for the manes of the dead ancestors. The dead ancestors in hell, of him who offers piṇḍas under the shade of a Tulasī-plant, are gratified, O best king. He who keeps the Dhātrī-fruit on his head, in his hand, in his mouth, on his body, should be known to be Viṣṇu himself, O best king. He on whose body the Dhātrī-fruit or clay (from the root) of Tulasī from Dvārakā always remains, is called 'liberated while alive.' The fruit for that man who bathes with water mixed with Dhātrī-fruits or with Tulasī-leaves, is said to be like that of a bath in Gaṅgā. The man who would worship the deities with Dhātrī-leaves or Dhātrī-fruits, would obtain the fruit of worshipping them with various flowers (made) of gold. In Kārtika when the Sun has resorted to the Libra sign of the Zodiac, holy places, sages, deities, sacrifices always remain resorted to the Dhātrī. One who plucks a Tulasī-leaf on the twelfth day, and a Dhātrī-

fruit in Kārtika, would go to very condemned hells. The sin due to contact with (prohibited) food, of the man who eats under the shade of a Dhātrī plant in Kārtika, perishes for the (whole) year. One who worships Viṣṇu (while sitting) at the root of a Dhātrī plant in Kārtika, has always worshipped at all places sacred to Viṣṇu. Even the god (Brahmā) having four mouths would not be able to narrate the greatness of Dhātrī and Tulasī as of god Viṣṇu. One who devoutly listens to or causes (others) to listen to the cause of the origin of Dhātrī and Tulasī, has his sins shaken off, and he, seated in an excellent aeroplane with his ancestors, goes to heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

The Kalahā Episode

Pr̥thu said:

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, you told me properly the greatness of Tulasī along with its history. I have listened to this great, very wonderful (account). Tell (me) what great fruit a man gets, who observes the Kārtika vow; (tell) its greatness again. (Tell) also who observed it? and in what manner (did he observe it)?

Nārada said:

3-10. Formerly in the region of Sahyādri in the city of Karavīra there lived a brāhmaṇa known as Dharmadatta, a knower of Dharma. He always observed Viṣṇu's vow and was always engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu. He was fond of muttering the hymn of the twelve syllables and guests were dear to him. Once in the month of Kārtika he went to Viṣṇu's temple for keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, when the fourth part of the night had remained. When he was taking the materials for Viṣṇu's worship, he saw a demoness of a terrible voice, that had come there. Her fangs and face were crooked; her tongue had gone down; her eyes were red; she was naked; the flesh (in her body) was dry (i.e. she was emaciated); her lips were long

(i.e. protruding); her voice was purring. Seeing her, he, afflicted with fear and with limbs trembling, quickly struck her with the materials of worship and water. She was (thus) struck (by him) after remembering Viṣṇu's name and with Tulasī-water. Therefore, all her sin perished. Then she, remembering her former existence due to the maturity of her acts, told him her entire condition, after saluting him (by prostrating before him) like a staff.

Kalahā said:

11. I have been reduced to this condition as a result of my deeds in the former (existence). O brāhmaṇa, how shall I again attain excellent and auspicious condition?

Nārada said:

12. Seeing her bowing down before (him) and narrating those acts of her, the brāhmaṇa, extremely amazed, then said (these) words:

Dharmadatta said:

13. As a result of which act are you reduced to such a condition? Wherefrom (do you come)? Who are you? What is your disposition? Tell all that to me.

Kalahā said:

14-18a. O brāhmaṇa, in a city in Saurāṣṭra there was a brāhmaṇa named Bhikṣu. I was first his very cruel wife named Kalahā. I never did good to him even by words; I who broke his command and who always liked to quarrel, never gave sweet food to my husband. Then the brāhmaṇa was dejected through grief; that my husband thought of marrying another woman. Then, O brāhmaṇa, taking poison, I cast off my life. Then Yama's followers bound me and took me away. And Yama seeing me then, asked Citragupta.

Yama said:

18b-19. O Citragupta, see what act she has done. Let her obtain good or bad fruit of her act.

Then Citragupta, censuring her, said (these) words:

Citragupta said:

20-25. She has not done any good act at all. She (herself) ate savoury food, (but) did not give it to her husband. Therefore, let her be (born) in her own feces in the stock of a cockroach. Then, O Hari, she, who hated her husband and always quarrelled, will be (born) in the stock of a female pig eating feces. Since she always ate from the pot in which the food is cooked, (let her be born) among female-cats eating her own young ones. Since she killed herself with reference to her husband, therefore, let this extremely censured one live among ghosts and goblins. Then with the demons she should be taken to the Maru country. Let her, having a ghosts' body, stay there for a longtime. Thus having undergone (i.e. passed through) three stocks (i.e. existences) (she will be) doing auspicious acts.

Kalahā said:

26-31. That I (i.e. like that I) remained for five hundred years in a ghost's body. Everyday I was oppressed by hunger and thirst and was afflicted due to my own act(s). Then I, oppressed by hunger everyday, (resorted to) a merchant's body and came to the confluence of Kṛṣṇā and Veṇī in the southern country. When I resorted to that bank, I was forcibly thrown away from that body(?) by the attendants of Śiva and Viṣṇu. Then, O brāhmaṇa, I who was emaciated with hunger, who was wandering, and whose sin had gone away due to the contact of the Tulasī-water thrown (by you), saw you. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, have pity on me. How shall I be free from the three very fearful existences, and from this ghost's body?

Hearing like this the words of Kalahā, the brāhmaṇa, full of affliction and amazement due to the maturity of her acts, and with his mind restless due to having seen her misery thought for a long time, and sorrowfully spoke (these) words:

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

*Kalahā Is Emancipated**Dharmadatta said:*

1-5. By means of (visits to) holy places, gifts and vows etc. sins perish. But you, remaining in an imp's body are not entitled to them. My mind dejected at seeing this misery of you will not be pleased without emancipating you who are unhappy. Your sin, giving you the three existences as a result of its maturity, is very grave. It cannot be exhausted by other meritorious acts. The state of an imp is very censurable. Therefore, obtain a good condition by means of half the merit of the Kārtika vow observed by me from my birth. Sacrifices, gifts, (visits to) holy places and vows certainly do not at all have the equivalence to the merit due to the Kārtika vow.

Nārada said:

6-8. Speaking like this, when Dharmadatta sprinkled her with water mixed with Tulasī, repeating the twelve-syllabled (hymn), (just) then she was free from imphood, resembled the flame of a blazing fire, had a divine form, and brightened up the directions with her beauty. Then she saluted the brāhmaṇa (by prostrating herself) like a staff on the ground, and in a voice stammering with joy, said (these) words:

Kalahā said:

9. O you best brāhmaṇa, due to your favour I have been free from hell. Certainly you have been (the emancipator) of me who was drowning in the ocean of sin.

Nārada said:

10-13. She who was talking like this to the brāhmaṇa saw a bright aeroplane with attendants having Viṣṇu's form coming from the sky. Then two righteous door-keepers of good conduct put her into that excellent aeroplane attended upon by a band of celestial nymphs. Dharmadatta saw that aeroplane and was amazed. Seeing the two meritorious ones he fell on the ground like a staff. The two righteous ones of good conduct, raised the

brāhmaṇa who had bowed down, and praising him spoke (these) words:

The two attendants said:

14-26. It's good, O best brāhmaṇa, that you are always devoted to Viṣṇu, you are kind to the helpless, you know Dharma and are very much engrossed in Viṣṇu's vow. From your birth you observed this Kārtika vow. By giving half of (the religious merit due to) it her sins collected formerly in hundreds of existences, have perished. Due to your keeping awake in honour of Viṣṇu etc. this aeroplane has come; so also (have come) the residence in Vaikuṇṭha, proximity of Viṣṇu, and absorption into him. Those who have devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu as you have done, O Dharmadatta, are lucky and contented. Their existence is fruitful. What will Viṣṇu who formerly put Uttāna's son (Dhruva) at a fixed place, and by merely remembering whose name human beings get good position, not give to human beings, when he is properly propitiated? Formerly the lordly elephant seized by a crocodile became free by (merely) remembering his name, obtained his proximity and became one called 'Jaya' (i.e. came to be called Jaya). Therefore, Viṣṇu worshipped by you will give you with your two wives his proximity for many thousand years. Then, after your religious merit is exhausted, when you will go to the earth, you will be a famous king born in the solar dynasty named Daśaratha with your two wives and with this one as the third (wife) sharing half of your religious merit. There on the earth also Viṣṇu doing the work of the gods, will give you his proximity after having made himself (i.e. born as) your son. For you sacrifices, gifts, visits to holy places are not superior to this your vow (taken) from your birth and pleasing Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, you are lucky that you have observed this vow pleasing the lord of the world, due to the fruit of the half portion of which this one is being taken by us to the same world as of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

King Cola and Brāhmaṇa Viṣṇudāsa

Nārada said:

1. Hearing her words like this, Dharmadatta, being amazed, bowed on the ground (i.e. prostrated himself) like a staff and said these words:

Dharmadatta said:

2-3. By means of sacrifices, gifts, vows, (visits to) holy places, austerities, all devotees properly propitiate Viṣṇu who removes affliction. (Tell me) that which pleases Viṣṇu and which brings about proximity of Viṣṇu and having done which all those are done.

The two attendants said:

4-13. O brāhmaṇa, you have asked well. Listen with a concentrated mind to a story, with its history, which took place in olden times and which is being told (by us). Formerly in Kāntipura there lived an emperor Cola after whom, it is said, the country was called Cola. While he was ruling over the globe, no man was poor, unhappy, of a sinful design or diseased. Of him, performing many sacrifices (i.e. while he was performing many sacrifices), both the banks of the Tāmraparṇī (river) were full of beauty with golden sacrificial posts resembling Caitraratha (Kubera's garden). Once, O brāhmaṇa, that king went to Anantaśayana where this lord of the three worlds resorts to sleep. There the king having duly worshipped god Viṣṇu with divine gems, pearls, and beautiful golden flowers, saluted him (prostrating before him) like a staff and sat (there). When he was seated he saw a brāhmaṇa called Viṣṇudāsa, who had come with Tulasī-water in his hand for worshipping the god and living in his own city. Having come there, the brāhmaṇa-sage worshipped the god of gods after having bathed him with Tulasī blossoms and leaves and with (the recital of) the Viṣṇu-hymn. Seeing that the worship done (by him) with jewels (etc.), was covered with Tulasī (-leaves) etc. the got angry and spoke (these) words:

The king said: .

14-16. O Viṣṇudāsa, how is it that the beautiful worship done by me with rubies and gold is covered with Tulasī-leaves by you? Since you cover this very beautiful worship offered by me, I think you do not know devotion to Viṣṇu and you are wretched.

Hearing these words, the best brāhmaṇa got angry, and transgressing (i.e. not caring for) the greatness of the king, said (these) words then:

Viṣṇudāsa said:

17. O king, you do not know salvation; you are proud of your wealth. Tell me which Viṣṇu-vow you have observed before.

The two attendants said:

18-22. O brāhmaṇa, hearing those words of the brāhmaṇa the best king laughed and proudly said these words to Viṣṇudāsa: “O brāhmaṇa, if, being very proud, you are telling like this, (tell me) how much devotion to Viṣṇu you poor and indigent one have. O brāhmaṇa, you have not offered sacrifices or gifts. Nor anywhere have you put up a temple before. If the pride of you who are like this persists due to your devotion, then may these best brāhmaṇas today hear my words. This dispute will go (i.e. cease). I shall have actual perception of Viṣṇu so that all these and you will realise our devotion.”

The two attendants said:

23-30. Speaking like this, O brāhmaṇa, the king went to his palace; and making Mudgala the preceptor he commenced a sacrificial session (in honour) of Viṣṇu, at which hosts of sages had come and many presents were given, which was rich like the one offered formerly by Brahmā at Prayāga. Viṣṇudāsa, observing the vow, remained just there in the temple, always observing these five restraints pleasing Viṣṇu: observing properly the vow in Māgha and Kārtika, maintaining a Tulasī-grove, observing the Ekādaśī-vow, and muttering the twelve-syllabled hymn. So also everyday he worshipped Viṣṇu in the sixteen ways with auspicious (acts) like dancing and singing. (Thus) he observed these

vows. He, viewing all equally, always remembered Viṣṇu while walking, eating and even while sleeping, and saw Viṣṇu remaining (i.e. as present) in every being. He daily observed the special restraints in Māgha and Kārtika for pleasing Viṣṇu, so also their proper conclusion. When king Cola and Viṣṇudāsa, who were observing that vow, who had devoted their senses and acts to deeds for him (i.e. Viṣṇu), were thus propitiating (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī, much time passed.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

King Cola and Viṣṇudāsa Become Attendants of Viṣṇu

The two attendants said:

1-13. When once the brāhmaṇa Viṣṇudāsa cooked (food) after having duly performed his daily rite, someone unnoticed took away (the food). The brāhmaṇa, not (being able to) see him, did not at all cook again through fear of violating the vow of his evening worship. On the next day, when he, after having cooked, was about to offer it to Viṣṇu, somebody again took it away. In this way, for seven days somebody (daily) took away the food, O brāhmaṇa. He was amazed and thought in his mind thus: 'Oh, who comes daily and takes away my food? This place of the holy ascetics is not at all to be abandoned by me. If, having cooked again, I eat (the food), then how can I give up the evening worship (of the deity)? I shall not eat after cooking some food. A devotee of Viṣṇu does not eat without offering everything to Viṣṇu. How can I again remain in (i.e. observe) this vow by fasting? Today I shall properly guard the food.' Thinking thus he cooked the food and remained there unnoticed. Just then he saw a cāṇḍāla ready to take away the cooked food. He was emaciated with hunger, his face was melancholy, and only bones and skin were left (in his body). Seeing him, the best brāhmaṇa had his mind distressed with pity. Seeing the (cāṇḍāla) stealing the food, the brāhmaṇa said, "Wait, wait. How do you

eat the dry food? Have this ghee.” Seeing the best brāhmaṇa speaking like this and coming (near him), he, through fear, ran fast, and dropped down unconscious. That best brāhmaṇa, seeing the cāṇḍāla frightened and unconscious, speedily approached him and fanned him with the ends of his garment through compassion (for him).

14-21. Viṣṇudāsa saw him who got up, to be actually god Viṣṇu holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, (and) wearing a yellow garment, having four arms, having the mark of Śrīvatsa, wearing a crown, and having his chest marked with Kaustubha resembling atasī flower. Seeing him, the best brāhmaṇa was full of good thoughts. At that time he was unable to praise and salute him. Then gods like Indra came there at that time; and gandharvas and celestial nymphs gladly sang and danced. At that time the place was crowded with hundreds of aeroplanes and it resounded with the sounds of songs and musical instruments. Then Viṣṇu, having embraced his virtuous devotee, gave him absorption into himself and took him to Vaikuṇṭha. King Cola who was initiated (for a sacrifice) saw Viṣṇudāsa seated in the excellent aeroplane in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. Seeing Viṣṇudāsa going to Viṣṇu’s abode, he quickly called his preceptor Mudgala and thus spoke to him:

Cola said:

22-25. That brāhmaṇa vying with whom I performed that sacrifice etc., is, after taking up Viṣṇu’s form, going to Viṣṇu’s abode. I who was initiated for this sacrificial session, offered oblations into fire through you and made the brāhmaṇas completely (happy) in their minds through gifts etc. That god yet does not certainly become pleased. (But) that Viṣṇu actually presented himself (before the brāhmaṇa) by his devotion. Therefore, Viṣṇu is not at all pleased by means of gifts and sacrifices. Devotion alone is the means of seeing that lord.

The two attendants said:

26-32. Saying so he consecrated his sister’s son on the throne. Since from his childhood he was initiated for the sacrifice, he was sonless. Therefore, even now in his kingdom sisters’ sons only, continuing the convention followed (previo-

usly) become heir to the kingdom. Then going to the place of the sacrifice, and standing before the hole made for receiving the sacrificial fire, addressing Viṣṇu, he loudly spoke (these words) three times: “O Viṣṇu, give me a stable devotion through acts of mind, speech and body.” Saying like this he fell into the fire, when all were watching. Then Mudgala angrily extracted the tuft of hair on the crown of his head. Since then, even up to this day the Mudgalas are without the tuft of hair on the crowns on their heads. Just then Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, appeared in the fire in the hole made for receiving the sacrificial fire. Viṣṇu embraced him and put him into an excellent aeroplane. Having embraced him and assimilated him into himself, the lord of gods, surrounded by gods, went to his abode in Vaikuṇṭha with him.

Nārada said:

33. That Viṣṇu dear to Lakṣmī, made the two having similar forms, his doorkeepers. He who was Viṣṇudāsa became Puṇyaśīla (by name), and he who was king Cola became Suśīla by name.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

The Story of Jaya and Vijaya

Dharmadatta said:

1. I have heard that Jaya and Vijaya are Viṣṇu's doorkeepers. (But I do not know) what they did due to which they had these forms.

The two attendants said:

2-14. Due to just being seen by Kardama, Devahūtī, Tṛṇabindu's daughter, formerly gave birth to two sons, O brāhmaṇa. The elder one was Jaya by name, and the younger Vijaya. On (i.e. from) the other wife was born Kapila, a knower of yoga, and Dharma. Jaya and Vijaya were always engrossed in devotion

to Viṣṇu. Controlling their senses, they were disposed to virtue. Everyday they both recited the eight-syllabled hymn and observed the Viṣṇu-vow. Viṣṇu always presented himself at their worship (of him). Sometime Marutta invited them for a sacrifice. They, skilled in performing a sacrifice, went there, being waited upon by divine sages. Jaya became the Brahmā priest and Vijaya the sacrificing priest. Then they fully accomplished the sacrificial rite. Marutta, after having bathed at the end of the sacrifice, gave them much wealth. Taking that wealth they went to their hermitage. O sage, then for worshipping and gratifying Viṣṇu they vied with each other and they divided the wealth. Jaya said: "Let it be divided into equal parts." Vijaya said: "Whatever is received by one is one's (share)." Then Jaya angrily and with his mind agitated, cursed Vijaya; "Since having received (the wealth) you are not giving it, therefore, be a crocodile." Vijaya too, having heard that curse of (i.e. pronounced by) him, cursed him: "Be an elephant", since he, erring due to arrogance had cursed him. Seeing lord Viṣṇu at the time of the daily worship, they told him like that. They solicited Lakṣmī's lord for rendering the curse ineffective. "O god, how shall we, your devotees, go to the stock of a crocodile and an elephant? O ocean of kindness, turn away that curse."

The lord said:

15-29. The words of my devotees shall never be untrue. I too can never change it. Formerly due to Prahlāda's words I appeared in a pillar. In the same way due to Ambariṣa's words I arose on the way(?). Therefore, having certainly undergone these two curses pronounced by yourselves, obtain my eternal position.

Speaking like this, Viṣṇu vanished.

The two attendants said:

Then the crocodile and the elephant were (born) on the bank of Gaṇḍakī. Even in that state they remembered their (former) birth, and observed Viṣṇu-vow. Some time in Kārtika the elephant went to Gaṇḍakī to bathe. Just then, the crocodile remembering the cause of the curse seized him. The elephant

seized by the crocodile remembered Viṣṇu. Just then Viṣṇu, holding a conch, a disc, a mace appeared (there). Then the lord, throwing his disc, emancipated the crocodile and the elephant, and absorbing them into himself, took them to Vaikuṇṭha. Since then the place is known as Harikṣetra, where even (now) the stones bear the mark of the disc. Those two, O brāhmaṇa, known as Jaya and Vijaya, and dear to Viṣṇu, are his doorkeepers. Therefore, you too, O you who know piety, always observing Viṣṇu's vow and having given up jealousy and hypocrisy, view all equally. Always bathe in the morning (when the Sun is) in (the signs of) Libra, Capricornus and Aries, and maintaining a Tulasī-grove observe the Ekādaśī-vow. Always worship brāhmaṇas, cows, and Viṣṇu's devotees. Do not eat masūra (pulse), gruel made from fermentation of boiled rice and egg-plants. O Dharmadatta, by devotion to him (i.e. Viṣṇu) you too, on your death obtain that highest position of Viṣṇu, as we (have obtained). Sacrifices, gifts and (visits to holy places) are not superior to your vow (commenced) from birth and pleasing Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, you are lucky that you have observed this vow which gratifies the lord of the world, having got the fruit of which this meritorious one is taken by us to the world of Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

30-32. Having thus instructed that Dharmadatta, the two, getting into the aeroplane, went with Kalahā to Viṣṇu's abode. Dharmadatta also, being convinced, observed the vow and on his death went, accompanied by his two wives, to that place of the lord. One who duly listens to his account which took place in ancient times, his mind, by the favour of the lord of the world, becomes disposed to reach Viṣṇu's proximity.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

*The Greatness of Kṛṣṇā and Venī**Prthu said:*

1-2. You told (me) that formerly Kalahā came out of the body of the merchant on the bank (of the confluence) of Kṛṣṇā and Venī (and went) with the attendants of Śiva and Viṣṇu. (Now) O you who know Dharma, tell me about the greatness of the two rivers and that place. I have a curiosity about it.

Nārada said:

3-8a. Kṛṣṇā is actually the dark-bodied one, and Venī is god Śiva. (Even) the Four-faced (Brahmā) is not able to describe the greatness of their confluence. Yet, I shall tell you about their origin. Listen to it. Formerly in the age of Cākṣuṣa Manu, Manu's grandfather (i.e. Brahmā) was ready to perform a sacrifice on the charming peak of the Sahya mountain. Surrounded by hosts of all gods, and with Viṣṇu and Śiva, he after making the preparation for the sacrifice, went to the peak of that mountain. At the time (sacred to) god Brahmā (i.e. the early part of the day) the hosts of sages like Bhṛgu gathered there to initiate him. Then, through the brāhmaṇas Viṣṇu called the elder wife Svarā. When she was coming slowly, Bhṛgu said to Viṣṇu:

Bhṛgu said:

8b-9a. O Viṣṇu, you called Svarā; but she is not coming quickly. This is the transgression of the auspicious moment. How can the rite of initiation be done?

Viṣṇu said:

9b-10a. If Svarā is not coming quickly, then put Gāyatrī here (i.e. in her place). Can this wife of him also not join him in the meritorious deed?

Nārada said:

10b-13. Rudra also, in the same way, approved of Viṣṇu's words. That Bhṛgu, hearing those words, seated Gāyatrī to the right of Brahmā, and performed the rite of initiation. O king,

while they were duly performing the rite of initiation of Brahmā, Svarā came to the place of the sacrifice. Seeing Gāyatrī initiated with Brahmā, Svarā due to jealousy for her co-wife, angrily said (these) words:

Svarā said:

14-16. (When) those that do not deserve to be honoured, are honoured, and those that deserve to be honoured are ignored, three (inauspicious things) take place there: famine, death, fear. You have seated this younger one on my seat. Therefore, all of you, being devoid of consciousness will have various forms. Since she has sat on my seat, on the right (of Brahmā), therefore let her have a body of a river invisible to the people.

Nārada said:

17-18. Then hearing that curse, Gāyatrī trembled; and getting up, she, though restrained by gods, cursed that Svarā. "As Brahmā is your husband, so he is also mine. You have in vain cursed me. You too (will) become a river."

Nārada said:

19. Then all gods led by Śiva and Viṣṇu felt grief; saluting (by prostrating) like a staff on the ground, they requested Svarā:

The gods said:

20-21. O goddess, since you have cursed all of us like Brahmā, if we all become devoid of consciousness and turn into rivers, then these three worlds will certainly perish. You have acted imprudently. Therefore, withdraw this curse.

Svarā said:

22-24. O best gods, since at the commencement of the sacrifice you did not worship the lord of the attendants (i.e. Gaṇeśa), therefore this obstacle, due to my anger, has indeed come up. Nor again, these words of me will be untrue. Therefore, with your portions dulled, turn into rivers. We, the two co-wives, shall become two rivers, flowing into the west, by means of our portions, O gods.

Nārada said:

25-31. O king, then hearing her words Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva became dulled and turned into rivers just by means of their portions. Viṣṇu became Kṛṣṇā, and god Śiva Venī. Brahmā then separately became Gaṅgā having humps (of waves). The wise gods also, having dulled their portions, became good rivers separately (flowing) from the peaks of Sahya mountain. The best rivers, (formed) with the portions of gods, flowed into the east. Gāyatrī and Svarā joined together, flowing westward, came to be called Sāvitṛī. Both Viṣṇu and Śiva appointed at that sacrifice, became (known) by the names Mahābala and Atibala. O king, I am not able to describe the greatness of the two rivers. Gods like Brahmā went (from the place) and remain, through their portions, as rivers. Every act of him who listens with devotion to this great (account of) Kṛṣṇā, removing sins or causes (others) to hear it, would become meritorious, and gets the fruit due to seeing her and bathing in her (water).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

Portions of Merit and Demerit That Go to Others

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

1-5. Hearing these words of him, Pṛthu, with his mind amazed, devoutly honoured Nārada and allowed him to go, O dear one. Therefore, this triad of vows—the two in Māgha and Kārtika, and the one of Ekādaśī—is very dear to me. To me Tulasī among plants is dear, Kārtika among months is dear, Ekādaśī among days is dear, and Dvārakā among the holy places is dear. He who with his senses conquered resorts to these, becomes dear to me; not like that (i.e. so dear) with sacrifices etc. He who is devoted to these, should not, due to my grace, be afraid of sins as a rule.

Satyabhāmā said:

6-8. O lord what you told me, viz. that Kalahā was emancipated by the religious merit given by others, causes wonder. This month of Kārtika having such efficacy, is dear to you, since due to bath and (giving) gifts (in that month) sins like cheating one's master have gone (i.e. go). O lord, if one gets the religious merit given by another person, then in what way does a man get the religious merit not given to him?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

9-29. Listen properly with which act men receive religious merit and sins not given to them. The region, the village and the families should have the portion of (the fruit of) acts etc. But in Kali-age only the doer gets the fruit of the religious merit or the sin. This arrangement is said (to obtain) even when no contact takes place. Know as to how religious merit and sins pass (to another person) through contact. Due to being paired together, going together, eating from the same pot, a man would duly get half the portion of religious merit or sin. A man always gets one-fourth portion of the religious merit or sin (of another person) through teaching, acting as a priest at a sacrifice, or eating (after sitting) in the same line. A man gets one-sixth portion of the religious merit or sin (of another) through (sitting on) the same seat, same vehicle, and due to the contact of (another man's) breath with his body. A man always gets one-tenth portion of the religious merit and sins (of another person) through touching (him), talking (to him) or praising (that) other person. A man would obtain one-hundredth portion of the religious merit or sin of another person by seeing, listening to, or thinking in his mind about him. He who censures another person, acts wickedly towards him or disregards him, gets (the fruit of) the sin committed by him, and gives him his own religious merit. A person, except the wife, a hired servant and a disciple of the man who does meritorious acts, serving him, and not getting the money in accordance with his service would also share the religious merit of him (who is served) in lieu of his service. A waiter at meals who ignores serving a man taking food after sitting

in the same line as others, would share one-sixth of his sin. He who, while bathing or performing sandhyā prayer etc., would touch or speak (with another person), would very certainly give one-sixth of his religious merit to that person. Another person who gives money to a person who asks for it for a religious purpose would get the fruit due to his (i.e. latter's) religious merit. He who performs a religious act after snatching another's wealth, incurs sin, and the fruit due to that (religious act) goes to the person having money (and giving it for the religious purpose). A rich man shares in proportion with his wealth the religious merit of the man who dies without repaying the money (borrowed from the rich man for the religious act). One who gives an idea, one who approves of it, one who gives the implement, one who compels, would obtain one-sixth portion of the religious merit or sin. A king would take out from his subjects one-sixth portion of their religious merit or sin. A preceptor would obtain half the portion of the religious merit from (i.e. of) his disciple; a husband (would obtain half the portion of the religious merit) of his wife, a father of his son, and a wife also (would obtain half the portion of the religious merit) of her husband. She, pleasing him, always behaves according to his mind (i.e. desire). The giver of a gift for the man who gives gifts with the hand of (i.e. through) another person, except a hired servant or his son, would extract one-sixth portion (of the religious merit of the donor). He who gives subsistence would extract one-sixth of the portion of him to whom the subsistence is given, provided he does not make him serve himself or any other (person).

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

30. In this way, the religious merit and sins earned by others, always go, though not given (to others). Listen to this excellent account, which is old, and which gives great religious merit.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Dhaneśvara's Story

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

1-12. Formerly there was a brāhmaṇa named Dhaneśvara who lived in the city of Avantī. He had fallen from the status of a brāhmaṇa, was addicted to sins, and was very wicked. He sold liquor, blankets, hide, and behaved falsely. His mind was addicted to stealing, prostitutes, drinking and gambling. That Dhaneśvara, going from one region to another for selling (these articles), sometime went to Māhiṣmatī city. It was fashioned formerly by Mahiṣa. By its rampart shone Narmadā that destroyed sins. Seeing there men observing Kārtika-vow and coming from different directions, he, selling (his articles) stayed there for a month. He, everyday wandering on the bank of Narmadā for selling (his articles), saw brāhmaṇas who bathed (in the river) and were engaged in muttering hymns and worshipping deities. Everywhere Dhaneśvara, full of curiosity saw some men reciting a Purāṇa, some engaged in listening to it, some engaged in eulogising Viṣṇu with dancing, singing and musical instruments, some having marks (like a conch etc. in honour) of Viṣṇu, and some having on their persons garlands and Tulasī. He, wandering there everyday, due to seeing and coming in contact with Viṣṇu's devotees, heard the name of Viṣṇu etc. On his way he who resided there for a month, saw (people) keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu at the time of the concluding rite of Kārtika-vow. On the full-moon day he saw the worship of two kinds, so also presents and meals and offering of lights done by the observers of the vow. Then at the time of the sunset he saw the ceremony of illumination done for pleasing the enemy of Tripura (i.e. Śiva).

13-17a. Since on that day Śiva burnt the three cities (of Tripura), therefore, a great festival is celebrated by the devotees on that day. All the religious rites of him who would discriminate between me and Śiva, would undoubtedly be fruitless. That Dhaneśvara, seeing dance etc. there, wandered. Just then he was bitten by a black serpent and deprived of strength he dropped. Men seeing him fallen, and full of pity, surrounded

him. Then they sprinkled his face with water mixed with Tulasi. Then, when his body dropped (i.e. he died), Yama's servants bound him, and angrily tormented him with strokes of whips, and took him to Saṁyamini (Yama's city). Seeing him Citragupta chided him and told Yama the bad deeds done by him from his childhood.

Citragupta said:

17b-19a. No good deed of (i.e. done by) him since his childhood is noticed. O Sun's son, his bad deeds cannot be described even in many years. O lord, this one appears to be just sin incarnate. Therefore, till the time of the final deluge he should be roasted in hell.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

19b-20a. Hearing these words, Yama showing his form resembling the fatal fire, angrily said to his servants:

Yama said:

20b-21a. O you who look after the dead, take him tormenting him with your iron clubs. Quickly put him into Kumbhīpāka (hell) having the sound of the boiling of oil.

21b-25a. When he was thrown there, Kumbhīpāka became cool, as when in olden times Prahlāda was thrown into it. Seeing that great wonder, the official looking after the dead was amazed. He speedily came and told it to Yama. Yama heard the curious thing told by the official looking after the dead. Saying, "Oh, what is it?" he thought (over it) properly. Just then Nārada, smiling, came there quickly. He was properly honoured by Yama after seeing him. He said these words:

Nārada said:

25b-34. O Sun's son, he is not fit to suffer in hells, since his acts are those that keep away hell. That man who would see, touch or talk to those who do meritorious acts, obtains one-sixth of the merit of those doing meritorious deeds. Since he had innumerable contacts with the observers of the Viṣṇu vow in Kārtika for a month, therefore he shares a portion of their

religious merit. Since he served them, he enjoys the entire religious merit of the vow. Therefore, his religious merit due to the Kārtika-vow cannot be measured, (since) Viṣṇu, to whom good devotees are dear, does destroy even the major sins of those who observe the Kārtika-vow. Since in the end (i.e. at the time of his death) he was favoured by Viṣṇu's devotees by repeating the names (of Viṣṇu) and by sprinkling water mixed with Tulasī (-leaves), therefore he is not be roasted in a hell. Therefore, with his sins destroyed, he deserves to get a good position. As due to deliberate or non-deliberate sins one has to suffer from torment in hell, in the same way one has to enjoy pleasures in heaven. Therefore, he who unintentionally got the religious merit, would, living in the stock of yakṣa, see all hells and would undergo the fruit of his sins.

When Nārada, after speaking like this left, Yama, realising his religious merit on hearing his (i.e. Nārada's) words, again took the brāhmaṇa through his servant showing him all groups of hell.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Seven Hells Shown to Dhaneśvara

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

1. Then Yama's servant, the official looking after the dead, took Dhaneśvara and showed him all hells.

The official looking after the dead said:

2-24. O Dhaneśvara, see all these very fearful hells into which sinners are always roasted by Yama's servants. This hell, appearing fearful, is called Taptavāluka in which those sinners whose bodies are burnt, cry. Those men who do not honour the guests emaciated with hunger, who have come to their house after having made an offering to all deities, are roasted here due to their acts. Those who have kicked the preceptor, fire, brāh-

maṇas, deities, those that are crowned, have their feet burnt. This hell has six divisions, and is reached by those who have committed various sins. Similarly this is the great hell (called) Andhatāmisra. O brāhmaṇa, see the body (of a man) due to his sinful act, is being pierced by insects of fierce mouths that have come in contact with him. This also has six divisions. In them sinful human beings are roasted with their vitals pierced by horses, crows, beasts and birds. The third hell is Krakaca, appearing fierce, where the sinful human beings are cut with swords. It has six divisions like (the one having) the Asipatragrove. Those men who separate (others) from their wives, sons etc., so also with other beloved persons, are roasted here. The sinners, crying and running here and there through fear of being cut with blades of swords, are roasted here. See (them). This fourth hell is called Argala. See. Those sinners, being bound by Yama's servants with various kinds of nooses, and being killed with iron clubs, are crying here. Those sinful men who oppose good men and brāhmaṇas in this world are roasted here after their necks etc. are seized by Yama's servants. This also is a hell having six divisions like Vadha, etc. See this fifth hell called Kūṭaśālmali, where, O brāhmaṇa, there are śālmali and other trees resembling charcoal, where those men who are always engaged in adultery, snatching others' wealth and treachery, are roasted cruelly in six ways. See this sixth wonderful hell (called) Raktapūya where men committing sins are roasted with their faces turned down. These have eaten prohibited articles, and were engaged in censuring others and wickedness. Being pierced and killed, they are crying in fearful tones. This also is having bad smells of six kinds. O Dhaneśvara, see this seventh hell appearing fierce and called Kumbhīpāka. It is divided into six by means of articles like oil. Here great sinners are, for many thousand years, boiled by plunging them and taking them out (of the oil) by Yama's servants. These Raurava hells are said to be forty plus two. See them. A non-deliberate sin is called *śuṣka*, and a deliberate one *ārdra*. The hells are of two kinds depending upon the two varieties, ārdra and śuṣka. They have eightyfour separate divisions. That which is of a non-specific or general nature, resulting in a person's not being allowed to dine in the same line, and arising from pollution, and

resulting in one's exclusion from his caste is said to be a minor sin.

25-26. A very heinous sin¹ is a major sin said to be divided into seven divisions. One by one they are roasted in these seven (hells). Due to your collection of religious merit as you had contact with the observers of the Kārtika-vow, you were taken out of them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

27-29. Thus showing him the hells, the official looking after the dead, took Dhaneśvara to the Yakṣa-world; then he lived there. He is the follower of Kubera, and is known as Dhanayakṣa, and after him Viśvāmitra has fashioned a holy place at Ayodhyā. This Kārtika-vow is having such an efficacy, gives pleasures and salvation. By seeing an observer of this vow even he who has committed many sins, gets salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Aśvattha and Vāṭa Praised as Gods in Disguise

Sūta said

1-4. Speaking like this to Satyabhāmā, very dear to him, Vāsudeva went to his mother's house to offer evening prayer, etc. This Kārtika is said to be powerful like this, destroying sins, always making one dear to Viṣṇu and always giving pleasures and salvation. Keeping awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu, bathing in the morning, using Tulasī (leaves etc.), concluding the vow, and offering light—these are the vows (to be observed) in Kārtika. The Kārtika-vow is complete with these five vows. The fruit that one gets is said to be pleasures and salvation.

The sages said:

5-7. O Raumaharṣaṇa, this religious act of Kārtika is said

1. Mahāpāpa—a great, or heinous sin. Murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, violating the preceptor's bed (i.e. his wife), and company of those who commit these sins are great sins.

to be dear to Viṣṇu, giving great fruit, properly purifying and destroying sins. When it comes, it should be necessarily observed duly by men desiring salvation, or desiring enjoyments. If this is so, how should a man observing a vow, who is in a difficulty, who is in an impervious forest, or is suffering from diseases, observe the auspicious Kārtika vow?

Sūta said:

8-20. O best sages, listen. I shall tell all about it as to how it should be observed, since it is extremely fruitful. In a temple of Viṣṇu or Śiva, or in any other temple in the absence of a temple of Viṣṇu or Śiva, a man should keep awake (in honour) of Viṣṇu. If a man is in an impervious forest to which he might have gone by day, he should observe it under the root of an Aśvattha tree or even in Tulasī-groves. A man, by singing (songs) mainly containing Viṣṇu's names, near Viṣṇu, obtains the fruit of presenting a thousand cows. A man playing upon a musical instrument will obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya (sacrifice), and a dancer that of bathing at all holy places. A man who gives wealth will obtain all this religious merit of them. He would get one-sixth portion by praising and seeing (the deity). O (sages), if one who is in a calamity, does not get a watery (place) for bathing, or one is diseased, he should purify himself with (the recital of) the names of Viṣṇu. He who after observing the vow is unable to conclude it (duly), should, according to his capacity, feed brāhmaṇas for the (proper) completion of the vow. Since it gives great fruit, it should never be abandoned by men. Brāhmaṇas are the form of Viṣṇu whose form is not manifest on the earth. By their being pleased he is well pleased on the earth. If he is not able to present a lamp, he should light others' lamps. Or he should carefully protect them from wind etc. In the absence of Tulasī he should worship a brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, since Viṣṇu is always present in his devotees. In the absence of all (this) the observer of the vow should serve brāhmaṇas, cows and worship Aśvattha and Vaṭa trees for the completion of the vow.

The sages said:

21. How do you equate Aśvattha and Vaṭa trees with a cow

and a brāhmaṇa? How do you take them to be more venerable than all (other) trees?

Sūta said:

22-23. There is no doubt that lord Viṣṇu is of the form of Aśvattha, Vaṭa is Rudra's form, and Palāśa has taken up Brahmā's form. Seeing, worshipping and serving them is said to remove sins. These certainly destroy grief, diseases and the wicked.

The sages said:

24. O you omniscient one, tell (us) how Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva became trees. We have a great doubt about it.

Sūta said:

25-26. Formerly, it is said, gods sent Agni in a brāhmaṇa's form to create an obstacle when Śiva and Pārvatī were cohabiting. Then that Pārvatī, trembling and angry due to being deprived of the sexual pleasure, angrily cursed the gods.

Pārvatī said:

27-29. Even these worms and insects know the sexual pleasure. O gods, you will obtain the condition of plants due to having obstructed it.

Thus that Pārvatī of an angry mind, cursed the gods. Therefore, all hosts of gods have become trees. Therefore, O chief sages, both these Viṣṇu and Śiva have become Aśvattha and Vaṭa (trees). Aśvattha has become fit to be touched on a Saturday and not fit to be touched (on other days) due to contact of Śani with Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

*Alakṣmī's Episode**The sages said:*

1. O Sūta, how has this Aśvattha tree become untouchable, and similarly how has it become fit to be touched on a Saturday? Please tell us all this in detail.

Sūta said:

2-3. Out of the gems that the lordly gods obtained after churning the ocean, the gods gave Lakṣmī and Kaustubha to Viṣṇu. When he accepted Lakṣmī as his wife, she respectfully said to him having the disc in his hand.

Lakṣmī said:

4-5. How will you marry me, the younger one, without getting this elder one married? Therefore, O Viṣṇu, having first married this Alakṣmī, my elder sister, take me. This is an old practice.

Sūta said:

6-10a. Hearing these words of her, Viṣṇu, the creator of the world, gave according to his own words, to sage Uddālaka who had practised penance for a very long time, that Alakṣmī, of a big face, white teeth, having a bright body, tall, having red eyes, and having rough and tawny hair. That sage, in accordance with Viṣṇu's words, accepted her and he, knowing Dharma, brought her to his hermitage full of sounds of (the recital of) the Vedas, rich with the fragrance of sacrificial fire, and resounding with the sounds of (the recitals of) lores. Seeing that hermitage, she who was afflicted, said these words:

Jyeṣṭhā said:

10b. This abode full of Vedic sounds is not proper for me. O brāhmaṇa, I shall not come here. Take me somewhere else. Do not delay.

Uddālaka said:

11. Why do you not come? What is here that you don't

like? Tell me at which place an abode proper for you would be (found).

Jyeṣṭhā said:

12-15. I shall not stay there where the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas is heard, guests are honoured, and sacrifices etc. are (performed). So also I shall not stay there where a pair of lovers live, and where the dead ancestors are honoured. I love a place where there are men engaged in gambling and taking away others' wealth, and where there live adulterers. I am interested in that place where cow slaughter takes place, drinking is indulged in, so also where sins like the killing of a brāhmaṇa take place.

Sūta said:

16-17. Hearing these words of her, sage Uddālaka's face was dejected; and recollecting Viṣṇu's words, he did not say (anything). He went here and there. Seeing his worship she said, "I will not come". Then through confusion, he too became very much afflicted. Then Uddālaka spoke these words to that Alakṣmī:

Uddālaka said:

18. O Alakṣmī, stay for a moment at the root of this Aśvattha tree till I return after finding a place for (our) stay.

Sūta said:

19-21. Thus keeping her there, Uddālaka went (away). When she who was waiting for him for a long time did not see him, she, afflicted due to being forsaken by her husband, wept piteously. Lakṣmī, in her abode in Vaikuṇṭha heard her weeping there. Then with her mind dejected, she respectfully said to Viṣṇu:

Lakṣmī said:

22. O lord, O kind one, my elder sister is afflicted due to being forsaken by her husband. If I am dear to you, then go to console her.

Sūta said:

23. Then Viṣṇu, full of compassion, came there with Lakṣmī, consoled that Alakṣmī, and said these words to her:

Śrī Viṣṇu said:

24-25. O Alakṣmī, being in possession of this Aśvattha tree, be stable. I have made from my portion this abode for you. May this younger sister of you be stable with those householders who everyday worship you, the elder one.

Sūta said:

26-28. Those who listen to and recite this (account of) the greatness of Kārtika, would live in Viṣṇu's city till the final deluge. There is on the earth no other (vow) than that of Kārtika, dear to Viṣṇu, which removes diseases, which destroys sins, which is a great giver of intelligence, which is a means of getting sons, wealth etc., which is the cause of salvation. What is the use (the need) for going to and resorting to holy places for the man who, with restraints, observes the Kārtika vow which is dear to Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which brings about prosperity in the form of good sons and grandsons, wealth and grains?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

The Importance of Bathing in Kārtika

Sūta said:

1. Hearing all these words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that noble Satyā, daughter of Satrājit, then said:

Satyā said:

2. O lord, I have not heard the greatness of Kārtika in detail. How is Kārtika (said to be) the best of all months?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

3. You have well asked with respect about the vow of Kārtika. It was formerly told to Śaunaka by very noble Sūta.

Sūta said:

4. Listen, I shall give the auspicious answer to this question. Formerly the lord told it to Kārtikeya who had asked about it.

Kārtikeya said:

5-15. O lord, I, a devotee of Viṣṇu, have heard many secrets of Viṣṇu told by you. Men have come to the ocean of mundane existence, covered with large waves of unhappiness. Carefully tell (some story) for their emancipation. So also, O you best among speakers, tell about the rite of Kārtika and the bath (in it), by which men will cross over the ocean of unhappiness, O father. Tell me about the greatness of illumination, of offering mango-sprouts, O you of a good vow, and the greatness of gopīcandana and Tulasī, O lord. Tell me also about the greatness of jasmine flowers; so also of lotuses; so also tell about the greatness of dhātrī-fruits and damanaka. O lord, tell about the greatness of ketakī-flowers; so also of the offering of eatables, the greatness of a holy place, and the fruit of the bath in Māgha. O best god, tell about the fruit of eating from palāśa-leaves, the fruit of waving the light by setting right the wick of another's lamp, O Śiva. (Tell me about) the greatness of the holy place (called) Puṣkara, so also of Śūkara, O lord; so also the greatness of Śālagrāma, and the arrangement of the Svastika (symbol). Tell me also about the fruit of gifts, avoiding others' food, the fruit of the fast for a month, and of giving away a couch. O you of a good vow, (tell me) about the greatness of Dipāvalī, and of the Prabodhini (Ekādaśī); so also tell me in detail the importance of the five days from the eleventh to the fifteenth of the bright half of the month of Kārtika.

The lord said:

16-21. O child, you have asked well for emancipating the people. I shall undoubtedly tell it. There is no other Viṣṇu devotee

like you. O child, there is no doubt that I am emancipated by a good son (like) you. You always have a firm devotion to Viṣṇu. The best brāhmaṇa who gives (i.e. tells) the Vaiṣṇava practice to people gets the religious merit obtained by giving the earth with the ocean. That is not equal even to a croreth part of (the merit got from the vow of) Kārtika. On one side are all gifts, gifts of cows, all sacrifices with presents, the residence at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Himālaya, the residence at the holy place of Mathurā, at Vārāṇasī, at Śūkara, and on the other side is Kārtika always dear to Viṣṇu, O child.

Sūta said:

22. Speaking like this, O best sage, Śiva again spoke these words: “I shall tell you in great detail the importance of bathing (daily) in (the month of) Kārtika”.

The lord said:

23-32. The Kṛta age is said to be of brāhmaṇas, the Tretā age is said to be that of kṣatriyas, Dvāpara is said to be of vaiśyas and Kali is said to be of Śūdras. O child, people show slackness in taking a bath in the Kali age. Yet I shall tell you about the bath in Kārtika and Māgha. A man whose hands, feet, speech, mind are controlled, and who has knowledge, penance and fame (to his credit) enjoys the fruit of (the visits to) a holy place. These five—one having no faith, a sinful person, an atheist, one with a split mind, and a disputant—do not enjoy the fruit of (the visit to) a holy place. That brāhmaṇa who, getting up in the morning, would always bathe in a holy place, is free from all sins, and obtains (i. e. goes to) the highest Brahman. O Kārtikeya, those who know about a bath, have said that a bath is of four kinds: Vāyavya, Vāruṇa, Divya and Brāhmya. A bath in the evening is Vāyavya; a bath in a sea etc. is Vāruṇa; a bath with hymns recited by brāhmaṇas is Brāhmya; and a divine bath is the one bright with the water (directly falling) from the clouds. Of all the baths Vāruṇa is the best. A brāhmaṇa, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya should take a bath with the (recital of) hymns. O Kārtikeya, a śūdra, so also women, should bathe silently. A girl, a young women, an old woman, a man, a woman, a eunuch are free from all sins due to

a bath (everyday) in Kārtika and Māgha. Having bathed in Kārtika, they obtain the desired fruit.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

Śiva Answers Kārtikeya's Queries

Sūta said:

1. Having approached the listener, viz. Kārtikeya, full of devotion, the bull-bannered lord Śiva spoke again.

The lord said:

2-15. Kārtika is Viṣṇu's month and the best of all months. In the Kali age all the thirtythree gods come together in this month. In the very prosperous month of Kārtika men will give to a brāhmaṇa a cow, gold, silver, land, residence, cows with full devotion, O you of a good vow. Of all gifts the gift of a daughter is the best. Men will duly give their daughter to a brāhmaṇa of the Atri-family. They (will) live in Vaikuṇṭha as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). When small hair appears (on the private parts), Soma enjoys a daughter. When she attains puberty, gandharvas (enjoy her); and when the breasts appear (prominent), Fire (enjoys her). A man should marry his daughter as long as she has not attained puberty. Wise men recommend a girl's marriage when she is eight years old. She should be duly given to a brāhmaṇa who is well-versed in sacred learning, possesses moral virtue, has actually studied the Vedas, and has observed celibacy. This is said to be the rule regarding a daughter to be given (in marriage). He is honoured in Rudra's heaven for as many thousand years as the number of hair on the daughter's body. (The gift of) a thousand cows is equal to that of ten bulls. (The gift of) a vehicle is equal to that of ten bulls. (The gift of) a horse is equal to that of ten vehicles. The gift of an elephant is superior to the gift of thousands of horses. The gift of gold is equal to the gift of thousands of elephants. Giving knowledge is equal to the gift

of thousands of bhāras of gold. The gift of (a piece of) land is a crorefold superior to giving knowledge. The gift of cows is superior to thousands of gifts of land. Giving food is superior to thousands of gifts of cows. All this immobile and mobile world has food as its support. Therefore, O Kārtikeya, one should with an effort (i.e. should make an effort to) give (gifts) in Kārtika. (These) three are equal gifts, and have equal fruits—a cow fulfilling all desires, earth (i.e. land) and Sarasvatī (i.e. knowledge).

Kārtikeya said:

16. O great god, please tell me other (religious) practices doing which one having got rid of all (one's) sins, would be a god.

Sūta said:

17. O you treasures of penance, what is the use of praising it in many ways? Thus asked Śiva again commenced speaking:

The lord said:

18-46. He who, observing restraints, avoids others' food in Kārtika, gets the fruit of the Cāndrāyaṇa (vow). The man who, noticing that Kārtika has arrived, would avoid others' food day by day, obtains the fruit of the Kṛcchra vow. A man should avoid oil in Kārtika; a man should avoid honey in Kārtika; one should avoid (the use of) bell-metal in Kārtika; and one should especially avoid food prepared for a group. By eating flesh (but) once (in Kārtika) he obtains (i.e. goes to) a demonish stock and is cooked in feces for sixty thousand years. Freed from that the sinner is born as a village-pig eating feces. When foods (generally) indulged in are restricted in Kārtika (by a man), he surely obtains Viṣṇu's form and a position giving salvation. There is no (other) month like Kārtika and no deity superior to Viṣṇu. There is no (other) sacred knowledge like the Vedas; there is no (other) holy place like Gaṅgā; there is no (other) practice like (that of) truth; there is no (other) age like the Kṛta (age). There is no (other) satisfaction like that of the tongue; there is no (other) pleasure like that due to giving gifts. There is no (other) friend like righteousness; there is no (other) luminary

like the eyes. He who would spend (Kārtika), the month dear to Viṣṇu, without (observing) a vow, should be known to have fallen from duty and he is born in low stocks. Kārtika is the best month, always dear to Viṣṇu's devotees. A holy river flowing into the sea is difficult to be had for a bath by those given to bathing (everyday). An unmarried girl belonging to a noble family and of good character is difficult to be found. A couple of human beings (of an amiable nature) is difficult to be found. In the world a (good) mother and especially a (good) father are difficult to be found. Honour to the good is rare. A virtuous son is rare. Residence at Dvārakā is difficult to be accomplished. Kṛṣṇa's sight is difficult to be had. A bath in Gomatī is had with difficulty. The Kārtika vow is difficult to be had. O child, the fruit that a man gets by giving (pieces of) land to brāhmaṇas at (the time of) lunar and solar eclipses is had by one who sleeps on the (bare) ground. He should feed a brāhmaṇa couple and should honour them with unguents. Blankets, gems, various garments, mattresses filled with cotton should be given along with bed-sheets. Give a pair of sandals or an umbrella in the purifying (month of) Kārtika. He who everyday eats from leaves in Kārtika, does not meet with a calamity as long as the fourteen Indras are ruling. He gets the fruit of all his desires, and would get the fruit of (visiting) all holy places. By eating from palāśa leaves a man does not see (i.e. have) a residence in hell, since this palāśa is actually known to be Brahmā granting all desired objects. O Kārtikeya, in Kārtika (a man) should avoid the middle (palāśa) leaf. In the three leaves (of palāśa), Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva (reside). He should avoid the divine leaf, (since) Brahmā is excellent Viṣṇu (*obscure*). By eating from the remaining leaves he obtains all religious merit. O best sage, by eating from the middle leaf (of palāśa) and by drinking the milk of a tawny cow a man would go to hell. A śūdra who ignorantly drinks the milk of a tawny cow, is purified by giving a cow to a brāhmaṇa in Kārtika. Giving sesamum, bathing in a river, always seeing the good, eating from palāśa leaves in Kārtika give salvation. He who observes silence, eats from palāśa leaves, bathes with (river-) water, always forgives, sleeps on the (bare) ground in Kārtika would destroy sin earned during (many) ages, O Kārtikeya, one who keeps awake before Viṣṇu

at dawn in Kārtika, would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows. The fruit which men get by offering food in pitṛpakṣa (i.e. dark half of Bhādrapada), and by offering water in Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha, is obtained by them in lighting others' lamps. By lighting another's lamp and by serving Viṣṇu's devotees in Kārtika a man gets the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifices. He who does not bathe in a river, does not (tell) tale(s) of Viṣṇu, does not see Viṣṇu's devotees in Kārtika would lose the religious merit (collected during) ten years. O best sage, (the religious merit of) that wise man who would remember Puṣkara through (physical) act, mentally, or through speech, would be a lakh of crore times more.

47-60. Prayāga in the month of Māgha, Puṣkara in Kārtika, so also Avantī in Vaiśākha-month would destroy sin earned during ages. O Kārtikeya, those men are blessed especially in the Kali age, who by all means serve Viṣṇu everyday. (For him,) O sage, what is the use of having offered many piṇḍas by means of (offering) srāddhas etc.? There is no doubt that he has emancipated his dead ancestors from hell. Those who for (i.e. in honour of) their dead ancestors give a bath with milk etc. to Viṣṇu, go to heaven and live there with gods for a crore of kalpas. O best brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī does not stay for crores of existences in the houses of them who have not worshipped the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) in Kārtika. Those who have not worshipped Viṣṇu with black or white lotuses are stung, snatched, have perished and have fallen into the cave of Kali. He who (even) with one lotus worships the chief of gods, the lord of Lakṣmī, destroys sins (collected during) a myriad thousands of years. The lord of gods, saluted and worshipped with (just) one lotus would forgive seven hundred thousands of sins. O best sage, he who would worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika with a lakh of Tulasī-leaves would obtain a pearl on (i.e. for) every leaf as the fruit. Viṣṇu, O (my) son, is pleased for crores of thousands of kalpas with whatever is done (i.e. offered) after being mixed with (i.e. having) the fragrance of Tulasī. O Kārtikeya, Kali does not touch him who carries in his mouth, on his head or body a Tulasī (leaf) taken down from (the image of) Viṣṇu (after it was offered to him). O Kārtikeya, he who would sprinkle his body with the offerings like flowers after taking them down from (the image

of) Kṛṣṇa, becomes free from all diseases and sins also. O (my) son, undoubtedly the sins of him perish, and diseases of him come to an end, whose body touches (i.e. is smeared) with the remaining of the (burnt) charcoal etc. (offered) to Viṣṇu. The water in a conch, devotion to Viṣṇu, the remains of offerings like flowers, water (flowing from) the feet (of the image of Viṣṇu), sandal, the remains of incense remove (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN

In Praise of a Fast for a Month

The lord said:

1-3. O best of Viṣṇu's devotees, listen to the importance of the (daily) bath in Māgha. O you very intelligent one, there is no (other) devotee of Viṣṇu like you in this world. A man gets that fruit by a (daily) bath in Māgha, which he gets on seeing Viṣṇu at Cakratīrtha or Mathurā. He who, with his senses conquered, with his mind tranquil, and endowed with moral conduct, bathes (everyday) in Māgha, does not again come to this mundane existence.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

4. To you I shall tell about the greatness of (the holy place called) Śūkara, by merely knowing which (a man would) always have my proximity.

Sūta said:

5. Saying so, lord Kṛṣṇa spoke to Satyā in many ways. I shall tell it (to you). O you (sages) having penance as your treasure; listen to it.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

6-13. A being, even a donkey, that lives in Viṣṇu's temple at Śūkara extended over five yojanas, becomes the Four-armed

(Viṣṇu). The measure of Śūkara is laid down to be three thousand cubits, three hundred cubits and three. O goddess, a man gets that fruit in half a watch (i.e. three hours), (which he would get when) he practises penance for sixty thousand years at another place. The (same) fruit is said (to be obtained) by tulāpuruṣa dāna¹ in Kurukṣetra when the Sun is seized by Rāhu. It is said to be tenfold in Kāśī, and would be hundredfold in Veṇī, and said to be thousandfold at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. It is said to be endless in Viṣṇu's temple at Śūkara. A man gives duly a lakh (of gifts) at another place. (The fruit) would be similar by giving one only at Śūkara. By bathing but once at Śūkara, in Veṇī, and at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, a man removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Alarka formerly got (the kingdom of) the earth with the seven islands after hearing the greatness of Śūkara, O Kārtikeya. (O son, go there on the Dvādaśī of the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa.)

Kārtikeya said:

14-16. O lord, I desire to listen to (the description of) the best of vows; so also the proper manner and the fruit of a fast for a month. (So also I desire to hear) how it should be observed by men, what would be (the way of) observing the vow, (how) it is duly commenced and duly completed. O Maheśvara, tell me in detail how many times this vow, giving happiness and wealth, is to be observed, O sinless one.

Śrī Rudra said:

17-29. O Kārtikeya, since you have asked all this with devotion, listen to me explaining it, O best among the intelligent. As Viṣṇu is the greatest of the gods, as the Sun is the greatest of the luminaries, as Meru is (the greatest) of the mountains, as Garuḍa is the greatest among the birds, as Gaṅgā is (the greatest) of the holy places, as vaiśya is (the greatest) of the subjects, similarly observing the fast for a month is the greatest among the vows. He who observes the fast for a month

1. Tulāpuruṣa—Gift to a brāhmaṇa of as much gold or silver as equals the weight of one's body.

would obtain the religious merit due to all vows, all holy places and gifts. A man does not get that religious merit by means of various sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma in which many presents are given as he gets by observing the fast for a month. That man who observes the fast for a month according to the rule has (indeed) muttered (hymns), has offered oblations (into fire), has given (gifts), has observed penance, has made oblations to his dead ancestors. Dedicating a sacrifice to me, Viṣṇu, and worshipping me, and then receiving an order from his preceptor he should observe the fast for a month. Having observed all vows (in honour) of Viṣṇu and observed the auspicious (vow) of Dvādaśī etc. he should observe the fast for a month. O brāhmaṇa, after having observed the vows like Atikṛcchra, Pārāka,¹ and Cāndrāyaṇa he should fast for a month by the order of his preceptor. Having observed a fast on the Ekādaśī of the bright half of Āśvina, he should take up this vow for thirty days. A man who worships Viṣṇu and fasts for the entire month of Kārtika would enjoy the fruit in the form of salvation. In the temple of Viṣṇu he should three times a day devoutly worship Viṣṇu with the fragrant flowers of mālatī (jasmine), blue lotuses, arka flowers, lotuses, (other) flowers, uśīra-roots, camphor etc. and with the offerings of eatables, cakes, lights etc. after smearing (the lord's image) with excellent sandal.

30-43. A man, a woman or a widow, having great devotion and with his/her senses conquered, should worship the Garuḍa-bannered god (Viṣṇu) with mind, deeds and words and should day and night utter the names of Viṣṇu. He should devoutly and without false words utter Viṣṇu's praise. Full of compassion for all beings, of a tranquil temperament, harmless, sleeping and sitting on a seat outside he should narrate (the praise of) Viṣṇu. He should avoid recollection, sight, enjoying fragrant articles and talking of food, and should give up (taking) morsels. He should avoid smearing his body with oil, smearing his head with oil, (chewing) tāmbūla, smearing his body when he is observing the vow, and should avoid everything that is prohibited. While observing the vow he should not touch any-

1. Pārāka—Name of a vow of religious penance said to consist in fasting for twelve days and nights, keeping the mind attentive and organs subdued.

thing and should not disturb anyone doing a deed. A householder, remaining in a temple, should certainly observe the vow. A man, a good woman or a widow, having duly observed the fast for a month, should worship Viṣṇu properly. With his mind controlled and senses conquered, he should observe this vow without anything wanting or adding for thirty days and should observe the fast for a month, and then on the Dvādaśī (day) he should worship the auspicious Garuḍa-bannered (god). He should worship him with garlands of flowers, sandal, incense, and by besmearing (his image). A man should please Viṣṇu with clothes, ornaments and (by playing upon) musical instruments. With water (from) holy (places mixed) with sandal he should devoutly bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu. He should (worship) the image besmeared with sandal and adorned with incense and flowers. Having fed best brāhmaṇas (and pleased them) with gifts of garments etc. he should give them dakṣiṇā (i.e. presents), and saluting them he should apologise to them. Having thus fasted for a month, and having worshipped Viṣṇu, and having fed the brāhmaṇas, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. Thus he should engage thirteen brāhmaṇas. Listen to the manner in which he should dismiss them at the end of the fast for a month. Fasting on the Ekādaśī day he should perform a sacrifice (in honour) of Viṣṇu.

44-53. Having with the permission of his preceptor worshipped the lord of gods, he should, according to his capacity, worship the preceptor. Then saluting the brāhmaṇas of a pure family and character and devoted to Viṣṇu's worship, he should feed them. Then he should honour them all. Having fed thirteen brāhmaṇas, he should salute and honour the best brāhmaṇas with tāmbūla, pairs of garments, food coverings, yogapaṭṭas, threads, sacred threads, and then he should get fashioned a bed furnished with a cover, well-covered, beautiful, excellent, with pillows and decorated. Then, having according to his capacity got fashioned his golden image, he should put it on the bed after worshipping it with garlands etc. On the bed he should put a seat, wooden sandals, an umbrella, a pair of garments and shoes, and pure flowers. Having thus made the bed, and having saluted those brāhmaṇas, he should request the brāhmaṇas for their consent and say: "I am going to Viṣṇu's

world.” Then the best man would go to Viṣṇu’s healthy abode. He should repeatedly say to the brāhmaṇas seated in the pavilion: “O best brāhmaṇas, may all that is without the (proper) hymns and (proper) acts, be fully accomplished due to the favour of your words.” I have (thus) properly told (you) the manner of (observing) the vow of the fast for a month.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTY

The Greatness of Śālagrāma

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words, Kārtikeya again asked about the worship of Śālagrāma. O you having penance as your wealth, listen to it again.

Kārtikeya said:

2. O lord, O greatest among the meditating saints, I have heard about all religious practices. O lord, tell me in detail about the worship of Śālagrāma.

The lord said:

3-23. Well, well, I shall tell you what you ask, O you very intelligent one; O dear to me, listen to it. O you noble-hearted Kārtikeya, on a Śālagrāma stone the three worlds with the mobile and immobile always stay together. He who has seen, saluted, bathed and worshipped it, would get religious merit as the fruit, a crorefold more, of sacrifices, and that of the gift of a crore of cows. O child, he who has always drunk the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu’s Śālagrāma, has cut off the very tormenting stay in the embryo. O son, even he, always attached to passion and without devotion, would become Viṣṇu after worshipping a Śālagrāma stone. The round Śālagrāma stone, when remembered, glorified, meditated upon, worshipped and saluted, destroys a crore (of sins). As the herds of beasts in a forest go (away) through fear on seeing a lion, so sins in large numbers go

(away) on seeing a Śālagrāma stone. A man saluting with or without devotion a Śālagrāma stone at the time of its worship would obtain salvation. A man who everyday worships the Śālagrāma stone, has no fear of Yama, so also of death and birth. A man who, in the Kali age greatly devoted, everyday worships the Śālagrāma stone with sandal, water for washing the feet, respectful offerings, offerings of eatables, lights, incenses, unguents, songs, musical instruments and hymns, enjoys for thousands of crores of kalpas in the abode of Viṣṇu. How can those men, my devotees on the earth, have manhood (i.e. birth as a human being) who have devoutly saluted Śālagrāma? Those of my devotees, the most sinful ones, who do not salute my lord, Viṣṇu, are not my devotees, being deluded by sins. Even he, being my devotee, who eats on the Ekādaśī day, harms me, and goes to the Andhatāmisra hell. One should touch my (symbol, the) Phallus. No other purification is told for him. That day which is dear to Viṣṇu, is dear to me. That mortal who would not fast on that day, is a sinner and worse than a cāṇḍāla. O son, I always live in the Śālagrāma stone. The god, being pleased, has given me that place. That fruit which is obtained by worshipping me with thousands of lotuses is obtained, a crore times more, by worshipping a Śālagrāma stone. Those men who have not worshipped a Śālagrāma stone in the mortal world, have not worshipped and saluted me. O Kārtikeya, he who worships me before a Śālagrāma stone, has worshipped me for twentyone yugas. What is the use of worshipping hundreds of Liṅgas (i.e. my symbols) without devotion to Viṣṇu? If the round Śālagrāma stone is not worshipped, then, O son, offerings of eatables, leaves, flowers, fruits, water, offered to me, is not fit.

24-51a. Everything in front of a Śālagrāma stone is purified. A man eating the eatables offered to another deity would observe the Cāndrāyaṇa(-vow, i.e. would get its fruit). (But) by eating the eatables offered to Viṣṇu, he would obtain the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. There is no doubt that by means of the water flowing from the feet of god (Viṣṇu), so also by means of the water in a conch, (men) having committed a crore of murders are purified. He who being a devotee of Śiva, would not honour a devotee of Viṣṇu, so also his hater, goes to (and lives

in) hell as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). He in whose house a householder rests for a while, drinks nectar for eight ages of Brahmā. Mean men, avoiding Kṛṣṇa's worship, perish in the painful forest of the mundane existence for thousands of crores of years. By means of worshipping the Liṅgas coming up from Śālagrāma stones, through love, men devoid of Sāṁkhya or Yoga, obtain salvation. That fruit which would be got by seeing crores of my Liṅgas, worshipping or eulogising them, would be (obtained) (just) on (worshipping) the Śālagrāma stone. There are twelve stones coming up (i.e. formed) from the Śālagrāma. Listen to the religious merit of him who worships them daily. The religious merit (obtained by) worshipping thousands of crores of Liṅgas on the bank of Jāhnavī, by living for eight yugas at Kāśī, would be had in one day (by worshipping the Śālagrāma). Then (what would be the religious merit) of a man who would worship it for many (days)? I or deities like Brahmā do not endeavour to measure it. Therefore, O son, my devotees should do devoutly, to please me, the worship of a Śālagrāma stone. At that place where Viṣṇu in the form of a Śālagrāma stone lives, live gods, demons, yakṣas, and the fourteen worlds. That fruit which a man would get by means of all the crores of recitals (of the names) of deities, would be got by the good deed, viz. recital (of the names) of Viṣṇu, in the Kali age. His dead ancestors once gratified with a piṇḍa in front of the Śālagrāma stone live (in Vaikuṇṭha). They cannot be counted. For those men who devoutly drink the water dropping from the Śālagrāma stone, what is the use of drinking thousands of the pañcagavyas (i.e. the five products obtained from a cow)? When an expiation has succeeded after having drunk the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, what is the use of (giving) gifts, observing fasts, and properly practising Cāndrāyaṇa vows? What is the use of worshipping crores of other deities for him who fashions an image of Viṣṇu lying in water in a tank? They say 'Gods have Viṣṇu as their chief'. O son, for the fruit of every religious act, there is a limit. (But) there is absolutely no measure of the fruit of the worship of the Śālagrāma stone. He who gives a stone of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu originating from Śālagrāma to a brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, has performed hundreds of sacrifices. Even though he stays at

home, he has everyday bathed in Gaṅgā. He has bathed at all holy places, and is initiated for all sacrifices. One should do sprinkling with water flowing from a Śālagrāma stone. O Kārtikeya, there are stones in heaven, in the mortal world, and in the nether world. But there is no (other) stone like the Śālagrāma stone. The life of him in the world of human beings, difficult to obtain, who everyday gives a prastha of sesamum is fruitful. He gets that fruit by worshipping a Śālagrāma stone. A leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, a root or so also a blade of dūrvā offered to the Śālagrāma become equal to Meru. A man may be without a rite or having no (religious) act or hymns; but if he has a mark of the disc on his arm, he gets the proper fruit as is told in the sacred texts. All that I have seen in Viṣṇu as destroying affliction, I shall tell you, O son. “O Viṣṇu, where do you stay? What is your prop? What is your resort? O god, how are (can) you (be) pleased? Tell me all that.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

51b-73. O Śiva, I always stay in the stone produced in Śālagrāma. Listen to my names which are there on the chariot-wheel mark. If on the wheel resembling an opening, there is no hole, then that should be known as Viṣṇu, pure and very handsome. That which has a long size, a cavity and many holes, is Pradyumna, having the Sun's face and of bright lustre. Aniruddha has a yellow lustre, is round and very beautiful, is marked with three lines at the opening, and has a mark of a lotus. God Nārāyaṇa is dark, has a raised wheel of the navel, has long lines, and has a cavity on the right side. One should know that a stone having an opening above, and beautiful, is of the form of Viṣṇu, giving desired objects, salvation, and especially wealth. The highest lord has a white lustre and is endowed with a lotus and a disc. On its surface are a round figure and very many holes. Similarly Viṣṇu is of a dark complexion on the basic, very beautiful disc (like figure). Similarly on the opening, in the middle part, a line is noticed. Kapila, Narasimha has a large disc and is very beautiful. He should be worshipped with celibacy; otherwise he creates difficulties. Varāha has strength as his symbol, the two discs are said to be uneven. He resembles a sapphire, has three lines, and is beautiful from (i.e. due to) the

navel. That stone which is long, has a golden complexion, and adorned with three lines, is known as 'Matsya', and gives the fruit like enjoyments and salvation. Similarly Kūrma is raised, round on the surface, and is filled with a disc (like figure). Marked with Kaustubha, it has a green colour. Hayagrīva has the shape of a horse, and is adorned with five lines, is full of many marks, and on the surface has a blue sign. Vaikuṇṭha has an undivided body, and has mark of a disc and a banner. Similarly on the hole there is a very beautiful line, of the shape of a guñja-fruit. Similarly god Śrīdhara is marked with a garland of wood-flowers; has the form of a kadamba flower, and is adorned with a group of five lines. The round and small one is called Vāmana. It is like the atasī flower, and is adorned with a mark. Similarly the handsome god is dark-complexioned and very lustrous. On its left side there are a mace and a disc, and on the right side of it there is a line. Similarly Dāmodara is big; in its centre is a disc. It resembles dūrvā, is crowded with openings, and has yellow lines. Ananta has many colours, and is marked with various circuits. It is of various forms, and grants all desired objects. He whose face is seen in all quarters and intermediate quarters and above, should be known as Puruṣottama who grants the fruit in the form of pleasures and salvation. That whose Liṅga is seen on the top of a stone coming up from Śālagrāma, is god Yogeśvara (i.e. the lord of abstract meditation), and removes (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder. Padmanābha is reddish. A lotus is in contact with his face. Due to worshipping him daily a poor man would become rich.

74-83. One should point out one that is marked with a disc, having a golden body, and a collection of rays, full of many golden lines, and adorned with crystal-lustre. A very glossy (stone) gives success; a black one gives fame; a white one burns sins, and gives a father long life and sons. A dark blue one gives wealth; a red one diseases; a rough one gives dejection; and a crooked one causes poverty. One (disc on a stone) should be known to be the Sudarśana; the second (i.e. having two discs) the couple Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa. One should know the third one (i.e. having three discs) to be Acyuta; the fourth one (i.e. having four discs) to be Janārdana; the fifth one (having five discs) to be Vāsudeva; and the sixth one (having

six discs) to be Pradyumna; the seventh (having seven discs) to be Saṁkarṣaṇa; the eighth one (having eight discs) to be Puruṣottama; the ninth one (having nine discs) to be the nine modes; the tenth one (having ten discs) of his own nature; the eleventh (having eleven discs) to be Aniruddha; and the twelfth one (having twelve discs) is of the twelve forms. Discs more than these are seen on the stone called Ananta. A broken, cut or broken Śālagrāma does not have a flaw. He should carefully worship that image which is liked by him. He who carries the lord of stones after placing him on his shoulder, would subjugate the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. Viṣṇu resides there where there is the Śālagrāma stone. The gift (given) there or the muttering of hymn or bathing done there is hundred times superior to that at Vārāṇasī, Kurukṣetra, Prayāga, Naimiṣa and Puṣkara.

84-92. The religious merit there is a crore times more. It gives great fruit at Vārāṇasī. All (such) sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa that a man commits, are quickly burnt by the worship of Śālagrāma stone. Where there is the deity coming from Śālagrāma stone, and where there is the (deity) from Dvārāvati, and where there is the union of the two, there is salvation. There is no doubt about this. Celibates, householders, recluses and mendicants should eat the eatables offered to Viṣṇu. No doubt should be raised about it. For its worship no hymns, no muttering, no faith are (necessary). For the worship of a Śālagrāma stone, no eulogy, no formality is needed. The auspicious circle drawn before a Śālagrāma stone, especially (the one drawn) in Kārtika purifies the family up to the seventh (descendant). He who would draw an auspicious circle even of a size of an atom before (the image of) Viṣṇu, with clay or metal-products, and he who observes the worship of the sacred fire for a full year, (the latter) being equivalent to drawing an auspicious circle in Kārtika, come to me. The sin due to cohabiting with a woman not fit to be approached, due to eating what is prohibited, perishes by means of decorating Viṣṇu's temple. That woman who draws an auspicious circle before (the image of) Viṣṇu everyday, never obtains widowhood for seven existences.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

*The Importance of Offering Lights etc.**The Lord said:*

1-25a. O Kārtikeya, of him who, resorting to the shade of dhātrī, offers piṇḍas, the dead ancestors obtain salvation through Viṣṇu's grace. O child, a man who, being adorned with dhātrī-fruits, holds a dhātrī fruit on his head, in his hand, mouth, on his body, and who eats dhātrī-fruits becomes Viṣṇu. O Kārtikeya, he, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who has a dhātrī-fruit, becomes dear to gods; then what to say of human beings? A man should not abandon a Tulasī-garland and especially a dhātrī-garland. As long as the dhātrī-garland remains round the neck of a man, Viṣṇu, till that time, remains in his body. The life of him in whose house these three, viz. dhātrī-fruit, Tulasī, and clay from Dvārakā are (found), is fruitful. A man would live in Vaikuṇṭha for as many thousands of yugas as the days he wears a dhātrī-garland in the Kali age. He who would wear a pair of garlands of dhātrī and Tulasī round his neck would live in heaven for a crore of kalpas. A man who, having controlled the group of his senses, devoutly worships Śālagrāma stone, has the religious merit of a horse sacrifice in (i.e. from) each flower. As is Viṣṇu among gods, so is Tulasī among flowers. He who everyday would worship the Garuḍa-bannered god with Tulasī, becomes free from birth, grief, old age and diseases, and would obtain salvation. In case of him who has worshipped Viṣṇu in Kārtika, Viṣṇu rubs off the row of letters written by Yama. Śricandana with camphor, agaru sandal with saffron, so also offering ketakī flowers and lights is always dear to Viṣṇu. He who has offered ketakī flower or light in Kārtika in the Kali-age would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family, O Kārtikeya. On the days of Kārtika, offering of lotuses, Tulasī, ketakī-flowers and mango-blossoms, and lights as the fifth (should be done). O child, he who has made in Kārtika a bower with ketakī-garlands for Viṣṇu, obtains residence in heaven. Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered god, worshipped with a ketakī-flower only, is much pleased for a thousand years. O Kārtikeya, by worshipping Viṣṇu with ketakī-

flowers, one goes to Viṣṇu's auspicious and happy abode. So also having worshipped the lord of gods when Vaiśākha has come with damanaka, he obtains a fruit due to that worship, O best of sages. O brāhmaṇa, by the sight of him who worships Viṣṇu with agasti-flowers, the fire of hell perishes. O brāhmaṇa sage, Viṣṇu, pleased by penance, does not do that which, O Mahāsena, he does, when he is adorned with mango-flowers. He who, abandoning all (other) flowers, devoutly worships Viṣṇu in Kārtika with mango flowers, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. About him who offers Viṣṇu a garland made of mango-flowers, even the lord of gods speaks good words. O Kārtikeya, the fruit which is obtained by the gift of a myriad cows, is obtained by offering (just) one mango-flower in Kārtika. As Viṣṇu is pleased with the Kaustubha gem, or with the garland of wood-flowers, so is he pleased with a Tulasī-leaf in Kārtika.

Sūta said:

25b. Seeing Kārtikeya bowing with politeness and full of devotion, Śiva, the Bull-bannered god spoke again.

The lord said:

26-37. O Kārtikeya, listen to the importance of lights in Kārtika. The dead ancestors, always surrounded by hosts of (other) dead ancestors, desire: 'A good son, devoted to his dead ancestors, will be born in our family, who will please Viṣṇu by offering lights in Kārtika'. O Kārtikeya, to him, whose lamp burns with ghee or oil, what is the use of a horse-sacrifice? He who has offered lights in Kārtika before Viṣṇu, for five days especially in the dark half, has performed all sacrifices, and has plunged into the water at a holy place. He who offers a light on these days, would eternally obtain religious merit. A female rat, having brightened the lamp offered by others, obtained the existence of human beings difficult to obtain, and got the best position. A hunter also who, going without food, worshipped the great lord on the fourteenth day, got the highest (place) and went to Viṣṇu's world. A prostitute Lilāvati who, due to her resorting to a cāṇḍāla, caused (to burn more) a lamp lighted by others, became pure and went to the eternal heaven. A certain

cowherd who, seeing on the new-moon day the worship of Viṣṇu again and again said, “Victory (to Viṣṇu),” became the great lord of kings. Therefore, at night, after sunset, lamps should be offered in houses, all cow-pens and all abodes, temples of gods and cremation grounds and lakes. Due to its religious merit the offering of lights with ghee for a good purpose should be done for five days. The dead ancestors who were sinful and who had missed the rites (of the offering) of piṇḍas and water, get the highest salvation due to the religious merit of offering lights.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

The Celebration of Dipāvalī

Kārtikeya said:

1-2. O lord, now tell me in particular the fruit of Dipāvalī. Why is it celebrated? What would be its deity? O lord, tell me what should be and should not be given during the festival. What (kind of) exultation is indicated during it? What sport is mentioned?

Sūta said:

3. Hearing these words of Kārtikeya, the lord who had burnt up Cupid, said, ‘Well’ and laughed and said these words, O Brāhmaṇas.

Śrī Śiva said:

4-20. O Kārtikeya, on the thirteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika, a man should offer a light to Yama outside (his house). Thereby untimely death is avoided. “May the Sun’s son, with Death having a noose in his hand and with his wife, be pleased due to this offering of the light” Those who are scared of sins, should necessarily bathe at moon-rise on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika. He, being careful, should bathe early in the morning on the fourteenth day pierced

(i.e. mixed) with the previous day of the dark half of Kārtika. Lakṣmī (resides) in oil and Gaṅgā in water. He who would bathe in the morning on Caturdaśī in Dipāvalī does not see Yama's world. To destroy (i.e. to avoid) hell, he should whirl (round himself) apāmārga, tumbī, prapunnāṭa, vāhvala (twigs) while bathing. "O Apāmārga, being with a clod of furrowed land and with thorn and leaf, remove my sin, when repeatedly whirled." He should whirl over his head apāmārga and prapunnāṭa. Then with (i.e. by reciting) Yama's names, he should offer libations of water. "Salutation to Yama, Dharmarāja, Mr̥tyu, Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla and Sarvabhūtakṣaya (Destroyer of all beings), Audumbara, Dadhna, Nīla, Parameṣṭhin, Vṛkodara, Citra, Citragupta." Having worshipped the deities, he (i.e. the king) should offer a light to Naraka. Then at the break of night he should offer pleasing lights at the temples of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva etc., and especially at apartments on the tops of the houses, sanctuaries, assembly halls, rivers, ramparts, gardens, wells, streets, pleasure-groves near houses, stables and abodes of elephants also. O Kārtikeya, having, like this, bathed in the morning on the new-moon day, and having devoutly worshipped and saluted deities and dead ancestors, and having offered the pārvaṇa śrāddha with curd, ghee, milk etc., he should feed brāhmaṇas with various kinds of food, and apologise to them. Then, O dear one, in the afternoon the king should gratify the citizens. Having chitchatted with them, honoured them he should converse with them. O Kārtikeya, for one year love is generated among those who talk. Before Viṣṇu has got up, he should awaken Lakṣmī through the women.

21-32. When a man has awakened Lakṣmī at the time of her getting up through a good woman, for one year Lakṣmī does not leave him. The haters of gods (i.e. the demons) scared of Viṣṇu obtained fearlessness from the brāhmaṇas, after knowing (that Viṣṇu) was asleep in the Milky Ocean, and Lakṣmī had resorted to the lotus. "You are the lustre, Śrī Ravi (i.e. the Sun), the Moon, the Lightning, the Golden Star; the lustre occurring in the lustre of the lamp is the lustre of all the lustres. That Lakṣmī that lives on the earth, in the cowpen on the auspicious day of Dipāvalī in Kārtika, may grant me a boon." Śiva and Bhavānī

took to playing with dice as a sport. Lakṣmī, propitiated by Bhavānī remained in the form of a cow. Formerly Pārvatī vanquished Śiva in the game of dice, and sent him away naked. So this Śiva is unhappy. Gaurī always remains happy. He who gets victory first (passes) the year happily. When the night passes like this, and people have their eyes half-closed, Alakṣmī is driven out of the courtyard of the house by the joyful city-women by means of sounding the musical instruments and drums. In the case of a defeat (in the game of dice) opposite will be the case. On the first day, when the sun has risen, Govardhana should be worshipped in the morning and one should play the game of dice at night. Then cows should be decorated; and they should not be used to carry (loads etc.) or should not be milked. “O Govardhana, O support of the earth, O protector of Gokula, O you who were lifted by the hand of Viṣṇu, give (us) crores of cows. That Lakṣmī who remains in the form of the cow of the regents of the quarter, and that carries ghee for the sacrifice, may remove my sin. May cows stand before me. May cows be behind me. May cows be in my heart. I live among cows.” Thus worship of Govardhana (should be done).

33-42. Having pleased with sincere devotion deities and good men, he should please others by giving food and (should please) the learned men by offering (i.e. speaking gentle) words. (He should please) the inmates of the harem by (giving them) garments, tāmbūlas, lights, flowers, camphor, saffron, food and eatables of superior and inferior quality. The king should please the chief of the village with gifts and vassals with wealth, and the hosts of foot soldiers good neck-ornaments and bracelets. The king should also please his ministers and his own people separately. Then having properly gratified wrestlers and actors, so also the bulls and large oxen fighting with one another and other soldiers and foot soldiers who are well-adorned being seated on a raised seat, he should see the actors, dancers and bards, and should cause to fight and roar the cows and buffaloes etc. which (he possesses). By means of sounding words (of calls) and responses he makes the cows attract their calves. Then, O Kārtikeya, he should put up a divine arch over the path in the eastern direction in the afternoon, tied to a pillar of the

fort or a tree; (it should be made) of kuśa (grass) and should have many hanging strings of flowers. Observing many horses and elephants, he should take them and bulls with cows, so also he-buffaloes and she-buffaloes furious with bells to the base of the arch. Through the best brāhmaṇas who have offered a sacrifice, he should put up the arch. Then, he, of a good vow, should make obeisance by (reciting) this hymn:

43-57. “O mārgapāli, salutation to you who give happiness to all the world.” O Kārtikeya, at the base of the mārgapāli cows and great bulls go. Kings, princes and especially brāhmaṇas on crossing the mārgapāli, become free from disease and happy. Having done all this, at night he should actually worship Bali, the lord of demons, in a circle made on the ground. Having drawn, with five colours, (the picture of) Bali, the lord of demons, complete with all ornaments, accompanied by Vindhyaśālī, surrounded by the demons Kūṣmāṇḍa, Maya, Jambhāru, Madhu, and with his entire face delighted, and with a crown and bright earrings, and again (drawing the picture of) the lord of demons with two arms in a small or big chamber in his own house, he should then worship it. The lord of kings, who, being pleased and with his ministers and priests, and with his mother, brothers, and kinsmen, worships (the demon-lord) with lotuses, red lotuses, flowers, white lotuses and blue lotuses, with sandal, flowers, offerings of eatables with milk, jaggery and sweetened milk, with liquor, flesh, wine, things eaten by licking or by sucking, (other) eatables and offerings, and by (reciting) this hymn, gets happiness during that year: “O king Bali, O lord, O son of Virocana, salutation to you. O future Indra, O enemy of gods, accept this worship.” Having thus offered the worship and keeping awake at night, he should make (others) keep awake at night with actors, dancers, singers, and make people place (the image of) king Bali with white rice inside the house on a couch, and should worship him with fruits and flowers. O Kārtikeya, everything there should be done with reference to Bali. The sages, the seers of truth say that all those (objects) that are inexhaustible (come to him). Whatever small or big gift is made here, all that would be inexhaustible, auspicious, and would please Viṣṇu. May all the untractable practices of those men who do not worship you, Bali, at night, come to you.

58-69. O child, Viṣṇu himself, being pleased, has granted this great festival to Bali who had obliged the demons. O Kārtikeya, since then (this festival of) Kaumudī has commenced (for) ever. It melts all troubles and destroys all difficulties. It removes the grief of people, it fulfils desires, and brings about wealth, nourishment and happiness. The word 'ku' stands for the earth, the word 'muda' stands for joy. Due to the root (meaning) of the two (words coming together) the festival is said to be (i.e. called) Kaumudī, since the people mutually rejoice (during it) on the earth. They are glad and pleased, are happy, so it is called Kaumudī. O son, since during it red lotuses are offered to Bali by kings for (removing) their sins, therefore it is called Kaumudī. To the king who every year gives the earth, (clean) like a mirror, for a day and night to the king of demons, how can there be fear from diseases? He has plenty of corn, happiness, health, excellent wealth. All people are free from diseases and free from all calamities. So, to spread devotion on the earth, the Kaumudī (festival) is celebrated. O Kārtikeya, he who lives with a (particular) feeling during it (i.e. the festival) passes the year with that feeling of joy, sorrow etc. If he weeps, the year makes him weep; if he is delighted, the year is delightful. If he enjoys (the festival) he enjoys the year; if he is happy, the year will be happy. Therefore, good men should joyfully celebrate Kaumudī. This day in Kārtika is said to be sacred to Viṣṇu and demons.

70-73. Of the families of the intelligent ones, having happiness due to (giving) gifts and enjoyments, who celebrate the light festival pleasing all, and who worship Bali, the entire year giving the lord(?), passes happily. O Skanda, these dates beginning with the second are well known. For four months and then in the rainy season they cause well-being. The first is in the month of Śrāvaṇa; the second is in the month of Bhādrapada; the third is in Āśvina; the fourth would be (i.e. fall) in Kārtika. Kaluṣā falls in the month of Śrāvaṇa, Amalā in Bhādrapada, Pretasamcārā in Āśvina, and Yāmyakāmyatā in Kārtika.

Kārtikeya said:

74. Why is the one (in Śrāvaṇa) called Kaluṣā? Why is the one (in Bhādrapada) said to be Nirmalā? Why is the one (in

Āśvina called Pretasaṁcārā? And why is the fourth called Yāmyā?

Sūta said:

75. Hearing these words of Kārtikeya, the Bull-bannered lord, the cause of the beings, laughed, and spoke (these) gentle words.

Maheśa said:

76-88. Formerly when Vṛtra was killed and Indra obtained the kingdom, a horse sacrifice was commenced to remove the sin of the brāhmaṇa's murder. Indra angrily killed the brāhmaṇa (Vṛtra) with his thunderbolt. The (sin of the) killing was thrown down on the earth in six ways: in a tree, in water, on the land, in a woman, in one who causes abortion, and in fire after dividing it in due order. Due to hearing about that sin, with the day previous to the second, a woman, a tree, a river, the land, fire, and one who procures an abortion are polluted. For this reason it is called Kaluṣā. Formerly the earth merged into the blood of Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Therefore (to the measure of) eight fingers she is impure. The menstrual flow of women is impure. All the rivers in the rainy season are impure. Fire (going) up is impure due to soot. Trees are impure due to exudation. Those that cause an abortion are impure due to contact. Filth moves on this day. Therefore, she is said to be Kaluṣā. There are the wicked atheists who censure the good practices of gods and sages. The second one is pure from the filth of their words. Therefore, it is Nirmalā. The Sāṁkhyaas, Tārkikas (i.e. logicians) teach and study the sacred texts on days forbidden for study. On the second (i.e. Amalā) day the Śruti-followers are purified from the filth of their words and bad words. Therefore it (is called) Nirmalā. O child, the three worlds would be purified due to the birth of Kṛṣṇa in Śrāvaṇa. The wise ones have indicated it as Nirmalā. The Pretasaṁcārā is (so called) because of movements of the dead ancestors, grandsires like the Agniṣvāttas, the Barhiṣads, the Ājyapas, and the Somapas also. The dead ancestors are called departed spirits. They move on that (day). They are worshipped with Svadhā hymns by their sons, and the sons of their sons and daughters. They, moving

departed spirits, leave after being gratified by means of śrāddhas, gifts and sacrifices. The spirits are seen to move on the earth on the Mahālaya.

89-103. Therefore, O Kārtikeya, it is called Pretasaṁcārā, Since, O Kārtikeya, on this day worship is offered to Yama by men, therefore, it is called Yāmyakā. I have told the truth and the truth (only). Those best men who listen to the importance of Kārtika, certainly get the religious merit due to the (daily) bath in Kārtika. A man, having bathed on the Bhānujā on the second day of Kārtika, should worship Yama in the morning. (Thereby) he does not see Yama. O Śaunka, formerly, on the second day of the bright half of Kārtika, Yama was fed and honoured by Yamunā in her house. On the second day a great gift (is given). Denizens of hell are gratified. They, separated (i.e. freed) from sins, are free from all bondage. They all, being praised, remain pleased as they like. This great festival, giving pleasure to Yama's region, takes place for them. Therefore, this Yamadvitiyā is well known in the three worlds, and so the wise should not eat at home (on this day). They should affectionately take a nourishing meal at their sister's hand; gifts should duly be given to sisters. Then along with the gift of golden ornaments and garments and honouring (their sister) they should eat from the hand of their sister of whole blood. The meal from the sister's hand should be taken on all (these days). It is nourishing. Yama is gratified on the second day of bright half of Kārtika. Yama is mounted upon the seat (i.e. back) of a he-buffalo. The lord holds a staff and a mallet. He is surrounded by his jubilant servants. Obeisance to him of the nature of Yāmyā. For those who have pleased their sisters whose husbands are alive, with gifts of garments etc. there is no quarrel (with anyone), nor any fear from their enemy during the year. O sinless one, O my son, I have told you the entire account along with its secret. It is blessed, gives success, increases the (span of) life, and is the means of righteous acts and enjoyments. Since on this day god Yamarāja was well-fed by Yamunā with a sister's affection (for her brother), therefore he who, on this day, eats from the hand of his sister, gets wealth and excellent riches.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

*Instructions Concerning the Fast**Kārtikeya said:*

1-3. O lord, I wish to listen to the vow which is best among the vows; so also the mode of observing the fast for a month and the fruit of it as is told; and also how the vow is to be commenced, and how it is to be duly completed. O lord, tell me in detail the number (of days) for which this vow is to be observed, O best of the gods.

Śrī Rudra said:

4-17. Well, O kārtikeya, hear from me who am telling you, all that you have devoutly asked, O best among the intelligent. As Viṣṇu is among gods, as the Sun is among the shining ones, as Meru is among mountains, and Garuḍa among birds, as Gaṅgā is among holy places, as the trader is among the subjects, so is this fast for a month the best of all vows. He who observes the fast for a month would obtain the merit of all vows, and all holy places, and the fruit due to all gifts. A man does obtain that merit by means of sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma (performed) with profuse gifts, which he obtains by fasting for a month. A man who duly observes the fast for a month, has (indeed) muttered (hymns), has offered oblations into fire, has given (gifts), has practised penance, and performed svadhā (i.e. pleased his dead ancestors by offering them oblations). Dedicating a sacrifice to Viṣṇu, and having worshipped him, and having secured his preceptor's order, he should fast for a month. Having observed all the auspicious vows as prescribed for the devotee of Viṣṇu, such as Dvādaśī, he should then observe the fast for a month. Having observed Atikṛcchra, Pārāka and Cāndrāyaṇa (vows) he, considering his physical strength and weakness, should observe the fast for a month. An anchorite or an ascetic or a widow should observe the fast for a month with the preceptor's—brāhmaṇa's—order. Having bathed and fasted on the eleventh of Āśvina, he should take up this vow for thirty days. That man who, worshipping Viṣṇu, would fast for the entire month of Kārtika, would enjoy the fruit of salvation.

In the temple of Viṣṇu he should devoutly worship Viṣṇu three times (a day) with jasmine flowers, blue lotuses, lilies and lotuses, camphor and besmearing (the image) with saffron, saṁdal, and excellent sandal, (should worship him) with offerings of eatables, incense and lights.

18-29. A man, a woman or a widow, having great devotion and with his senses conquered, should worship the Garuḍa-bannered (god Viṣṇu) with mind, deeds and words, and should day and night utter the names of Viṣṇu. He should devoutly and without false words utter Viṣṇu's praise. Full of compassion for all beings, of a tranquil temperament, harmless, sleeping and sitting on a seat outside, he should narrate (the praise of) Viṣṇu. He should avoid thinking, seeing, enjoying fragrant articles, and talking of food, and should give up (taking) morsels. He should avoid smearing his body with oil, smearing his head with oil, (chewing) tāmbūla, smearing his body when he is observing the vow, and should avoid everything that is prohibited. While observing the vow he should not touch anything and should not disturb anyone doing a deed. A householder, remaining in a temple, should certainly observe the vow. A man, a good woman or a widow, having duly observed the fast for a month, should worship Viṣṇu properly. With his mind controlled and senses conquered, he should observe this vow without anything wanting or additional for thirty days, and should observe the fast for a month, and then on the Dvādaśī (day) he should worship the auspicious Garuḍa-bannered (god). He should worship him with garlands of flowers, sandal, incense, and by besmearing (his image). A man should please Viṣṇu with clothes, ornaments, and (by playing upon) musical instruments. With water from holy places and mixed with sandal he should devoutly bath the image of Viṣṇu. He should (worship) the image besmeared with sandal, and adorned with incense and flowers. Having fed best brāhmaṇas and pleased them with dakṣiṇā (i.e. presents), and saluting them he should apologise to them. Having apologised to the brāhmaṇas, he should dismiss them after having honoured and worshipped them.

30-42. In this way having observed the fast for a month and worshipped Viṣṇu according to his monetary capacity, with

devotion, and having fed the brāhmaṇas according to his capacity he is honoured in the heaven of Viṣṇu. Now listen to the manner in which at the end of the fast for a month, having chosen thirteen brāhmaṇas, he should dismiss them. Observing a fast on the Ekādaśī day, he should perform a sacrifice (in honour) of Viṣṇu. Having, with the consent of his preceptor, worshipped the lord of gods, and having, according to his capacity, honoured his preceptor, he should salute his preceptor. Then he should feed after saluting the brāhmaṇas of a pure character and family and greatly devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu. Then having worshipped and fed all the brāhmaṇas and having given the best brāhmaṇas tām̐būlas, pairs of garments, food and coverings, so also yogapaṭṭas (i.e. cloths thrown over the back and knees of ascetics during abstract meditation), threads and sacred threads and then having saluted them, he should devoutly honour them. He should prepare a bed furnished with a cover, well-covered, beautiful, excellent, with pillows and decorated. Then, having according to his capacity, got fashioned his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) golden image, he should put it on the bed after worshipping it with garlands etc. On the bed he should put a seat, wooden sandals, an umbrella, a pair of garments and shoes, and pure flowers. Having thus made the bed, and having saluted those brāhmaṇas, he should request the brāhmaṇas for their consent and say: "I am going to Viṣṇu's world." Then the best man would go to Viṣṇu's healthy abode. He should repeatedly say to the brāhmaṇas seated in the pavilion: "O best brāhmaṇas, may all that is without the (proper) hymns and (proper) acts, be fully accomplished due to the favour of your words." I have (thus) properly told (you) the manner of (observing) the vow of the fast for a month.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Haribodhinī, Bhṛṣmapañcaka etc.

The lord said:

1-15. O best god, also listen to the greatness of Prabodhinī which destroys sins, enhances merit, and gives salvation to those who comprehend the truth. O Kārtikeya, Gaṅgā Bhāgīrathī roars on the earth till the time the Haribodhinī (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika has not come. The holy places and the lakes up to the ocean roar till the time the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī) in Kārtika has not arrived. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are equal to one fast on the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī). O brāhmaṇa, Prabodhinī gives even that which is desired but which is difficult to be got or reached in the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. O brāhmaṇa, Haribodhinī when fasted on, easily gives affluence, union, knowledge, kingdom, happiness and wealth. Just by means of one fast Haribodhinī burns the sins resembling Meru and Mandara committed (by a man). O best among men, he who naturally observes a fast on the Prabodhinī (day), according to the rule, gets the fruit as is told (in the sacred texts). The sin committed during thousands of former existences is burnt like a heap of cotton by keeping awake on the Prabodhinī (day). O Kārtikeya, listen; I shall tell you the characteristic(s) of the vigil, by merely knowing which Viṣṇu is not difficult to be secured. O noble one, a man should sing, play upon musical instruments, recite the Purāṇas, offer incense, light, eatables, flowers, besmear (the image) with sandal, offer fruits, respectful offerings, have faith, give gifts, control his senses, be truthful, without sleep, full of joy and (religious) acts, (offer worship) with energy and without laziness etc. by going round (the image), and preceded by obeisance, so also accompanied by waving of lights. With a mind free from dejection he should wave lights before Viṣṇu in every watch. He who, with a concentrated mind, keeps vigil accompanied with these characteristics, and without dishonesty regarding money, for the lord, is not reborn on the earth.

16-26. He who thus devoutly and without deceitfulness keeps awake on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is taken to the

highest position. He who, everyday in Kārtika, worships Viṣṇu with the recital of the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn) has worshipped Viṣṇu for thousands of crores of years. The man who would everyday worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika according to the prescribed manner for five days, would enjoy salvation. He who would worship Viṣṇu (saying) 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa', is free from torments in hell and goes to an auspicious position. He who recites in Kārtika (the hymn containing) the thousand names of Viṣṇu, and (the account of) the release of the lord of elephants, does not have rebirth. He who keeps awake on the Dvādaśī in the month of Kārtika lives in heaven for thousands of crores of yugas and hundreds of Manu's periods. And hundreds and thousands (persons) born in his family obtain Viṣṇu's position. Therefore, one should keep awake. O beautiful lady, he who eulogises and sings (songs about Viṣṇu) in the last watch (of a day) in Kārtika, lives in Śvetadvīpa with his dead ancestors. He who offers eatables to Viṣṇu at the end of a day in Kārtika lives for so many yugas in heaven, O best sages. O best sage, he who would continuously worship the lord of gods with jasmine flowers and lotus, goes to the highest position. A man who observes (fast on) the Ekādaśī of the bright half of Kārtika, and gives auspicious pitchers (to brāhmaṇas) in the morning, goes to my abode.

Kārtikeya said:

27-28. O lord, tell me about the virtuous vow, best among the vows, viz. Bhīṣmapañcaka to be observed in the month of Kārtika. Through favour to me and the sages, tell me, O grand-sire, about the manner in which it is observed, and its fruit, O best god.

The lord said:

29-45. O you best among the believers in vows, I shall explain to you the very meritorious vow which lasts for five days. Since Bhīṣma got it from Viṣṇu, it is called Bhīṣmapañcaka. Who, except Viṣṇu, is able to tell the merits of this vow? Listen to the ancient practice. In the bright half of Kārtika it was observed by Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, Garga etc. in the ages like Kṛta. In the yugas like Tretā it was observed by Ambarīṣa with

(offerings of) food etc. and by brāhmaṇas observing celibacy, muttering hymns and performing rites like sacrifices. So also (it was observed) by kṣatriyas and vaiśyas highly devoted to truth and purity. It is difficult to be observed by those who are void of truth (i.e. are not truthful) and cannot be observed by those of foolish hearts. They say it is difficult to be observed, (that is, it is) 'Bhīṣma'. It cannot be observed by ordinary men. O best brāhmaṇa, he who observes it, has (indeed) observed every (vow). This Bhīṣmapañcaka vow gives great merit, destroys great sins. Therefore, men should carefully observe it. Having properly and according to the precept bathed on the Ekādaśī in the bright half of Kārtika one should take up this vow lasting for five days. The observer of the vow should especially bathe in the morning and at mid-day in a river or a spring, and having obtained cowdung with rice and barley he should in due course gratify his dead ancestors. One of a strong vow, having bathed and observed silence, and having put on washed garments, should carefully offer water and make respectful offering to Bhīṣma. He should carefully worship Bhīṣma and give gifts. He should carefully and especially give five jewels to a brāhmaṇa. Lord Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī should also be always worshipped. By means of worshipping (Viṣṇu) during the group of five (days) Viṣṇu is pleased for crores of kalpas. Whatever (image etc.) is made, he should fashion it with five metals. By giving water and making a respectful offering, a man gets the entire fruit of vows (lasting) for a year. One who makes (the offering) with (the recital of) this hymn: 'I am offering this water to Bhīṣma who has Vaiyāghrapāda gotra and Sāmkṛta pravara' would enjoy salvation. 'I make the respectful offering to Bhīṣma, the incarnation of the Vasus, the son of Śantanu, and a life-long celibate.' This is the hymn of the respectful offering.

46-56. He, who, in this way, finishes the group of five (days), undoubtedly gets religious merit equal to that of a horse sacrifice. For five days he should carefully observe restraint. O son, the practice of a vow is not possible without restraint. Viṣṇu gave (the highest position) to Bhīṣma who departed in the Uttarāyaṇa; he became¹....Then he should get Viṣṇu, the

1. This part is unintelligible (Tr.)

destroyer of all sins. Then he should devoutly bathe (the image) with water, honey, milk and ghee; so also with the five products of a cow and water mixed with sandal. Then he should besmear (the image of) Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered (god) with fragrant sandal, with saffron, and with camphor mixed with uśīra (sandal). He should worship (the image) with charming flowers along with black aloewood and incense. He, with devotion, should burn guggulu (a fragrant gum resin) with ghee before (the image of) Kṛṣṇa. During the five days he should offer light day and night. He should offer excellent food as offering of eatables. Having thus worshipped, remembered and saluted the god, he should mutter one hundred and eight times the hymn *Namo Vāsudevāya*. He should make an offering with sesamum, rice and barley smeared with ghee, with the utterance of the hymn of six syllables, along with the utterance of the exclamation *svāhā*. The observer of the vow, having offered the evening sandhyā prayer, having saluted Viṣṇu, having muttered the hymn as before, should sleep on the (bare) ground.

57-69. All this should be done for five days. Listen to the speciality of and that which is superior in this vow. On the first day the observer of the vow should worship Viṣṇu's feet with lotuses. On the second (day) he should worship his knees with bilva-leaves. Then, with his mind directed to him, he should devoutly worship the head of the Disc-holder, the god of gods, with jasmine flowers on the full-moon day of Kārtika. Having succinctly worshipped Viṣṇu on the Ekādaśī, he, after having eaten cowdung, should duly observe fast on the Ekādaśī day. The observer of the vow should drink cow's urine on the Dvādaśī, milk on the Trayodaśī and curd on the Caturdaśī with (the recital of) the hymn. Having eaten (and drunk these) for the purification of his body and having fasted for four days, he should, after bathing, worship Viṣṇu according to the sacred precept. Giving up sinful thoughts the intelligent one, observing celibacy, should devoutly feed brāhmaṇas, and give presents to them. The man, avoiding liquor and flesh, so also sinful coitus, subsisting on vegetables and sages' foods, should be deeply engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa. Then having first (sipped) the five products of the cow, he should eat at night. He would

obtain the fruit of the vow thus duly concluded. (Even) a drunkard who would drink liquor from birth to death obtains the highest position by observing this Bhīṣma-vow. By the words (i.e. order) of a brāhmaṇa, women should observe it, which enchances religious merit. Widows also should observe it for salvation, and an increase in their happiness. O Kārtikeya, men observe the Kārtika(vow) by bathing everyday and (giving) gifts for abundance of (the fulfilment of) all desires and for (obtaining) religious merit. O child, greatly engrossed in meditation upon Viṣṇu, they should also perform the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice (in honour of all deities), which gives health and sons and destroys great sins.

70-78. O Kārtikeya, with all efforts he should observe the Kārtika(vow) at holy places. The conclusion of all the vows (observed) during the year is observed in Kārtika. An image of Sin should be fashioned. It should have fearful clothes and should be very fierce. It should have a sword in its hand; it should have come out (i.e. should be prominent); it should have iron fangs and be dreadful. Covered with a black piece of cloth it should be put on a prastha (i.e. a particular measure) of sesamum seeds. Its wreath should be made of red flowers; its golden earrings should be bright. Having, with great devotion, worshipped it with (the utterance of) the names of Dharmarāja, he taking a handful of flowers, should recite this hymn: 'Due to the grace of your feet may the sin committed in another (i.e. previous) existence or in this, perish.' Having duly worshipped that golden image, and having, according to his capacity honoured the brāhmaṇas, expounders of the Vedas, he should, to please Kṛṣṇa, god of gods, of unimpaired acts, give it to a brāhmaṇa (saying) 'May Dharma be pleased with me.' According to his capacity he should give presents to the reader (of the next). Saying, 'May Kṛṣṇa be pleased with me', he should give gold and cows also. Having done his deeds, and being detached, he should be controlled. According to his capacity he should give excellent gifts to others also.

79-83. (Such) a man, of a tranquil mind, and guiltless, would obtain the highest position. He should reflect upon Mahādeva who is dark green like the petal of a blue lotus, who has four fangs and four arms, who has eight feet, and one eye,

who is spike-eared and has a rough voice, who is cold, who has two tongues, whose eyes are red, who has a lion-like thin cover. He has no form. Bhīṣma, being on the bed of arrows told this to me. This vow known as Bhīṣmapañcaka on the earth, is confined to five days beginning with Ekādaśī. There is no prohibition for him who is intent on taking food. Due to that vow Viṣṇu gives an auspicious fruit.

Sūta said:

84-88. This has more religious merit than all (other) vows. It is difficult to be done on the earth. This secret, the collection of the essences of the sacred texts, is told by me. It is a secret of the gods. It is a great secret. It at once gives salvation even to those who are engaged in illicit intercourse. It would free one from both the sins of selling one's daughter or one's sister. This sacred text leading to salvation should not be revealed to other people. A man hearing it at once goes to salvation. It should be carefully preserved. This auspicious (vow) is not to be told to them who give it up. This is the truth and the (only) truth, O Kārtikeya. Thus all the fruit that Kārtika has is told.

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

89-96. The god of gods told it to his son for his welfare. Hearing those words of his father, Kārtikeya was full of joy. All those, with the palms of their hands joined, said to the god, the life of the world: "We are blessed by hearing the fruit due to Kārtika. Nothing else is to be heard. I have obtained the fruit of my existence." That man who, 'having heard (this description of) the greatness (of the vow), would honour the reader (of it) with (the grant of a piece of) land, gold, garments, is equal to Viṣṇu, since when the reader is honoured, Viṣṇu is worshipped. Like that he should always give to the reader if he desires the auspicious religious texts, Purāṇa, or Vedic texts, etc. to be fruitful. One who desires religious merit should give the book to the reader only. Those who give the Purāṇic texts, enjoy inexhaustible fruits. He who would devoutly read this, or would retain it after having heard it, is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. There is no doubt that merely by listening to the (account of this) importance, he gets wealth, grains, fame, sons, (long) life, and good health.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

*The Importance of Māgha As Told by Bhṛgu**The sages said:*

1-3. O Sūta, O noble Sūta, you, desiring the well-being of the world have narrated the account of Kārtika giving pleasures and salvation. O Lomahaṛṣaṇi, now tell us about the importance of Māgha, hearing which the great doubt of people diminishes. Tell us who formerly revealed the greatness of the bath in Māgha along with its history, O noble one.

Sūta said:

4-9. Good! good! O best sages, you are greatly devoted to Kṛṣṇa. Since you with joy and devotion repeatedly ask Kṛṣṇa's story, I shall tell you the greatness of Māgha that increases the religious merit and destroys the sin of those who have bathed at dawn. O brāhmaṇas, once Pārvatī, touching the lotus-like feet of Śaṅkara with modesty, asked him, the benefactor of the world:

Pārvatī said:

O god of gods, O great god, O you who grant fearlessness to your devotees, be pleased, O lord of the universe. Tell me what I ask you now. O master, formerly I heard from you many kinds of religious practices. Now I desire to hear the greatness of Māgha. Tell it. Since you love your devotees, tell me who observed it formerly, what is the mode (of observing it), which is the deity. Tell (me) all that in detail.

Śiva said:

10-24. King Dilipa, best among kings, whose auspicious rites were performed by the sages after the ablution after a sacrifice, who was honoured by all citizens, went out of his city. The king was interested in hunting. He was full of curiosity, and was surrounded by an assemblage for hunting. He had put on his shoes, a blue turban and had covered his chest. He had a leathern fence fastened round his left arm to prevent injury

from the bow string, had a finger-protector, and a bow in his hand and a sword. (He was accompanied) by archers with small swords, so also foot soldiers like that. The young (king), brave like a lion, gladly sported with them in the bowers, looking for game in very charming large thickets in Gandhāra. He crossed great streams. 'Kill him, kill him; this deer is fleeing.' Speaking like this to his servants, he himself jumped and killed it. Again he moved here and there observing at places the forest-ground which was crowded with groups of frightened peacocks, that flew to the trees and hid themselves. It was full of fear of the herds of (frightened) female deer. In its various directions young ones of deer were running. It was fierce due to the sharp howls of jackals at places. The forest at places bore the beauty of elephants due to the groups of young rhinoceroses (*obscure*). At places it was resounding with the hooting of owls resorting to the hollows of trees. At places it was marked with the impressions of the paws of lions. At places it was red due to the blood of the rohita deer, torn apart by the nails of tigers. At places it suggested to the mind (that it was) the ground in the courtyard of the harem due to the groups of the Mahiṣīs (buffaloes/queens) troubled by the burden of their stout (udders) breasts. At places it was covered with dense trees, and was fragrant with wild flowers. It at places had doors in the form of creepers, and was very charming with the humming of bees. It had large holes fearful due to serpents whose sloughs had partly come out. It was fearful due to the large serpents hiding in it, and spreading sloughs. It at places had the flames of wild fire, and very beautiful due to lustre from stones; it was full of the hissing sounds; it was crowded with deer and tigers. At places he let loose the group of his dogs against rabbits. Having rested at the (banks of) ponds he went to another forest.

25-39. When the lord of kings was going like this, and the group of hunters was swaggering, he saw a deer making a loud noise and moving out of a thicket. With hasty strides it crossed the ground having inaccessible paths. At times it jumped into the air, and at times it was seen on the ground. The king, following its footsteps, entered an impassable forest very imperious due to crooked streams and full of thorny trees. The king, going further and further away and from one solitary region to

another, had his neck and throat dry due to the excitement caused by (his) not (being able) to see the deer. His palate and face had become red. He was perspiring. His footmen were tired; his voice was wavering. After having passed over long ways, he, oppressed with thirst, saw, when the sun had gone to the middle (of the sky, i.e. at noon), before him a lake that vied with the ocean, on the bank of which there were dense trees, which was a holy place, was clean and auspicious. It was large; the lotuses in it had bloomed; the bees were intoxicated with honey. It was covered with green lotus-leaves like emeralds. The fish in it was leaping at will like the clean mind of a good man. It was full of moving aquatic animals. It was adorned with the rows of waves. Like the mind of the wicked, it was rough inside due to the groups of crocodiles; at places, it was, due to moss, inaccessible like a miser's house. Day and night it pacified all the afflictions of various birds. Like donors with all their belongings it destroyed the afflictions of those that resorted to it. With its water it gratified the wild beasts like its own dead ancestors. Like the moon it removed all the heat of the day. Seeing it, he was free from languor like a cātaka on seeing a cloud. Having drunk water there, and having performed the mid-day rites, the king ate, with his companions, the flesh of the game. He, telling charming stories, stayed on its bank, and keeping his arrow fixed to the bow (string), he rested on the bank at night. The hunters, fixing their arrows to the bow strings, blocked the paths of the directions. When the warriors remained like this, having spread the nets, at night on every bank a herd of hogs moved out, and having eaten the bulbs in the lake, jumped (before) the crowd of the hunters.

40-48. The king pierced the hogs; and many were killed by the hunters. In a moment, the hogs that were pierced, fell on the ground. Seeing them, the very proud hunters made an uproar, and running with great joy, gathered where the king stayed. Bringing them through his soldiers, he left the bank of the lake. Desiring to go (back) to his city he saw an ascetic on the way. (He saw) the brāhmaṇa, old Hārīta, well adorned with a conch and disc, with his body emaciated due to restraints difficult to observe and intense. He remained only in bones (i.e. had become skeleton-like), he was highly restrained, and his skin

had become rough. He wore a deer-skin, and put on a soft-bark-garment. He was muttering hymns from the Vedas. He had long nails and hair and matted hair. Seeing that hermit, and giving him passage, the king, with respect saluted him with his head (bent) and the hollows of his hands resembling a lotus joined. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Hārīta), taking him to be a king from his ornaments, and with a desire for obliging others, and for bringing about his welfare said (to him): “At this meritorious and auspicious time, for what purpose are you going, O king, avoiding (i.e. not taking) a morning bath in the month of Māgha?” Then the king replied, “O best brāhmaṇa, I do not know.

49-57. Tell me in detail what kind of fruit the Māgha bath has.” Hearing these words of the king, the ascetic said: “O king, the glorious sun, removing the darkness, is quickly rising. This is the time for our bath and not the time for a talk. After bathing, go to Vasiṣṭha, and ask him, the master of your family.” Saying so the anchorite, observing silence, went for his morning bath. The hero Dilīpa too, turning back, and bathing there with the proper rite, and full of joy went to his own city. In his harem he again told the account of the anchorite. Having got into a chariot having white horses, and with a white umbrella and white chowries (he went to Vasiṣṭha’s hermitage). Being adorned, having put on good garments and surrounded by his ministers, and repeatedly hearing the cries of victory made by the panegyrists and bards, he remembering the words of the sage, went to Vasiṣṭha’s hermitage. There only he saluted the brāhmaṇa sage with politeness. Being given a seat, he accepted the respectful offering, and was adorned with blessings; and when the sage asked the king about his well-being, the king, delighting the sage’s mind spoke the words. He of a sweet form asked (Vasiṣṭha) about what the anchorite had told him.

Dilīpa said:

58-60. O glorious one, by your grace I have, in detail, heard (from you) about the practices, administration of justice, and the great duties of a king, so also the duties of the four castes and stages of human life; so also gifts, and the manners in which they are given; so also sacrifices and rites; so also the

vows told by him, and about Viṣṇu's worship. Now I desire to know the fruit to be had from Māgha bath along with the manner in which it is done. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, tell it to me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

61-71a. That sage, living in the forest, has properly told the highest bliss, bringing about the good of the three worlds, and removing the sin. Those not defeated by the glances of beautiful women (though) in proximity, desire to bathe in the stream when the Sun is in Capricornus. O dear one, those who desire beatitude without (offerings into) fire, sacrifices, without performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity, go out to bathe every morning in Māgha. O king, those who desire (salvation) without giving (a piece of) land, a cow, gold, rubies, cows fashioned with gold etc. bathe in Māgha. Those who desire (to go to) heaven without parching their bodies with the vows lasting for three weeks, the Kṛcchra and Pārāka, always bathe in Māgha. Viṣṇu's worship in Vaiśākha, penance and worship in Kārtika, and the three, viz. penance, sacrifice and gifts, excel (everything else). A man having a planned conclusion (of these) would certainly become the lord of the earth, due to which there would again be no idea leading to salvation (*obscure*). That worship (including) fasting, penance and (giving) gifts in the month of Māgha, O best king, was laid down by those having divine eyes. For (fulfilling) a desire, or for progeny, or for Viṣṇu or (even) without (any of these) one observing the vow of purifying his body (has) four kinds of fruit obtained by bathing. For twelve years Aditi without taking food bathed (daily) in Māgha and obtained twelve sons illuminating the three worlds. Rohiṇī became a favourite wife; Arundhatī became exceedingly liberal; Śacī was endowed with beauty.

71b-86. Those who bathe when the Sun is in the Capricornus sign of the Zodiac, happily live in a palace which has seven storeys, is endowed with beauty due to being cleaned, the courtyard of which is charming with dancers, crowded with beautiful women, which is resounding with singing and musical instruments, which is charming with auspicious practices, which

is pure due to the sounds of (the recital of) the Vedas, which is adorned by learned brāhmaṇas, which is constantly used in worshipping deities, which is charming, which is always resorted to by guests. For those who have given much in Māgha, have worshipped and praised Viṣṇu, Māgha always produces religious merit due to their abandoning dear objects and observing restraints. Māgha cuts off the root of their sins; it is the root of desired objects through giving fruits; it without a desire and always gives knowledge. Those worlds which are secured by those disposed to (securing) knowledge, by those living in forests (i.e. anchorites), by devotees of Viṣṇu, are always secured by those who bathe in Māgha. O hero, due to having (exhausted) religious merit, other men return from heaven; but men given to bathing in Māgha never return. A man who, having bathed in Māgha, gives a milch cow (to a brāhmaṇa), is honoured in heaven for as many thousand years as are the small hair on her entire body, O best king. A man who bathes in Māgha and would give sesamum seeds with jaggery, shines spotless, having washed his sin. Of all the heaps of grains sesamum seeds destroy the sins. Therefore, O best king, sesamum seeds should be given with (every) effort. A man bathing in Māgha should feed brāhmaṇas. He, of a pure soul, after gratifying his dead ancestors, goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, with all efforts Māgha is passed in giving gifts (by men). O best king, a man should not pass Māgha without (giving) a gift. Knowing his (i.e. according to his) wealth he should always give gifts in Māgha. He who would bathe in Māgha and who gives sandals and pitchers to brāhmaṇas, certainly lives in heaven. A man practising the excellent penance of bathing in Māgha, should never pass it without (giving) a gift. Heaven is obtained through charity.

87-89. O king, heaven is obtained through giving (gifts). Happiness is obtained through giving (gifts). Blemish due to great sin perishes due to giving (gifts). Penance without giving (gifts) does not shine like the sky without the sun, or a family without progeny, or a house without good practices. There is nothing superior to this, that is pure and that destroys sins. (This) was related to a vidyādhara by Bhṛṅgu on Maṇi mountain.

The king said:

90. O brāhmaṇa, when did that brāhmaṇa Bhṛgu give him the instruction in the religious practice on the mountain. Tell it to me, (as I am asking it) through curiosity.

Vasiṣṭha said:

91-94. O king, formerly the clouds did not shower (water) for twelve years. People being afflicted and emaciated, went into all the ten directions. When, O king, at that time the region between Himālaya and Vindhya had become barren, was devoid of the utterances of *svāhā*, *svahdā* and *vaṣaṭ*, and the study of the Vedas, when the world was in distress, when piety had disappeared, and when the world had become lustreless, when the globe was void of fruits, roots, food and water, Bhṛgu, along with his disciples, moved out of his hermitage on the charming bank of Revā covered with trees of Vindhya mountain, and went to the Himālaya mountain.

95-110. There, to the west of Kailāsa mountain, stands a mountain, known as Maṇikūṭa—a heap of gold, gems and red arsenic. The mountain is crystal-like white in the lower parts, has dark blue slabs in the middle; and surrounded by grandeur on all sides, and white, it shone like Śiva. It is dark-blue everywhere, and has golden lines in between. It shines like a cloud with the streak of lightning flashing. At the top the mountain has dark blue rocks. Below (it) it has a golden girdle. It shines like Viṣṇu wearing a yellow garment. Appearing very dark green without the girdle, it has white rocks (at places) in the middle. The mountain shone like the sky with stars. It shone like another moon that had secured his own white body, that bore divine herbs, and that diffused great light. The mountain always shone with the music of kinnarīs on its table-lands, with bamboos, and with the banners in the form of the leaves of plantain trees. The mountain was as it were covered with rainbows due to the circles of the rays of lustre of the sharp rocks of green stones, lapis lazuli, and rubies. It was well adorned with gold, full of all minerals, various gems; it was covered everywhere with lofty peaks like flames of fire. Vidyādhara women overcome with sexual desire come to its slopes having grass and

big rocks and serve their husbands. The detached ones, having restrained their breath, and having overcome anger, day and night meditate upon Brahman in its caves. Siddhas, with rosaries and (sacred) threads in their hands, with their eyes half-open, propitiate Śiva in the beautiful caves. This (mountain), having rendered fragrant the quarters with the fragrance of the mandāra flowers, is always noisy with the murmuring sound of the water of the mountain torrents. The mountain is always charming due to the young ones of the elephants and the elephants in the forest playing in the lands at its foot, due to herds of musk-deer and charming spotted antelopes, so also due to the sporting flocks of camaras and strange wild beasts, cooing pigeons, cakoras and cuckoos also, so also due to royal swans and peacocks. It is always resorted to by gods, guhyakas and bebies of celestial damsels.

The king said:

111-117. The mountain is full of many wonders; it is the resort of all (kinds of) prosperity. O revered one, what is its height? What is its length? How extensive is it?

The sage said:

At (i.e. up to) its top it is thirtysix yojanas in height. Its length and expanse are ten yojanas. At the foot it is sixteen yojanas. It is adorned with the rows of yellow sandal (trees), mandāra (trees) and mango (trees). It is crowded with devadāru trees, and is adorned with sarala and arjuna (trees). The best mountain, always giving flowers and fruits, shines with kālāgaru trees, clove trees, so also with arbours and bowers. On seeing that beautiful mountain, Bhṛgu who was oppressed with famine, was mentally delighted and lived there only. (On the charming mountain, in its caves and thickets) Bhṛgu well-engrossed in penance, practised penance for a long time. Getting down from the mountain a vidhyādhara couple came (there). Approaching the sage, saluting him, it very much grieved, and stayed there.

118-130a. Seeing them like that the brāhmaṇa spoke sweet words: "O vidyādhara, tell me in a friendly way why you are so much unhappy." Hearing the sage's words, the vidyādhara said

to the brāhmaṇa: “O best among the ascetics, listen to the cause of my unhappiness. Having obtained the fruit of my religious merit, I reached heaven. Though I got a deity’s (i.e. a divine) body, my face was like a tiger’s. I do not know of which deed (of mine) this effect came up. Again and again thinking like this, I did not obtain pleasure. O brāhmaṇa, listen to this another (thing) due to which my mind is afflicted. This my wife is auspicious, of a sweet voice and beautiful. She is proficient in the arts of dancing and singing; she possesses all good qualities. When she was a maiden, she, the spotless one, playing upon the lute, very much delighted, with the seven strings, sage Nārada skilled in playing upon the lute. This one, having a lovely voice, pleased, even in her childlike state, the lord of gods, conversant with charming tunes. Hearing the fifth note, sweet due to many winding modes (of singing) of her with her body horripilating due to eagerness while playing upon the lute, Śiva nodding his head, and horripilated, was delighted. No other beautiful woman having the grace of good character, generosity, (other) hosts of virtues, beauty and youth, like her, is (to be found) in heaven. ‘What a great disparity is there between this divine-faced female and a tiger-faced male like me?’ O brāhmaṇa, always thinking like this in my mind, I am burning.” Hearing these words, Bhṛṅgu, Ikṣvāku’s son, having a divine eye, and knowing the three times, laughed and said:

130b-138a. “O best vidyādhara, listen to the strange fruit of (one’s) deeds. Having obtained it, the wise are not deluded, but the ignorant are deluded. As poison, just of the measure of the wing of a bee is dangerous, similarly even a small act, not enjoined, is dangerous in its effect. Having fasted on Ekādaśī, you smeared your body with oil. Due to that you have become tiger-faced in the body of the previous existence on Dvādaśī. Formerly Purūravas, having fasted on the auspicious Ekādaśī but having used oil on the Dvādaśī obtained, like you, an ugly body. Seeing his ugly body, he was pained by that affliction. He went to the lord of mountains on the lake of the deities, and staying there with great joy, he bathed, and being pure, (sat on) a darbha-seat. The king, fasting, and, having controlled all his senses, and reflecting in his mind on Viṣṇu, dark green like a fresh cloud, having large lotus-like eyes, holding a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus,

of (i.e. committed by) me of a foolish mind. There was no sinful act which I did not do.

138-150a. O you of an excellent complexion, listen to another drawback of that holy place. The sin of the size of an atom (committed) in Avimukta would attain (the size of) Meru. During that existence, I did not collect any (kind of) religious merit. Then, O beautiful lady, I died after a period of many days. Due to the power of Avimukta I did not go to hell. No sinner dying at Avimukta goes to hell. Any sin committed at Avimukta certainly becomes adamant. Due to that adamant sin I was born as a demon—fearful, very cruel, and sinful—on the snow mountain. Formerly I was twice born in the stock of vulture, thrice as a tiger, twice as a serpent, once as an owl, and after that as a hog. O you beautiful lady, this my birth as a demon is tenth. Of (this) my birth thousands of years have passed. O good one, I am not escaping from this ocean of misery. Here I have made (the region up to) three yojanas devoid of beings. I have destroyed many sinless beings, O you of beautiful eye-brows, due to that act my mind is constantly burning. My mind, sprinkled with the nectar of your sight, has become cool. A holy place gives its fruit after (some) time; (but) contact with the good (gives fruit) instantly. Therefore, O beautiful lady, the wise recommend the company of the good. I have told you all this affliction lurking in my mind. O you beautiful lady, a good man whose mind is not afflicted, is rare. You know what is proper here. What more should I say? I am thinking as to how I can cross over this ocean of misery. The prosperity of the good is the source of livelihood to all; does the Milky Ocean give milk to a swan (only) and not to a crane also?

Dattātreyā said:

150b-163. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Kāñcanamālīnī having her mind melted with compassion, and deciding to give (him) her religious merit, said: “O demon, I shall make atonement (for your sin). Do not be grieved. Making a firm vow, I shall try to release you. Year after year I have duly taken (bath) in the month of Māgha. O good one, (I have bathed) with faith in the holy place of Prayāga. I am unable to tell the amount of that religious merit, O demon. The wise men

have said that piety should be secretly praised. The sages, proficient in the Vedas praise giving (gifts) to the afflicted. O good one, what fruit would there be for cloud showering (water) into the ocean. O demon, I have myself experienced the fruit due to that religious merit. O friend, I shall give you that (merit) which instantly destroys sin.” Then she squeezed her (wet) garment, and took the water in her lotus-like hand. She gave the old demon (her) religious merit due to (the bath in) Māgha. O king, listen, strange is the prowess due to the religious merit (of bathing) in Māgha. Having thus received her religious merit, he was free from (i.e. he got rid of) the demonish body. He became one having the body of a deity, lustrous like the sun’s form. With his eyes blooming with joy, he got into a divine vehicle. He then shone in the sky, illuminating the quarters with his lustre. He, having a divine form, shone like another sun. Then he congratulated that Kāñcanamālīnī: “O good one, the powerful god who gives the fruit of acts, knows that obligation done by you to me, where no acquittal was possible. Even now, kindly be pleased and favour me. O respectable lady, give me auspicious instruction, full of morals, and causing all religious acts, so that I shall not commit a sin. Hearing that I, permitted by you, shall later go to the abode of gods.”

Dattātreya said:

164-177. Having heard these words full of righteousness, uttered by him, Kāñcanamālīnī told him very affectionately about the religious practice, O king: “Always practise a good course. Give up harming beings. Serve good men. Kill the enemy (in the form) of passion. Quickly giving up praising and censuring the virtues and vices of others, speak the truth. Worship Viṣṇu. Go to the world of gods (i.e. heaven). Give up your longing after the body full of bones, flesh and blood. Give up the sense of mineness for your wife, sons etc. Mark ceaselessly that this world is perishable. Being firm in abstract meditation, be interested in detachment. Through love for you, I have told you the path of piety. Bear all (this) in mind. Be one of a good character. Giving up your demonish body, taking up a divine body full of lustre, quickly and happily go to heaven.” Hearing

about the religious practices, the demon, being pleased, said: “Be always joyful. May you always have well-being. As long as the Moon and the Sun last, enjoy at Kailāsa in Śiva’s proximity. O you of an excellent complexion, may you have Pārvatī’s constant love. O mother, always be devoted to piety and penance. May you not have longing after your body. Always remove the misery of the afflicted.” Speaking like this to and saluting Kāñcanamālinī, that demon, praised by many gandharvas went to heaven. Then daughters of gods, full of joy, came and showered flowers on the head of that Kāñcanamālā. The girls embraced her and spoke sweet words: “O good one, you have done a wonder freeing the demon. Due to the fear of this (demon) no one entered the forest. Now, we, being fearless, shall move here as we like.” O king, hearing their words, that Kāñcanamālinī, pleased with the gift (she gave) became (i.e. regarded herself as) blessed. Kāñcanamālinī, the best daughter of a gandharva, having quickly freed him, and full of obligations, went, playing with them, to Śiva’s abode.

A man who would devoutly listen to the dialogue of that excellent girl (and the demon) is never troubled by demons, and has a great liking for piety.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

The Hymn Yogasāra in Praise of Viṣṇu

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-15. I have told you the importance of Māgha as narrated by Dattātreyā. I shall now tell (you) which fruit Māgha bath has. O hero, Māgha bath is the best of all sacrifices; it gives the fruit of all gifts; it is equal to all vows and austerities. Men, due to Māgha bath (taken) with a pure mind, put the dead ancestors of both (the mother’s and the father’s) families in heaven, and themselves go to heaven in aeroplanes going according to the desire (of the occupants) along with ladies

of bright faces. Even those men who always commit sins, who are always engaged in bad practices, who go astray, but who bathe in Māgha and worship Viṣṇu, abandon a collection of great sins (committed) in this world. Even those men who are void of truth, who make their father and mother unhappy, who do not remain within (the limits) of the stages of life, who avoid the family practices, who are hypocrites, also get the position of the good due to the Māgha baths in this world. It is very difficult for men to get (an opportunity to have) a bath in the month of Māgha at holy places, since by that men obtain the position of the knowers of Brahman. No doubt should be raised about this. O king, in Māgha (practising) penance, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns) and continuous worship of Viṣṇu and his temple is inexhaustible (in giving fruit). Therefore, men should strive to bathe and give garments, food and gold according to their capacity. A giver of food in Māgha drinks nectar in heaven. A giver of gold goes near Indra. A man who offers a lamp-fire, garments, is full of lustre, and always lives in the world of the Sun. Sinners are not so much purified in this world by sacrifices, good gifts, severe and bright austerities, following proper celibacy, worshipping (deities) and resorting to abstract meditation as by Māgha baths causing religious merit. Those sinners who bathe at holy places when the orb of the Sun has half come up in the month of Māgha, do not suffer from the torment of a series of miseries and the unbearable torment inflicted by Yama. Those who, after having bathed in Māgha, worship Viṣṇu, become, after falling from heaven, kings who are excellent, handsome, fortunate, sweet-speaking, righteous, very wealthy, and living for a hundred years. As a heap of pieces of wood offered into fire is reduced to ash just that moment, in the same way, due to Māgha bath the heap of great sins and a series of sins, though vile, melt away. The bath in Māgha would, like Viṣṇu existing in the heart, burn all that sin committed by men through body, speech or mind, so also the sin that is known (i.e. deliberate) or unknown. O king, when the Māgha bath is taken, the fruit of the sin (committed) inadvertently, which is being undergone, certainly perishes just at that moment. Formerly, O king, the gandharva-maidens undergoing suffering due to the

sin, were freed from that as a result of Māgha bath (taken) at the words of Lomaśa. It was wonderful.

Sūta said:

16-33. Hearing these words, the king joyfully saluted his lotus-like feet, and polite due to great faith, asked that priest: “O revered sir, tell me whence the maidens got the curse, whose children they were, what their names and ages were, how they were freed from the suffering due to the curse by Lomaśa’s words, where did they bathe, and in what number?

Vasiṣṭha said:

O best king, listen to the great story full of religious merit, which is like the araṇi (i.e. the piece of wood used for kindling sacred fire) pregnant with fire and producing religious merit and fire. There was a gandharva (named) Sukhasaṅgīti. His daughter was Pramodinī. Suśīlā was Suśīla’s (daughter); Susvarā that of Svaravedin; Sutārā of Candrakānta and Candrikā of Suprabha. O king, these were the excellent names of those celestial nymphs. All the five maidens were of the same age; they had, as it were, come out from the Moon, and were bright like moonlight. Their faces were (lovely) like the Moon. They had good (i.e. long) hair; their lips contained the ambrosia from the Moon. They gave delight to the eyes as moonlight to the water-lily. They were born with profuse beauty; they had charming forms; they were attractive; their pitcher-like breasts had come up (i.e. were raised) like the lotus-plants in spring. Like a creeper with fresh foliage they had charming youth spreading out. They were yellowish like gold; had golden lustre; were adorned with golden ornaments. They had put on garlands of campaka flowers; they had golden complexion; had put on good garments; they were skilled in notes of the musical scale, and scales in music, in various melodies, in beating time and amusements, in playing upon the flute and the lute which accompanied the sound of the drums, in dances, in hobbies like drawing pictures and (other) arts. The maidens who were like this loved sporting in a grove. Fondled by their parents they moved in Kubera’s abode. Once (all) the five coming together through curiosity in the month of Vaiśākha, collected mandāra flowers

from one grove and another and to propitiate Pārvatī some time went to the Acchoda lake. They took from that (lake) excellent golden lotuses along with excellent blue lotuses. Having bathed in the lake which was bright with lapis lazuli, clear like crystal and having corals, and having put on garments, they with the golden sand fashioned, observing silence, a solid image of Pārvatī with an altar. The maidens, full of devotion, honouring Pārvatī with sandal, camphor and saffron, and worshipping her (image) with excellent lotuses etc. and with various modes of worships, danced by beating time. Having resorted to the excellent note of gandhāra (i.e. the third note) with sweet sounds of strings and with good modulations, the deer-eyed sang a song, having sweet letters, charming theme, and sweet tunes due to turns.

34-50. To that excellent holy place of Acchoda which had sweet-sounds (of music), which gave sprinkling of delight and joy, Agnipa, the son of a sage, the treasure of Vedas, came to bathe when the maidens were dancing very freely. He was matchless in form; had an excellent face: his eyes were long like lotus-leaves; he was young; his chest was broad; his arms were good; he was very handsome; he had a darkish complexion. He was as it were another Cupid. That celibate, with a tuft of hair on the crown of his head, shone with his staff like Cupid with his bow. He had covered himself with deer-hide, had worn a good sacred thread, and had his girdle of muñja grass resembling gold. Seeing that brāhmaṇa, the maidens, full of curiosity, were delighted (asking themselves): 'who is this (welcome) guest to our eyes on the bank of the lake?' Leaving dancing and singing, they, pierced by Cupid with his arrows like female deer pierced with arrows by a hunter, were engrossed in looking at him. The five innocent ones, saying, with great excitement (to one another), 'See (him), see (him)' mistook that youth, the excellent brāhmaṇa, for the god of love. Again and again propitiating him (i.e. gazing on him) with their eyes like lotuses, the maidens then debated with one another: 'If he is the god of love, how would he go without Rati? Is he the (twin) deities Aśvins? But they indeed move as twins. Is he a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a siddha, taking any form at will? Or is he a son of a sage or some excellent man?

Whosoever he may be, he has been created for us by the Creator. As for the lucky ones a treasure is fashioned by (means of) their former deeds, in the same way this excellent bridegroom is brought for us—the maidens, by Pārvatī whose mind is moistened due to the flood of the large waves of the water of compassion. ‘I have chosen him; you have also chosen him. As you have chosen him, so have I.’ O best king, when the maidens were talking thus, he, having heard their words, performed the mid-day rites, and thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): ‘This obstacle has come up. It is a wonder that gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, so also the ancient sages and siddhas, powerful in abstract meditation, were easily deluded by women. Whose deer in the form of his mind, struck by the archer Cupid with the sharp arrows in the form of the eyes (i.e. glances) of women and going out from the very strong bow in the form of their creeper-like brows, does not fall? Men’s morality shines, men would be afraid of people, the great strength of the mind would persist, the consideration of (their) family would be done, the maturity due to penance would persist, the maintaining of the vows of men would be done till men are not deluded by the arrows of the glances of women, with ardent passion.

51-53. Let women delude and madden the passionate ones with their charming amorous gestures. (But) by means of which qualities do these women delude and madden me, highly devoted to piety? May the passionate ones, with their hearts very much deluded, not take delight in the immodest, impure bodies of women, produced from flesh, semen, feces and urine, imagining them (to have) charm? The wise ones of pure minds have declared the contact of women to be fearful. Till they do not approach me, I will go home?’

54-67. Till the excellent maidens did not come (i.e. before they came) near him, the brāhmaṇa disappeared by means of his prowess due to Viṣṇu. Seeing that amazing act of the intelligent son of a sage, who had disappeared due to his magical power, the maidens with their eyes frightened, and afraid like female deer, and with their eyes confused and vacant, looked into the ten directions. To one another they said: “He clearly knows magic, or knows māyā, (since) though seen, he again disappe-

ared.” Just then their hearts were pervaded with the fire of separation, like a very glossy, dense forest with blazing wild fire. ‘O dear, giving up your practice of magic, quickly present yourself, united with our minds, and like a fly (falling) into a morsel before (it is put into the mouth), to us. Alas! why did the Creator show you to us? Why did he fashion you? Oh! we have understood it: You have been created to give (us) great torment. Is your heart cruel? Have you no mind (i.e. interest) in us? O dear, are you cunning? Are you stealing our mind? Do you have no faith in us? Are you testing us? Are you given to the art of joking? Are you proficient in trickery? Do you know the skill to enter into (other’s) hearts? And do you not again know to get out of it? Are you angry with us without (our) fault? Do you know the affliction caused to others due to deception? O lord of (our) hearts, we won’t now live without seeing you. And if we live, it is through the hope of seeing you again. Take us there where you have quickly gone. The Creator, depriving us of your sight has cut (our desire) just when it was a sprout. By all means appear (before us). By all means resort to pity. Good men do not at all see (i.e. do not go to) the extreme.’

68-70. Having wailed like this, and having waited for him for a long time, they quickly started moving towards home through the fear of their fathers. Bound by the chains of his love, very much afflicted due to separation from him, they somehow mustered courage and came home. All they came (home) and dropped (themselves) near fountains. They were asked by (their) mothers: “What is this? Why were you late?”

The maidens said:

71-80. As we were gladly sporting and singing with the kinnara-maidens at the lake, we were not conscious of (the particular time of) the day etc. O mothers, we were tired on the path, therefore, there is torment in our bodies. Due to great insensibility we are not able to speak.

Speaking like this the maidens rolled there on the jewelled floor. The perplexed ones concealing the expression of the face as giving a clue to their inward thoughts spoke with their mothers. Some one did not make the pet peacock dance with joy. Some other did not

teach the parrot in the cage through curiosity. Another one would not fondle the mongoose, or did not delight the sārīkā. Another one, very much perplexed, did not play with cranes. They did not resort to amusements; they were not delighted at home. They did not much talk to their kinsmen. They did not play on the lute. They did not drink the juice of the flowers of desire-yielding trees, which was tasty like nectar, which was sweet, and fragrant with mandāra flowers. The maidens with their eyes fixed on the tips of their noses, remained like female devotees continuously concentrating on the Unknown and having Viṣṇu in their minds. For a moment they remained at the window, covered with the moon-stones and oozing drops of water, and at (another) moment they remained at the fountain. For a moment they arranged their beds with the petals of lotuses from the lakes. They were fanned by their friends with cold leaves of plantain trees.

81-91. Thus those excellent maidens thought one night to be equal to a yuga. Somehow they showed courage, (but) they were afflicted as if suffering from fever. Seeing the sun in the sky they thought of their life. Each one informing her own mother, they went to worship Pārvatī. Having bathed according to the rite, and having worshipped (Pārvatī) with flowers and incense as was proper, they remained there singing. In the meanwhile that brāhmaṇa also came from his hermitage to the Acchoda lake to bathe. The maidens seeing the celibate had their eyes bloomed, as the lotus plants (have the lotuses bloomed) on seeing the sun at night's end. Just then the maidens went near the celibate and bound him with the bonds of their left and right hands. "O cunning one, yesterday you had gone (i.e. you could go). You cannot go today. We have surrounded you. About this you should have no doubt." Thus addressed, the brāhmaṇa who was (caught) in the noose of their arms, laughed and said: "You are talking good, favourable, sweet words. But the vow of me staying in the first stage of life and devoted to Vedic studies in my preceptor's house, has not been completed. The wise should stick to the practice which (is prescribed) for a particular stage of life. Therefore, O maidens, I do not think that marriage would be a (proper) way (for me)." Hearing his

words, they, with a sweet but indistinct voice, like the cuckoos in spring, and with curiosity, spoke to him (these) words:

92-106: “The wise ones say that the sacred rule is fixed like this: Worldly prosperity (*Artha*) is born of righteousness (*Dharma*). From *Artha* springs *Kāma*. And the fruits of righteousness (*Dharma*) spring from sensual enjoyments (*Kāma*): That sensual enjoyment has stood before you due to the abundance of your righteousness. Enjoy it through various pleasures. This will then be heaven (only).” Hearing these words of them he spoke in a serious voice. “Your words are true; but having finished my vow in this (stage of life) and having obtained (my) preceptor’s consent, I shall go through the complete rite of marriage. Not otherwise.” They thus addressed, again said, “O handsome one, you are certainly ignorant. Excellent women are a divine medicine, are Brahmā’s elixir, accomplishment of a treasure, excellent arts. They are a hymn, they (produce) a liking for success, and when they have approached, an intelligent man should not keep them off according to law. If an act is succeeding through (good) luck, the virtuous one does not ignore it. Since ignoring it is not fruitful, so, procrastination also is not recommended. (Only) fortunate men, and not others obtain maidens who have intense love, who are spotless due to being born in a (noble) family, whose hearts are soft with affection, who speak sweetly, who choose their grooms, who are beautiful, and whose youth is charming. What a great disparity there is between us—beautiful maidens—and this chap? I think the Creator is very clever in doing a difficult job. Therefore, do an auspicious thing now by accepting us in the gāndharva form of marriage. Otherwise we will not live.” Hearing these words, the brāhmaṇa who knew well the customary observance said: “O you deer-eyed ones, how should men whose wealth is religious merit, abandon the customary observances? Righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyment and salvation—these four (when practised) in (due) order are said to give (their) fruit. Opposite of this is fruitless. Therefore, I who have taken up a vow, would not marry at a wrong time. He who does not know the time of an act (i.e. the time when the act should be done) does not obtain its fruit. Since, O maidens, my mind is attached to religious thought, therefore, listen—I do not long after a self-choice

marriage.” Having thus known his intention, and looking at one another, they left one another’s hands, (and) Pramodinī seized his feet. Suśilā and Susvarā seized his arms; Sūtārā embraced him, and Candrikā kissed his face.

107-117. Yet the celibate remained uninterested; and resembling the fire at the time of the final deluge, and filled with great anger, he cursed them. “You clung to me like female imps. Therefore, you will be (i.e. turn into) female imps.” Thus, they, quickly cursed by him, left him and stood (as) before. “O sinful one, what have you done this to innocent persons? Fie upon your righteousness, since you did an undesirable act when a desirable act should have been done. We have heard that the happiness of the man who bears malice against adorers that are attached and his friends, perishes in both worlds. Therefore, by our curse you too quickly become an imp.” Speaking like this, those maidens, heaving sighs, smit with hunger, ceased (speaking). Then due to the anger towards one another all the maidens and that celibate became imps in that lake, O king. The female imps and the male imp, waiting ruthlessly, put an end to the fruit of the acts they had obtained formerly. O king, auspicious or inauspicious acts done before do give their fruit unavoidably even to gods, like one’s (unavoidable) shadow. Their fathers and mothers, so also his (father and mother) wept there, (saying): “The children have not erred; destiny is difficult to be overcome.” After that (i.e. since then), the imps, greatly pained in securing food, and running here and there, lived on the bank of the lake. When many days passed like this, Lomaśa, the best sage, came to the Acchoda lake to bathe on the fourteenth of Pauṣa.

118-128. Seeing that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Lomaśa), all the imps coming together and (thus) being in a group, and overcome with hunger, and desiring to kill him, ran (to him). Being burnt by his very bright lustre, they were unable to stand before him; and all of them remained away (from him). Just then there came the brāhmaṇa Vedanidhi. Having seen Lomaśa, O king, he saluted him touching the ground with the eight limbs of his body. Having put his folded palms on his head he spoke true and pleasant words: “O brāhmaṇa, (one) would have the company of the good, when there is (a possibility of) the dawn of good

fortune. Between the two, viz. a man who always bathes in holy places like Gaṅgā and who always keeps the company of the good the company of the good is better. O brāhmaṇa, the company of the venerable gives unseen and seen fruit on the earth. It gives (i.e. leads to) heaven; it removes diseases; but is said to be troublesome.” Speaking like this, he told him the former, wonderful account. “These are gandharva-maidens. This chap is my son. O best sage, all deluded by cursing one another, stand in the form of imps with melancholy faces in front of you. By seeing you the children will be freed; does not the mass of darkness hide in a cave on sunrise?” O king, Lomaśa of great lustre, having heard it, had his mind moistened with pity and spoke to the sage, grieved for his son: “Due to my grace may the children’s memory be revived at once. I am talking (words full of) virtue. The mutual curse would end.”

Vedanidhi said:

129. O great sage, describe the virtuous practice due to which the children will be free. This is not time for delay, since the fire of the curse is fearful.

Lomaśa said:

130-145. Let them duly have Māgha bath with me. At the end of Māgha they will be free from the curse. Otherwise there would be no atonement. O brāhmaṇa, the fruit of the curse is sinful. The destruction of men’s sin would take place by Māgha bath at a holy place. Thus I certainly think. Māgha bath, especially at a holy place, would burn all the sin committed during the seven previous existences and the present sin also. Even that sin for which the best sages do not see an expiation, would perish by the Māgha (bath) at holy places. Māgha (bath) at Mānasa produces knowledge. Due to that it gives salvation. It destroys all sins at the holy places on the Himālaya. The teachers of the Vedas have mentioned (Māgha bath) as giving (i.e. taking one to) Indra’s heaven. Māgha (bath) at Badarīvana destroys all sins and gives salvation. (At a holy place on the bank) of Narmadā Māgha (bath) destroys sins and misery, fulfils all desires, gives (i.e. takes one) to Rudra’s heaven and destroys sins. A Māgha bath in Yamunā would lead to the

Sun's world and destroy sins. One in Sarasvatī destroys sins and gives the fruit in the form of Brahmā's world. O best brāhmaṇa, the Māgha (bath) in the Viśālā (river) gives a large fruit. It is a wild fire to the fuel of sins, (and) destroys the effect of the cause of being conceived. A Māgha bath in Gaṅgā is said to lead to Viṣṇu's world and to salvation. Rivers like Śarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Kauśikī, Tāpī, Godāvarī, Bhīmā, Payoṣṇī, Kṛṣṇaveṇikā, Kāverī, Tuṅga-bhadrā and other rivers are there. A man bathing in any of them in Māgha quickly goes to heaven, after being free from sins. Māgha bath in Naimiṣa gives absorption into Viṣṇu, (and one) at Puṣkara takes a man near Brahmā. Due to (a bath) in Māgha at Kurukṣetra a man goes to Indra's world. A Māgha bath at Devahrada gives the fruit in the form of the divine powers obtained through abstract meditation. A man would be an attendant of Rudra by bathing at Prabhāsa when the Sun is in Capricorn. A man gets a divine body by bathing at Devakī in Māgha. O brāhmaṇa, by a bath in Gomatī, at Hemakūṭa, Mahākāla, Omkāra, Amareśvara there is no rebirth (for a man). A man is honoured in Rudra's heaven due to a bath in Māgha at Nīlakaṇṭha and at the confluence of all rivers when the Sun is in Capricorn.

146-155. By means of (such) a bath all the desires of human beings are fulfilled. O best brāhmaṇa, only the fortunate get an opportunity to bathe in Māgha at Prayāga, since the white and black water there gives freedom from rebirth. Gods dwelling in heaven always sing: 'We shall have a bath in Māgha at Prayāga, by having a bath at which place, men do not see (i.e. experience) the pangs of (being conceived in) a womb and remain near Viṣṇu.' Those men, clothed in (i.e. full of) many sins, who bathe on a new-moon day at the holy place of Prayāga, are meritorious, do not go to hell, but gladly move like gods in an auspicious heaven. Formerly the Creator weighed the bath in Māgha at Prayāga with holy places, religious vows, gifts, austerities, and Māgha proved to be greater and therefore superior. That (highest) position which men get by bathing in Māgha, is not obtained by means of parching up their bodies through eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, water, or leaves, or through severe austerities collected over a long period, or by means of abstract

meditations. Does not a row of bees, struck by (the flappings of) the ears of elephants, adorn the doors of the houses of those who have bathed at the holy place of Prayāga at the confluence of the divine rivers (i.e. Gaṅgā with Yamunā) when the Sūn rises (after entering) Capricorn? How is that Prayāga which after having easily destroyed the sins, gives greater fruit after a bath there, than the Rājasūya sacrifice or the horse-sacrifice, not resorted to by (men)? In the country of Avantī formerly there was a king (named) Virasena. Having come to the bank of Narmadā he performed a Rājasūya sacrifice. He duly performed sixteen horse-sacrifices adorned with golden courts, and rich in golden ornaments and tying posts. He gave heaps of grains resembling mountains to brāhmaṇas. He was liberal, a devotee of deities, a giver of cows and of gold.

156-167. There was a foolish brāhmaṇa of a mean family named Bhadraka. He was a farmer of wicked acts, and was excluded from all religious rites. He was fed up with agriculture; and his brothers had not performed any purificatory rites for him. Wandering here and there, he, being oppressed by hunger, went out (of the city). Luckily he got into (i.e. joined) a caravan, and came to Prayāga. He bathed there for three days in Māgha. Once both the king and the brāhmaṇa died. I saw that their condition was similar in the proximity of Indra. They had similar power of the form of lustre, similar group of ladies (attending upon them), similar divine vehicles, similar ornaments, a garland of pārijāta flowers, similar dance, and similar music. Such is the greatness of the holy place. How can it be described? The Māgha bath at Prayāga is said to be equal to (many) Rājasūya sacrifices, O brāhmaṇa. A man bathing in Māgha at (Prayāga), at the confluence of (Gaṅgā and Yamunā having) white and dark green water, is not reborn, (but) the performer of Rājasūyas would be reborn. Even the breezes in Māgha would touch the white and dark green water. They would not touch inauspicious things, for they indeed destroy great sins. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of talking much in this case? O brāhmaṇa, listen for certain. Māgha would destroy the sin, the fruit of which has sprung up. In this (context) I shall tell you. Listen attentively. (Let the young celestial damsels listen to the ancient account of the liberation of the imps. Let your son also

listen to it. The imps, desiring salvation have obtained recollection through my grace.) Formerly, the brāhmaṇa Devadyuti, a devotee of Viṣṇu and master of the Vedas, with his mind flooded with kindness, liberated the imps.

Dilipa said:

168-169. Where did he stay? Whose son was he? What was his vow? What prayers did he mutter? Due to what did he become a devotee of Viṣṇu? Which imps were liberated? O great sage, tell all this in detail; due to your grace we are hearing an interesting and very auspicious (account).

Vasiṣṭha said:

170-185. On the auspicious bank of Sarasvatī there is a holy pool called Plakṣa. His hermitage resorted to (i.e. was by) a charming mountain. (O king, the hermitage was beautiful due to) groves of good trees like śāla, tāla, tamāla, bilva, bakula, pātala, tintidī, ciri, bilva, mango, campaka, karañja, kovidāra, kesara eaten by elephants, tilaka, karṇikāra, kumbha, khadira, tinduka, vānīra, sālva, jambīra, pīlu, udumbara, reeds, śakota, atarupa, kārahāta and fig trees, ghoṇṭa, kūṭaja, palāśa, aśoka (trees) that removed sorrow, jambu, nimba, kadamba, kṣīrika, karamardaka, and bījapūra, nāriṅga, and adorned with rows of plantain trees, so also jack-fruit trees, and coconut trees always having tasty fruits; saptacchada, tripatra, śirīṣa, and auspicious āmalaka (trees), karkandhu, lakuca, akṣa, pāribhadra and others: ketaka, sinduvara, tagara, kunda, mallikā, white, red, blue lotus (creepers), (creepers of) mālatī and yūthikā (jasmine) mālati, mogara, jāti fruit, punnāga, kiṁśuka, barvari and tulasī-trees. O king, the hermitage was always charming due to trees of various kinds. Through the forest flows the river Sarasvatī of auspicious water. Cranes always warble there softly, sweetly and indistinctly due to ardent passion. Cuckoos coo there, and bees hum (there). O king, the forest is very noisy due to parrots and sārīkās. Many wild beasts move in that best forest. The forest always has fruits and flowers, and has a dusty colour due to pollen, and is covered all round with aśoka trees. The charming forest is embraced on all sides by creepers with new foliage and sprouts that have

sprung up like a lover by his beloveds. Wind afraid of his curse blows on all sides. Clouds do not shower hail stones; the Sun does not dry up (the water). That forest is free from harm; it is inhabited by siddhas and non-siddhas; it always gave delight like the forest Caitraratha.

186-203. In that (forest) lived the pious, best brāhmaṇa, Devadyuti. The brāhmaṇa's son was Sumitra, obtained through the boon of Lakṣmī's husband. Listen to the vow of him who was always controlled. In summer he observed the vow called Pañca (-agni), and fixed his eyes on the Sun. He remained in the open space in the rainy season when the row of clouds showered; and when there was stormy wind blowing, he remained steady like the Himālaya (mountain). O brāhmaṇa, in winter he lived in a pool of Sarasvatī—in water; and during the season he sipped the pure water thrice a day. He everyday gratified his dead ancestors, deities and sages with faith. He always taught the Vedas, spoke the truth, and had curbed his senses. Resting on the (bare) ground, he, appealing to Viṣṇu, meditated on him. He offered oblations to fire with sylvan articles, and honoured guests with reverence. He always spent his time by practising Cāndrāyaṇa vow. He desired to subsist on leaves and fruits fallen on their own. He was not dejected; he was devoted to penance; he had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He was frightful due to his veins (very much strained), and his body had just bones (left in it). In this way he passed a thousand years in the forest. Then the mountain was blazing due to the lustre of his penance. The beings could not bear the lustre of the noble one. O brāhmaṇa, blazing with penance he shone like fire. In that forest beings were free from enmity. Deer, tigers, mice and cats, free from fear, played with one another. Listen also to another vow of him difficult to be secured. Everyday he worshipped Viṣṇu three times with a thousand fragrant flowers that had bloomed. He was very much engrossed in meditating upon Viṣṇu according to the Vedic hymns. The brāhmaṇa performed every act to please Viṣṇu. Due to a boon given to him by Dadhici he became an excellent devotee of Viṣṇu. Once on the Ekādaśī in the month of Vaiṣākha the great sage after worshipping Viṣṇu offered a charming and lovely (hymn of) praise to him. Then only Viṣṇu mounted

of (i.e. committed by) me of a foolish mind. There was no sinful act which I did not do.

138-150a. O you of an excellent complexion, listen to another drawback of that holy place. The sin of the size of an atom (committed) in Avimukta would attain (the size of) Meru. During that existence, I did not collect any (kind of) religious merit. Then, O beautiful lady, I died after a period of many days. Due to the power of Avimukta I did not go to hell. No sinner dying at Avimukta goes to hell. Any sin committed at Avimukta certainly becomes adamant. Due to that adamant sin I was born as a demon—fearful, very cruel, and sinful—on the snow mountain. Formerly I was twice born in the stock of vulture, thrice as a tiger, twice as a serpent, once as an owl, and after that as a hog. O you beautiful lady, this my birth as a demon is tenth. Of (this) my birth thousands of years have passed. O good one, I am not escaping from this ocean of misery. Here I have made (the region up to) three yojanas devoid of beings. I have destroyed many sinless beings, O you of beautiful eye-brows, due to that act my mind is constantly burning. My mind, sprinkled with the nectar of your sight, has become cool. A holy place gives its fruit after (some) time; (but) contact with the good (gives fruit) instantly. Therefore, O beautiful lady, the wise recommend the company of the good. I have told you all this affliction lurking in my mind. O you beautiful lady, a good man whose mind is not afflicted, is rare. You know what is proper here. What more should I say? I am thinking as to how I can cross over this ocean of misery. The prosperity of the good is the source of livelihood to all; does the Milky Ocean give milk to a swan (only) and not to a crane also?

Dattātreyā said:

150b-163. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Kāñcanamālīnī having her mind melted with compassion, and deciding to give (him) her religious merit, said: “O demon, I shall make atonement (for your sin). Do not be grieved. Making a firm vow, I shall try to release you. Year after year I have duly taken (bath) in the month of Māgha. O good one, (I have bathed) with faith in the holy place of Prayāga. I am unable to tell the amount of that religious merit, O demon. The wise men

have said that piety should be secretly praised. The sages, proficient in the Vedas praise giving (gifts) to the afflicted. O good one, what fruit would there be for cloud showering (water) into the ocean. O demon, I have myself experienced the fruit due to that religious merit. O friend, I shall give you that (merit) which instantly destroys sin.” Then she squeezed her (wet) garment, and took the water in her lotus-like hand. She gave the old demon (her) religious merit due to (the bath in) Māgha. O king, listen, strange is the prowess due to the religious merit (of bathing) in Māgha. Having thus received her religious merit, he was free from (i.e. he got rid of) the demonish body. He became one having the body of a deity, lustrous like the sun’s form. With his eyes blooming with joy, he got into a divine vehicle. He then shone in the sky, illuminating the quarters with his lustre. He, having a divine form, shone like another sun. Then he congratulated that Kāñcanamālīnī: “O good one, the powerful god who gives the fruit of acts, knows that obligation done by you to me, where no acquittal was possible. Even now, kindly be pleased and favour me. O respectable lady, give me auspicious instruction, full of morals, and causing all religious acts, so that I shall not commit a sin. Hearing that I, permitted by you, shall later go to the abode of gods.”

Dattātreya said:

164-177. Having heard these words full of righteousness, uttered by him, Kāñcanamālīnī told him very affectionately about the religious practice, O king: “Always practise a good course. Give up harming beings. Serve good men. Kill the enemy (in the form) of passion. Quickly giving up praising and censuring the virtues and vices of others, speak the truth. Worship Viṣṇu. Go to the world of gods (i.e. heaven). Give up your longing after the body full of bones, flesh and blood. Give up the sense of mineness for your wife, sons etc. Mark ceaselessly that this world is perishable. Being firm in abstract meditation, be interested in detachment. Through love for you, I have told you the path of piety. Bear all (this) in mind. Be one of a good character. Giving up your demonish body, taking up a divine body full of lustre, quickly and happily go to heaven.” Hearing

about the religious practices, the demon, being pleased, said: “Be always joyful. May you always have well-being. As long as the Moon and the Sun last, enjoy at Kailāsa in Śiva’s proximity. O you of an excellent complexion, may you have Pārvatī’s constant love. O mother, always be devoted to piety and penance. May you not have longing after your body. Always remove the misery of the afflicted.” Speaking like this to and saluting Kāñcanamālinī, that demon, praised by many gandharvas went to heaven. Then daughters of gods, full of joy, came and showered flowers on the head of that Kāñcanamālā. The girls embraced her and spoke sweet words: “O good one, you have done a wonder freeing the demon. Due to the fear of this (demon) no one entered the forest. Now, we, being fearless, shall move here as we like.” O king, hearing their words, that Kāñcanamālinī, pleased with the gift (she gave) became (i.e. regarded herself as) blessed. Kāñcanamālinī, the best daughter of a gandharva, having quickly freed him, and full of obligations, went, playing with them, to Śiva’s abode.

A man who would devoutly listen to the dialogue of that excellent girl (and the demon) is never troubled by demons, and has a great liking for piety.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

The Hymn Yogasāra in Praise of Viṣṇu

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-15. I have told you the importance of Māgha as narrated by Dattātreyā. I shall now tell (you) which fruit Māgha bath has. O hero, Māgha bath is the best of all sacrifices; it gives the fruit of all gifts; it is equal to all vows and austerities. Men, due to Māgha bath (taken) with a pure mind, put the dead ancestors of both (the mother’s and the father’s) families in heaven, and themselves go to heaven in aeroplanes going according to the desire (of the occupants) along with ladies

of bright faces. Even those men who always commit sins, who are always engaged in bad practices, who go astray, but who bathe in Māgha and worship Viṣṇu, abandon a collection of great sins (committed) in this world. Even those men who are void of truth, who make their father and mother unhappy, who do not remain within (the limits) of the stages of life, who avoid the family practices, who are hypocrites, also get the position of the good due to the Māgha baths in this world. It is very difficult for men to get (an opportunity to have) a bath in the month of Māgha at holy places, since by that men obtain the position of the knowers of Brahman. No doubt should be raised about this. O king, in Māgha (practising) penance, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns) and continuous worship of Viṣṇu and his temple is inexhaustible (in giving fruit). Therefore, men should strive to bathe and give garments, food and gold according to their capacity. A giver of food in Māgha drinks nectar in heaven. A giver of gold goes near Indra. A man who offers a lamp-fire, garments, is full of lustre, and always lives in the world of the Sun. Sinners are not so much purified in this world by sacrifices, good gifts, severe and bright austerities, following proper celibacy, worshipping (deities) and resorting to abstract meditation as by Māgha baths causing religious merit. Those sinners who bathe at holy places when the orb of the Sun has half come up in the month of Māgha, do not suffer from the torment of a series of miseries and the unbearable torment inflicted by Yama. Those who, after having bathed in Māgha, worship Viṣṇu, become, after falling from heaven, kings who are excellent, handsome, fortunate, sweet-speaking, righteous, very wealthy, and living for a hundred years. As a heap of pieces of wood offered into fire is reduced to ash just that moment, in the same way, due to Māgha bath the heap of great sins and a series of sins, though vile, melt away. The bath in Māgha would, like Viṣṇu existing in the heart, burn all that sin committed by men through body, speech or mind, so also the sin that is known (i.e. deliberate) or unknown. O king, when the Māgha bath is taken, the fruit of the sin (committed) inadvertently, which is being undergone, certainly perishes just at that moment. Formerly, O king, the gandharva-maidens undergoing suffering due to the

sin, were freed from that as a result of Māgha bath (taken) at the words of Lomaśa. It was wonderful.

Sūta said:

16-33. Hearing these words, the king joyfully saluted his lotus-like feet, and polite due to great faith, asked that priest: “O revered sir, tell me whence the maidens got the curse, whose children they were, what their names and ages were, how they were freed from the suffering due to the curse by Lomaśa’s words, where did they bathe, and in what number?

Vasiṣṭha said:

O best king, listen to the great story full of religious merit, which is like the araṇi (i.e. the piece of wood used for kindling sacred fire) pregnant with fire and producing religious merit and fire. There was a gandharva (named) Sukhasaṅgīti. His daughter was Pramodinī. Suśīlā was Suśīla’s (daughter); Susvarā that of Svaravedin; Sutārā of Candrakānta and Candrikā of Suprabha. O king, these were the excellent names of those celestial nymphs. All the five maidens were of the same age; they had, as it were, come out from the Moon, and were bright like moonlight. Their faces were (lovely) like the Moon. They had good (i.e. long) hair; their lips contained the ambrosia from the Moon. They gave delight to the eyes as moonlight to the water-lily. They were born with profuse beauty; they had charming forms; they were attractive; their pitcher-like breasts had come up (i.e. were raised) like the lotus-plants in spring. Like a creeper with fresh foliage they had charming youth spreading out. They were yellowish like gold; had golden lustre; were adorned with golden ornaments. They had put on garlands of campaka flowers; they had golden complexion; had put on good garments; they were skilled in notes of the musical scale, and scales in music, in various melodies, in beating time and amusements, in playing upon the flute and the lute which accompanied the sound of the drums, in dances, in hobbies like drawing pictures and (other) arts. The maidens who were like this loved sporting in a grove. Fondled by their parents they moved in Kubera’s abode. Once (all) the five coming together through curiosity in the month of Vaiśākha, collected mandāra flowers

from one grove and another and to propitiate Pārvatī some time went to the Acchoda lake. They took from that (lake) excellent golden lotuses along with excellent blue lotuses. Having bathed in the lake which was bright with lapis lazuli, clear like crystal and having corals, and having put on garments, they with the golden sand fashioned, observing silence, a solid image of Pārvatī with an altar. The maidens, full of devotion, honouring Pārvatī with sandal, camphor and saffron, and worshipping her (image) with excellent lotuses etc. and with various modes of worships, danced by beating time. Having resorted to the excellent note of gandhāra (i.e. the third note) with sweet sounds of strings and with good modulations, the deer-eyed sang a song, having sweet letters, charming theme, and sweet tunes due to turns.

34-50. To that excellent holy place of Acchoda which had sweet-sounds (of music), which gave sprinkling of delight and joy, Agnipa, the son of a sage, the treasure of Vedas, came to bathe when the maidens were dancing very freely. He was matchless in form; had an excellent face: his eyes were long like lotus-leaves; he was young; his chest was broad; his arms were good; he was very handsome; he had a darkish complexion. He was as it were another Cupid. That celibate, with a tuft of hair on the crown of his head, shone with his staff like Cupid with his bow. He had covered himself with deer-hide, had worn a good sacred thread, and had his girdle of muñja grass resembling gold. Seeing that brāhmaṇa, the maidens, full of curiosity, were delighted (asking themselves): 'who is this (welcome) guest to our eyes on the bank of the lake?' Leaving dancing and singing, they, pierced by Cupid with his arrows like female deer pierced with arrows by a hunter, were engrossed in looking at him. The five innocent ones, saying, with great excitement (to one another), 'See (him), see (him)' mistook that youth, the excellent brāhmaṇa, for the god of love. Again and again propitiating him (i.e. gazing on him) with their eyes like lotuses, the maidens then debated with one another: 'If he is the god of love, how would he go without Rati? Is he the (twin) deities Aśvins? But they indeed move as twins. Is he a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a siddha, taking any form at will? Or is he a son of a sage or some excellent man?

Whosoever he may be, he has been created for us by the Creator. As for the lucky ones a treasure is fashioned by (means of) their former deeds, in the same way this excellent bridegroom is brought for us—the maidens, by Pārvatī whose mind is moistened due to the flood of the large waves of the water of compassion. 'I have chosen him; you have also chosen him. As you have chosen him, so have I.' O best king, when the maidens were talking thus, he, having heard their words, performed the mid-day rites, and thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'This obstacle has come up. It is a wonder that gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, so also the ancient sages and siddhas, powerful in abstract meditation, were easily deluded by women. Whose deer in the form of his mind, struck by the archer Cupid with the sharp arrows in the form of the eyes (i.e. glances) of women and going out from the very strong bow in the form of their creeper-like brows, does not fall? Men's morality shines, men would be afraid of people, the great strength of the mind would persist, the consideration of (their) family would be done, the maturity due to penance would persist, the maintaining of the vows of men would be done till men are not deluded by the arrows of the glances of women, with ardent passion.

51-53. Let women delude and madden the passionate ones with their charming amorous gestures. (But) by means of which qualities do these women delude and madden me, highly devoted to piety? May the passionate ones, with their hearts very much deluded, not take delight in the immodest, impure bodies of women, produced from flesh, semen, feces and urine, imagining them (to have) charm? The wise ones of pure minds have declared the contact of women to be fearful. Till they do not approach me, I will go home?

54-67. Till the excellent maidens did not come (i.e. before they came) near him, the brāhmaṇa disappeared by means of his prowess due to Viṣṇu. Seeing that amazing act of the intelligent son of a sage, who had disappeared due to his magical power, the maidens with their eyes frightened, and afraid like female deer, and with their eyes confused and vacant, looked into the ten directions. To one another they said: "He clearly knows magic, or knows māyā, (since) though seen, he again disappe-

ared.” Just then their hearts were pervaded with the fire of separation, like a very glossy, dense forest with blazing wild fire. ‘O dear, giving up your practice of magic, quickly present yourself, united with our minds, and like a fly (falling) into a morsel before (it is put into the mouth), to us. Alas! why did the Creator show you to us? Why did he fashion you? Oh! we have understood it: You have been created to give (us) great torment. Is your heart cruel? Have you no mind (i.e. interest) in us? O dear, are you cunning? Are you stealing our mind? Do you have no faith in us? Are you testing us? Are you given to the art of joking? Are you proficient in trickery? Do you know the skill to enter into (other’s) hearts? And do you not again know to get out of it? Are you angry with us without (our) fault? Do you know the affliction caused to others due to deception? O lord of (our) hearts, we won’t now live without seeing you. And if we live, it is through the hope of seeing you again. Take us there where you have quickly gone. The Creator, depriving us of your sight has cut (our desire) just when it was a sprout. By all means appear (before us). By all means resort to pity. Good men do not at all see (i.e. do not go to) the extreme.’

68-70. Having wailed like this, and having waited for him for a long time, they quickly started moving towards home through the fear of their fathers. Bound by the chains of his love, very much afflicted due to separation from him, they somehow mustered courage and came home. All they came (home) and dropped (themselves) near fountains. They were asked by (their) mothers: “What is this? Why were you late?”

The maidens said:

71-80. As we were gladly sporting and singing with the kinnara-maidens at the lake, we were not conscious of (the particular time of) the day etc. O mothers, we were tired on the path, therefore, there is torment in our bodies. Due to great insensibility we are not able to speak.

Speaking like this the maidens rolled there on the jewelled floor. The perplexed ones concealing the expression of the face as giving a clue to their inward thoughts spoke with their mothers. Some one did not make the pet peacock dance with joy. Some other did not

teach the parrot in the cage through curiosity. Another one would not fondle the mongoose, or did not delight the sārīkā. Another one, very much perplexed, did not play with cranes. They did not resort to amusements; they were not delighted at home. They did not much talk to their kinsmen. They did not play on the lute. They did not drink the juice of the flowers of desire-yielding trees, which was tasty like nectar, which was sweet, and fragrant with mandāra flowers. The maidens with their eyes fixed on the tips of their noses, remained like female devotees continuously concentrating on the Unknown and having Viṣṇu in their minds. For a moment they remained at the window, covered with the moon-stones and oozing drops of water, and at (another) moment they remained at the fountain. For a moment they arranged their beds with the petals of lotuses from the lakes. They were fanned by their friends with cold leaves of plantain trees.

81-91. Thus those excellent maidens thought one night to be equal to a yuga. Somehow they showed courage, (but) they were afflicted as if suffering from fever. Seeing the sun in the sky they thought of their life. Each one informing her own mother, they went to worship Pārvatī. Having bathed according to the rite, and having worshipped (Pārvatī) with flowers and incense as was proper, they remained there singing. In the meanwhile that brāhmaṇa also came from his hermitage to the Acchoda lake to bathe. The maidens seeing the celibate had their eyes bloomed, as the lotus plants (have the lotuses bloomed) on seeing the sun at night's end. Just then the maidens went near the celibate and bound him with the bonds of their left and right hands. "O cunning one, yesterday you had gone (i.e. you could go). You cannot go today. We have surrounded you. About this you should have no doubt." Thus addressed, the brāhmaṇa who was (caught) in the noose of their arms, laughed and said: "You are talking good, favourable, sweet words. But the vow of me staying in the first stage of life and devoted to Vedic studies in my preceptor's house, has not been completed. The wise should stick to the practice which (is prescribed) for a particular stage of life. Therefore, O maidens, I do not think that marriage would be a (proper) way (for me)." Hearing his

words, they, with a sweet but indistinct voice, like the cuckoos in spring, and with curiosity, spoke to him (these) words:•

92-106: “The wise ones say that the sacred rule is fixed like this: Worldly prosperity (*Artha*) is born of righteousness (*Dharma*). From *Artha* springs *Kāma*. And the fruits of righteousness (*Dharma*) spring from sensual enjoyments (*Kāma*): That sensual enjoyment has stood before you due to the abundance of your righteousness. Enjoy it through various pleasures. This will then be heaven (only).” Hearing these words of them he spoke in a serious voice. “Your words are true; but having finished my vow in this (stage of life) and having obtained (my) preceptor’s consent, I shall go through the complete rite of marriage. Not otherwise.” They thus addressed, again said, “O handsome one, you are certainly ignorant. Excellent women are a divine medicine, are Brahmā’s elixir, accomplishment of a treasure, excellent arts. They are a hymn, they (produce) a liking for success, and when they have approached, an intelligent man should not keep them off according to law. If an act is succeeding through (good) luck, the virtuous one does not ignore it. Since ignoring it is not fruitful, so, procrastination also is not recommended. (Only) fortunate men, and not others obtain maidens who have intense love, who are spotless due to being born in a (noble) family, whose hearts are soft with affection, who speak sweetly, who choose their grooms, who are beautiful, and whose youth is charming. What a great disparity there is between us—beautiful maidens—and this chap? I think the Creator is very clever in doing a difficult job. Therefore, do an auspicious thing now by accepting us in the gāndharva form of marriage. Otherwise we will not live.” Hearing these words, the brāhmaṇa who knew well the customary observance said: “O you deer-eyed ones, how should men whose wealth is religious merit, abandon the customary observances? Righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyment and salvation—these four (when practised) in (due) order are said to give (their) fruit. Opposite of this is fruitless. Therefore, I who have taken up a vow, would not marry at a wrong time. He who does not know the time of an act (i.e. the time when the act should be done) does not obtain its fruit. Since, O maidens, my mind is attached to religious thought, therefore, listen—I do not long after a self-choice

marriage.” Having thus known his intention, and looking at one another, they left one another’s hands, (and) Pramodinī seized his feet. Suśilā and Susvarā seized his arms; Sutārā embraced him, and Candrikā kissed his face.

107-117. Yet the celibate remained uninterested; and resembling the fire at the time of the final deluge, and filled with great anger, he cursed them. “You clung to me like female imps. Therefore, you will be (i.e. turn into) female imps.” Thus, they, quickly cursed by him, left him and stood (as) before. “O sinful one, what have you done this to innocent persons? Fie upon your righteousness, since you did an undesirable act when a desirable act should have been done. We have heard that the happiness of the man who bears malice against adorers that are attached and his friends, perishes in both worlds. Therefore, by our curse you too quickly become an imp.” Speaking like this, those maidens, heaving sighs, smit with hunger, ceased (speaking). Then due to the anger towards one another all the maidens and that celibate became imps in that lake, O king. The female imps and the male imp, waiting ruthlessly, put an end to the fruit of the acts they had obtained formerly. O king, auspicious or inauspicious acts done before do give their fruit unavoidably even to gods, like one’s (unavoidable) shadow. Their fathers and mothers, so also his (father and mother) wept there, (saying): “The children have not erred; destiny is difficult to be overcome.” After that (i.e. since then), the imps, greatly pained in securing food, and running here and there, lived on the bank of the lake. When many days passed like this, Lomaśa, the best sage, came to the Acchoda lake to bathe on the fourteenth of Pauṣa.

118-128. Seeing that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Lomaśa), all the imps coming together and (thus) being in a group, and overcome with hunger, and desiring to kill him, ran (to him). Being burnt by his very bright lustre, they were unable to stand before him; and all of them remained away (from him). Just then there came the brāhmaṇa Vedanidhi. Having seen Lomaśa, O king, he saluted him touching the ground with the eight limbs of his body. Having put his folded palms on his head he spoke true and pleasant words: “O brāhmaṇa, (one) would have the company of the good, when there is (a possibility of) the dawn of good

fortune. Between the two, viz. a man who always bathes in holy places like Gaṅgā and who always keeps the company of the good the company of the good is better. O brāhmaṇa, the company of the venerable gives unseen and seen fruit on the earth. It gives (i.e. leads to) heaven; it removes diseases; but is said to be troublesome.” Speaking like this, he told him the former, wonderful account. “These are gandharva-maidens. This chap is my son. O best sage, all deluded by cursing one another, stand in the form of imps with melancholy faces in front of you. By seeing you the children will be freed; does not the mass of darkness hide in a cave on sunrise?” O king, Lomaśa of great lustre, having heard it, had his mind moistened with pity and spoke to the sage, grieved for his son: “Due to my grace may the children’s memory be revived at once. I am talking (words full of) virtue. The mutual curse would end.”

Vedanidhi said:

129. O great sage, describe the virtuous practice due to which the children will be free. This is not time for delay, since the fire of the curse is fearful.

Lomaśa said:

130-145. Let them duly have Māgha bath with me. At the end of Māgha they will be free from the curse. Otherwise there would be no atonement. O brāhmaṇa, the fruit of the curse is sinful. The destruction of men’s sin would take place by Māgha bath at a holy place. Thus I certainly think. Māgha bath, especially at a holy place, would burn all the sin committed during the seven previous existences and the present sin also. Even that sin for which the best sages do not see an expiation, would perish by the Māgha (bath) at holy places. Māgha (bath) at Mānasa produces knowledge. Due to that it gives salvation. It destroys all sins at the holy places on the Himālaya. The teachers of the Vedas have mentioned (Māgha bath) as giving (i.e. taking one to) Indra’s heaven. Māgha (bath) at Badarīvana destroys all sins and gives salvation. (At a holy place on the bank) of Narmadā Māgha (bath) destroys sins and misery, fulfils all desires, gives (i.e. takes one) to Rudra’s heaven and destroys sins. A Māgha bath in Yamunā would lead to the

Sun's world and destroy sins. One in Sarasvatī destroys sins and gives the fruit in the form of Brahmā's world. O best brāhmaṇa, the Māgha (bath) in the Viśālā (river) gives a large fruit. It is a wild fire to the fuel of sins, (and) destroys the effect of the cause of being conceived. A Māgha bath in Gaṅgā is said to lead to Viṣṇu's world and to salvation. Rivers like Śarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Kauśikī, Tāpī, Godāvarī, Bhīmā, Payoṣṇī, Kṛṣṇavenikā, Kāverī, Tuṅga-bhadrā and other rivers are there. A man bathing in any of them in Māgha quickly goes to heaven, after being free from sins. Māgha bath in Naimiṣa gives absorption into Viṣṇu, (and one) at Puṣkara takes a man near Brahmā. Due to (a bath) in Māgha at Kurukṣetra a man goes to Indra's world. A Māgha bath at Devahrada gives the fruit in the form of the divine powers obtained through abstract meditation. A man would be an attendant of Rudra by bathing at Prabhāsa when the Sun is in Capricorn. A man gets a divine body by bathing at Devakī in Māgha. O brāhmaṇa, by a bath in Gomatī, at Hemakūṭa, Mahākāla, Omkāra, Amareśvara there is no rebirth (for a man). A man is honoured in Rudra's heaven due to a bath in Māgha at Nīlakaṇṭha and at the confluence of all rivers when the Sun is in Capricorn.

146-155. By means of (such) a bath all the desires of human beings are fulfilled. O best brāhmaṇa, only the fortunate get an opportunity to bathe in Māgha at Prayāga, since the white and black water there gives freedom from rebirth. Gods dwelling in heaven always sing: 'We shall have a bath in Māgha at Prayāga, by having a bath at which place, men do not see (i.e. experience) the pangs of (being conceived in) a womb and remain near Viṣṇu.' Those men, clothed in (i.e. full of) many sins, who bathe on a new-moon day at the holy place of Prayāga, are meritorious, do not go to hell, but gladly move like gods in an auspicious heaven. Formerly the Creator weighed the bath in Māgha at Prayāga with holy places, religious vows, gifts, austerities, and Māgha proved to be greater and therefore superior. That (highest) position which men get by bathing in Māgha, is not obtained by means of parching up their bodies through eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, water, or leaves, or through severe austerities collected over a long period, or by means of abstract

meditations. Does not a row of bees, struck by (the flappings of) the ears of elephants, adorn the doors of the houses of those who have bathed at the holy place of Prayāga at the confluence of the divine rivers (i.e. Gaṅgā with Yamunā) when the Sun rises (after entering) Capricorn? How is that Prayāga which after having easily destroyed the sins, gives greater fruit after a bath there, than the Rājasūya sacrifice or the horse-sacrifice, not resorted to by (men)? In the country of Avantī formerly there was a king (named) Virasena. Having come to the bank of Narmadā he performed a Rājasūya sacrifice. He duly performed sixteen horse-sacrifices adorned with golden courts, and rich in golden ornaments and tying posts. He gave heaps of grains resembling mountains to brāhmaṇas. He was liberal, a devotee of deities, a giver of cows and of gold.

156-167. There was a foolish brāhmaṇa of a mean family named Bhadraka. He was a farmer of wicked acts, and was excluded from all religious rites. He was fed up with agriculture; and his brothers had not performed any purificatory rites for him. Wandering here and there, he, being oppressed by hunger, went out (of the city). Luckily he got into (i.e. joined) a caravan, and came to Prayāga. He bathed there for three days in Māgha. Once both the king and the brāhmaṇa died. I saw that their condition was similar in the proximity of Indra. They had similar power of the form of lustre, similar group of ladies (attending upon them), similar divine vehicles, similar ornaments, a garland of pārijāta flowers, similar dance, and similar music. Such is the greatness of the holy place. How can it be described? The Māgha bath at Prayāga is said to be equal to (many) Rājasūya sacrifices, O brāhmaṇa. A man bathing in Māgha at (Prayāga), at the confluence of (Gaṅgā and Yamunā having) white and dark green water, is not reborn, (but) the performer of Rājasūyas would be reborn. Even the breezes in Māgha would touch the white and dark green water. They would not touch inauspicious things, for they indeed destroy great sins. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of talking much in this case? O brāhmaṇa, listen for certain. Māgha would destroy the sin, the fruit of which has sprung up. In this (context) I shall tell you. Listen attentively. (Let the young celestial damsels listen to the ancient account of the liberation of the imps. Let your son also

listen to it. The imps, desiring salvation have obtained recollection through my grace.) Formerly, the brāhmaṇa Devadyuti, a devotee of Viṣṇu and master of the Vedas, with his mind flooded with kindness, liberated the imps.

Dilipa said:

168-169. Where did he stay? Whose son was he? What was his vow? What prayers did he mutter? Due to what did he become a devotee of Viṣṇu? Which imps were liberated? O great sage, tell all this in detail; due to your grace we are hearing an interesting and very auspicious (account).

Vasiṣṭha said:

170-185. On the auspicious bank of Sarasvatī there is a holy pool called Plakṣa. His hermitage resorted to (i.e. was by) a charming mountain. (O king, the hermitage was beautiful due to) groves of good trees like śāla, tāla, tamāla, bilva, bakula, pātala, tintidī, ciri, bilva, mango, campaka, karañja, kovidāra, kesara eaten by elephants, tilaka, karṇikāra, kumbha, khadira, tinduka, vānīra, sālva, jambīra, pīlu, udumbara, reeds, śakota, atarupa, kārahāta and fig trees, ghoṇṭa, kūṭaja, palāśa, aśoka (trees) that removed sorrow, jambu, nimba, kadamba, kṣīrika, karamardaka, and bījapūra, nāriṅga, and adorned with rows of plantain trees, so also jack-fruit trees, and coconut trees always having tasty fruits; saptacchada, tripatra, śīriṣa, and auspicious āmalaka (trees), karkandhu, lakuca, akṣa, pāribhadra and others: ketaka, sinduvara, tagara, kunda, mallikā, white, red, blue lotus (creepers), (creepers of) mālātī and yūthikā (jasmine) mālātī, mogara, jāti fruit, punnāga, kiṁśuka, barvari and tulasī-trees. O king, the hermitage was always charming due to trees of various kinds. Through the forest flows the river Sarasvatī of auspicious water. Cranes always warble there softly, sweetly and indistinctly due to ardent passion. Cuckoos coo there, and bees hum (there). O king, the forest is very noisy due to parrots and sārīkās. Many wild beasts move in that best forest. The forest always has fruits and flowers, and has a dusty colour due to pollen, and is covered all round with aśoka trees. The charming forest is embraced on all sides by creepers with new foliage and sprouts that have

sprung up like a lover by his beloveds. Wind afraid of his curse blows on all sides. Clouds do not shower hail stones; the Sun does not dry up (the water). That forest is free from harm; it is inhabited by siddhas and non-siddhas; it always gave delight like the forest Caitraratha.

186-203. In that (forest) lived the pious, best brāhmaṇa, Devadyuti. The brāhmaṇa's son was Sumitra, obtained through the boon of Lakṣmī's husband. Listen to the vow of him who was always controlled. In summer he observed the vow called Pañca (-agni), and fixed his eyes on the Sun. He remained in the open space in the rainy season when the row of clouds showered; and when there was stormy wind blowing, he remained steady like the Himālaya (mountain). O brāhmaṇa, in winter he lived in a pool of Sarasvatī—in water; and during the season he sipped the pure water thrice a day. He everyday gratified his dead ancestors, deities and sages with faith. He always taught the Vedas, spoke the truth, and had curbed his senses. Resting on the (bare) ground, he, appealing to Viṣṇu, meditated on him. He offered oblations to fire with sylvan articles, and honoured guests with reverence. He always spent his time by practising Cāndrāyaṇa vow. He desired to subsist on leaves and fruits fallen on their own. He was not dejected; he was devoted to penance; he had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He was frightful due to his veins (very much strained), and his body had just bones (left in it). In this way he passed a thousand years in the forest. Then the mountain was blazing due to the lustre of his penance. The beings could not bear the lustre of the noble one. O brāhmaṇa, blazing with penance he shone like fire. In that forest beings were free from enmity. Deer, tigers, mice and cats, free from fear, played with one another. Listen also to another vow of him difficult to be secured. Everyday he worshipped Viṣṇu three times with a thousand fragrant flowers that had bloomed. He was very much engrossed in meditating upon Viṣṇu according to the Vedic hymns. The brāhmaṇa performed every act to please Viṣṇu. Due to a boon given to him by Dadhīci he became an excellent devotee of Viṣṇu. Once on the Ekādaśī in the month of Vaiṣākha the great sage after worshipping Viṣṇu offered a charming and lovely (hymn of) praise to him. Then only Viṣṇu mounted

the bird (i.e. Garuḍa), and being very much pleased by the praise, himself came before him. Seeing him mounted on Garuḍa, with the colour of his skin like the cloud, having four arms, large eyes, decorated with all ornaments, actually standing before him, the brāhmaṇa, with horripilation appearing (on his body) and with tears of joy, with his mind satisfied, (saluted him) with his head going down to (i.e. touching) the ground.

204-216. Due to that joy he could not contain himself even in the interior of the universe. He did not remember (i.e. was not conscious of) his body. He felt, as it were, he was one with Brahman. Then Viṣṇu affectionately spoke to the sage, Viṣṇu's devotee: "O Devadyuti, I know you are my devotee. You have sought my shelter. You have given up all acts. You are devoted to me. You always have me in your mind. I am pleased with this praise. Ask for a boon." Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the ascetic replied: "O god of gods, O you lotus-eyed one, O you who have taken up a body through your divine power, there is no more difficult boon than (being able) to see you. All gods like Brahmā, and meditating saints like Sanaka, so also siddhas like Kapila, desire to see you in person. All bonds like ego, sense of mineness, so also delusion and greed—auspicious and inauspicious, entertained with a purpose, are burnt on seeing you, the highest one. I have obtained the fruit of my existence and deeds, and the fruit of my intellect has become manifest in that, O you lord of the world, you are seen by me. What other than this should I ask for? O lord of gods, I do not have your lotus-like feet in my heart for (securing) a boon. With my mind gone (i.e. devoted) to you, I always think of you with devotion. I ask for this boon only that my devotion to you should be steady. Let it be so, O lord of Lakṣmī. I do not ask for any other boon." Hearing these words of him, Viṣṇu, with his face bright, and with his mind pleased replied: "Let it be so, O best brāhmaṇa. The other (boon is): There will be no impediment to your austerities. Those men who will recite this hymn composed by you will have a firm devotion to me. Whatever religious act they (perform) will be complete. They will have a great unswerving faith in knowledge."

217. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu, the god of gods, vanished there only. Since then Devadyuti became extremely devoted to Viṣṇu.

Dilīpa said:

218-221. O great sage, I am favoured by you. I am purified by this account like Gaṅgā in company with Viṣṇu. Tell me that hymn of (i.e. composed by) the sinless brāhmaṇa, with which Viṣṇu was pleased. I have a great curiosity (to know it). O brāhmaṇa, I think, by your favour I have obtained my desired object. To whose greatness does the company of the great not lead? Favour me and tell me the excellent hymn of Viṣṇu, due to which the lord was pleased and obliged him by his appearance.

Vasiṣṭha said:

222-261. I shall tell you the secret, excellent hymn that is muttered. It was formerly received by Garuḍa and from him it came to me. It contains the essence of metaphysics; it causes great prosperity; is auspicious. It removes all sins, and is the great cause of the knowledge about the self, O king. (The hymn is as follows:) “Om, obeisance to Vāsudeva; salutation to Viśva, to Cakrin (i.e. the Disc-holder), to Kṛṣṇa to whom his devotees are dear, to Jagannātha and to Śārṅgin. One who praises, the one that is praised, the praise—when all this is Viṣṇu himself, by whom is he praised? The devotion of men pleases (him). Which praise would delight that god whose breath are the Vedas with the Vedāṅgas and the Sūtras? Due to my devotion I have become talkative. All the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile, revolve like a wheel. Therefore, O god having a disc in your hand and best weapons, are sung (your praises). (When) actually the Veda cannot describe him, or speech or mind does not know him, then how can one like me praise him, or would be his devotee? You are the first Brahman; you are Brahmā-Viṣṇu. You are the refuge of all. You are the Creator, the cause of Brahman. You yourself are pure Brahman. (O lord, which is this body of you that touches the one having a body after breaking it. Salutation to you who are not touched by blemishes of the body.) O Viṣṇu, there is no doubt that you are that thought—the mass of happiness—which keeps awake as god, and does not sleep in one’s soul. The Great Principles like Mahat, so also the guṇas that give rise to modifications (of Prakṛti)—all that is you, O lord; diversity is a foolish idea.

Through the three concepts like Keśa, Keśava, you are conceived, O brahman, as a man by sons etc. The entire world having some form without faults and with particular qualities appears to the poets. That truth, that pure Viṣṇu, I praise. I salute that Brahman, knowing which, the friends of the world having no desire, perform acts prescribed by the scriptures. I praise that Viṣṇu who is just existence, free from destruction, whom the meditating saints resort to after awakening, and who exists in all beings. I praise that Viṣṇu, seeing whom equal to you the best brāhmaṇas sing (i.e. praise) 'I am Brahma', after knowing him. Salutation to him, of the nature of pure intelligence, who destroys the variety of delusions through his divine power, so also the ego and sense of mineness of men and heaps of sins. Salutation to him, of the nature of pure intelligence, by remembering whose name the heaps of men's sins instantly perish at the time of setting or not setting out, always getting into the shadow of whose lotus-like feet a man is not burnt in the worlds burning with the blazing flames of the fire of delusion. I salute that Ananta, by remembering whom there is no delusion, no misery, no diseases and griefs. The beings that sprang up from the intellect do not at all desire (any thing). People moving in one (way), knowing him see him as their soul. If the meaning of a word or of a sign has Viṣṇu as its objects, then due to that fact may not the worldly existence touch (me). If Viṣṇu, pervading the world, is highly honoured by the Vedas etc., then due to that fact may I have uninterrupted devotion to Viṣṇu. May that Viṣṇu who is not a seedless seed, who is caused by a seed, cut off with the sword of bright knowledge the seed of the worldly existence. May that Viṣṇu who becomes one having three bodies like an actor, due to the (three) constituents in acts like creation, maintenance and destruction, favour me. May that Viṣṇu who, merely for protecting righteousness, descended on the earth in ten ways, and who was requested by all gods, favour me. May that god Viṣṇu who, the pure one, lives all alone in the abode of the heart (of objects) beginning from Brahmā up to a clump of grass, favour me. In front of the gods, that god who was one and many entered the deities. May that Viṣṇu, the Creator, favour me. He is a bird in the sky in the form of the heart. He is like the sky. He is the origin of the

sky. He is beyond the sky. His acts are (infinite) like the sky. He goes to the sky. The sky is *Brahmā*. He enjoys the sky etc. In the end he is of the form of the sky. You enjoy the sacrifice. Due to your lustre, your joy, your illusion (*Māyā*) the world becomes united. You are of the form of lethargy, misery and truth also. The universe created by you delights. Forsaken by you, it would be impure. Though in contact with it, you are detached; and due to that you become changed. You are the consciousness born of combination of physical elements, whom the *Cārvākas* worship. The *Saugatas* (i.e. the Buddhists) call you a transitory idea with their logic. Those who look upon the Jina as their deity (i.e. the Jainas) look upon you as having the size of the body. The *Sāṃkhyas* meditate upon you, beyond the *Prakṛti*, as the *Puruṣa*. The *Upaniṣads* think between themselves that you alone are Brahman, free from birth etc., the ancient one, and having bliss as its characteristic. You are the (five) elements like the sky, the body, the mind, the intellect, the senses, knowledge and ignorance. There is nothing else but you. You are the Creator of all beings; you alone are my refuge. You are the fire, the oblation; you are *Indra*; you are the *hotṛ* priest; you are the hymn; you are the act and the fruit. O *Viṣṇu*, you are existence and non-existence; I have sought your refuge. You are the giver of the fruit of (one's) act. You are the fruit of the rite of the initiated. You are the cause of all the beings. You are my refuge. May my love take delight in you as that of the young women in the young men, and as of the young men in a young woman. The servants of *Yama* do not see even a sinner who has bowed to you, as the owl does not see the sun. The three torments trouble a man through masses of sins as long as he does not, with devotion, remember your lotus-like feet.

262-269. I offer obeisance to that revered *Viṣṇu* whom the qualities, birth, bodily characters, so also the movements of the sense do not touch; (but) whom, the sages free from the delusion of attachment, touch. Wailing like—he is gross as a means, a (gross) means in a cause, is their cause, is without means and cause, the sages enter him. Salutation to that *Viṣṇu* waited upon by sages. Salutation to that *Viṣṇu* who is waited upon by sages and who having embraced *Lakṣmī* in the form of happiness and salvation, that is having the charming quality like affluence, and

that is subjugated by his meditation, shampooing and shaking, sleeps here in self-pleasure. I bow to Viṣṇu in my heart, in whom of a detached nature due to the modification like being born etc., the group of the six waves (of passions) shakes, and whom the faults like Cupid (i.e. love) etc. do not torment. I salute that Viṣṇu whose pure company of his meditation removes ignorance, the world in having fallen into the fire of whose knowledge perishes, the bright sword of whose knowledge cuts off the enemy of doubt, and who is the mass of pure knowledge. Since all the mobile and immobile beings are under the control of Viṣṇu, may he due to this fact remain before me. Since Viṣṇu is the entire immobile and mobile world, may he, due to this fact, manifest his form to me. If I have the same best devotion for my preceptor as for Viṣṇu, may he, due to this fact, manifest himself (to me).

270-293. Thus thinking about (my) devotion for him, due to true oaths, Viṣṇu who was pleased, showed himself to me.” Then having given him a boon, and having fulfilled his desire, Lakṣmī’s lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), pleased by the brāhmaṇa with the hymn, left. The brāhmaṇa also being satisfied and highly devoted to Viṣṇu, and muttering the hymn remained in the penance grove with his disciples. A man who narrates this hymn or he who listens to it, obtains the abundant fruit of a horse-sacrifice. A brāhmaṇa always gets awakening due to his knowledge. He has no mind for (committing) a sin; he does not see anything inauspicious. By narrating this hymn all men have peace of intellect, tranquility of mind, and peace of senses also. A man who, after having pondered over the meaning, devoutly mutters this hymn, shakes off his sins in this world and gets Viṣṇu’s position. He who always recites it, gets his desired objects, so also sons, grandsons, beasts, long life, strength, power. He who narrates this hymn gets that fruit which is obtained by giving a thousand pots full of sesamum, or a thousand cows. A man soon obtains, by means of this hymn, whatever he desires from among righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyment and salvation. Men who hear this hymn have always a mind for (good) conduct, modesty, piety, knowledge, penance and morality. By reciting it (just) once a man having (committed) major or minor sins, has his mind purified instantly. It increa-

ses intellect, wealth, glory, fame, knowledge, righteousness. It pacifies evil Planets; it destroys all that is inauspicious. Brāhmaṇas should recite this hymn removing all diseases, wholesome, destroying all dangers, helping to cross misery. It should at once be recited at the time of trouble from Planets and Stars, and fear from the king and thieves, calamities from fire and thieves. (Due to the recital of this) there is no fear from lions, tigers, so also from magic, spirits, imps and so also from demons. When this hymn is recited men have no fear at all from demonesses, big miseries, and dangers. He who worshipping Viṣṇu would recite this hymn, is not contaminated by sins like a lotus-leaf by water. A man gets the same position by reciting this auspicious hymn as is obtained by baths at holy places like Gaṅgā etc. He, who recites it once, twice or thrice a day, always and in all seasons obtains inexhaustible happiness. A man reciting this hymn (just) once obtains the same fruit as is obtained by reciting thrice even the four Vedas. He who remembers Viṣṇu with devotion, obtains inexhaustible wealth, becomes dear to women and is honoured in the world. He who daily recites this hymn, is always endowed with wealth, never meets with a calamity, and is not deprived of cows. Poverty, misfortune, bad dreams, bad thoughts of the devotees who listen to this hymn, at once perish.

294-297. He who, getting up in the morning, and being pure and greatly devoted to Viṣṇu, recites this, obtains inexhaustible happiness in this and the next world. This hymn called *Yogasāra* is accompanied by divine lustre, gives delight to Viṣṇu, is auspicious, produces Viṣṇu's favour, and gives his direct vision. It is highly purifying. He who always recites it goes to the heaven of Viṣṇu. Thus I have told you the secret hymn, destroying sins. Hereafter I shall tell you about the release of the imps.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

*The Deliverance of the Five Gandharva Maidens and
Vedanidhi's Son from Imphood**Vasiṣṭha said:*

1-9. Hear as to how many imps were liberated by him in the forest. Formerly in the Drāviḍa country there was a king named Citra. (He was born) in the Soma family, was a great hero, brave and had mastered the science of weapons and missiles. He, the brave one, was always possessed of streams of elephants, horses and chariots. His treasury was full of gold and many kinds of gems. He was very rich. He, with fondness, always sported in the midst of a thousand women. Being excessively fond of women, passionate, always greedy, quick-tempered, the king did not do (i.e. obey) the pious words uttered by his ministers. He very much censured Viṣṇu, and always hated Viṣṇu's devotees: (He said:) "Who is that Viṣṇu? Where is he seen? Where does he stay? Who tells about him?" In this way, the king, deluded by destiny did not put up with Viṣṇu. He, being angry, troubled those who worshipped Viṣṇu. Remaining in the condition of the heretics he did not honour brāhmaṇas, the Vedas, Vedic rites or a vow, and did not think of giving a gift. He harassed his subjects by inflicting severe punishment immorally. He was cruel, pitiless, wicked, and averse to auspicious acts. He was fallen from (good) conduct; he hated Viṣṇu; he had fallen from (maintaining sacred) fire and from (religious) acts. The king, as it were, of the form of another Yama, ruled over his subjects.

10-14. Then after a long time the king died. But he did not receive obsequies as enjoined in the Vedic texts. The king, then, being very much troubled by the hosts of (Yama's) servants, went to Yama's world along the path full of iron nails, covered with heated sand, heated by the rays of the hot sun, having no shadow of a tree, spread over with burning charcoals, and full of flames of fire, (and was) being struck by very ferocious serpents with iron-faces and being eaten (i.e. gnawed) by wolves with fierce fangs and fierce dogs while hearing the wailing of other men who had committed sins.

15-32. O king, hear about his unbearable condition in that world. The king went in succession from one hell to another. First he went to the (hell called) Tāmīśra, fearful and giving great agony. Then (he went to) Andhatāmīśra, where there was constant misery. Then he went to the very fierce Mahāraurava, then to Kālasūtra, Mahānaraka. Then the king, insensible due to grief, sank into Sañjīvana, Mahāvīci, Tapana, Sampatāpana, difficult to cross. (Then) the king, with his mind burnt by pain, went to Sampāta, Kākola, Kuḍmala, Pūtimṛttika, Lohaśa, Mṛgiyantra, and Panthāna, and to the river Śālmali. Then he entered a hell, very fierce, difficult to see, and inaccessible. (Then to) Asipatravana, Lohacāraka. In this way the sinful king, having fallen into all these (hells), met with terrible torment full of pangs. Then the king, due to his proclamation of great hatred of Viṣṇu, having experienced the torment inflicted by Yama for twentyone yugas, crossed the hells, and after (proper) time, he became a great evil spirit. Being hungry, he wanders in all directions in this forest. Even on the Meru mountain he does not come across food or water. The evil spirit oppressed by grief, while wandering, entered Plakṣaprasravaṇa forest (as a result) of the future good fruit. Extremely grieved he resorted to the shade of a bibhītaka tree. He loudly and fiercely cried again and again: “Oh! I am lost. How will this unhappy existence of me who am being carried by hunger and thirst, who have sought to hurt all beings, come to an end? Who will today first give a hand to me who am plunged into this ocean of sins, having a series of billows of miseries?” Devadyuti who was studying, heard this piteous wailing of the goblin of a helpless mind. Having then come there, he saw the imp, of a fierce face, fearful, of tawny eyes and weak, with his hair raised up, of a dark body, and as it were another messenger of Yama, with his tongue lolling, with long (i.e. protruded) lips, with long shanks, and full of veins, having long toes, with his mouth parched up, with his eyes like cavities, and with his skeleton (i.e. body) dry. Then the best sage, full of curiosity, asked him:

Devadyuti said:

33-35. Who are you of a fierce form? Why do you weep fiercely? Due to what are you reduced to this condition? Tell me

what can I do for you? Beings who have entered my hermitage never experience grief. All just rejoice as in the abode of Viṣṇu. O good man, quickly tell me the cause of this misery. The wise do not delay when the (desired) object has come (near).

Vasiṣṭha said:

36. Hearing these words, the evil spirit giving up (i.e. ceasing) weeping, bowing with politeness, spoke in a melancholy voice:

The evil spirit said:

37-46. Your words have removed the torment covering my entire body, as the showering cloud removes (the heat) due to a wild fire on a mountain. O brāhmaṇa, you are seen by me due to the religious merit that I have. Those who have not collected merit, do not meet the good.

Speaking like this, he told him his former account. "I have been reduced to this condition due to great hatred for Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I entertained the most sinful hatred for that Viṣṇu, remembering whose name a dead person would go to his position. I hated him who protects the beings, who maintains piety in the three worlds, and who is the innermost soul of beings. He who gives here the fruits of acts, who is sung (i.e. praised) in all Vedas, who is worshipped with penance, was hated by me. O brāhmaṇa, that Viṣṇu who is fit to be meditated upon in the Upaniṣads by ascetics who have given up (ordinary) acts, to whom forests are dear, and who move all alone without company, was hated by me. That Viṣṇu, whom all gods like Brahmā, (all) meditating saints like Sanaka worship for salvation, was hated by me. The ancient supporter of the universe in the beginning, middle and end, who has no beginning, middle or end, was hated by me. All those good acts done by me in my former existence, were burnt by my hatred for Viṣṇu, and were reduced to ash.

47-51. If somehow I see the limit (i.e. the end) of this sin, I shall not worship any other deity except Viṣṇu. Having, due to my hatred of Viṣṇu, experienced for a long time the torment (inflicted) by Yama, I have come out of the hell, and have come to (i.e. am born in) the stock of an evil spirit. Now due to which active charms am I brought to your hermitage where due to

the sun of your sight the darkness in the form of (my) misery has perished? A man is taken by his own compulsive act to that place where he obtains death, bondage, happiness, wealth or a bride. Now tell me the proper act destroying my imphood. The blessed ones do not move slowly in the act of obliging others.”

Devadyuti said:

52-60. Oh, this Māyā steals the memory of gods, demons and men. Due to it a hatred, destroying piety, is produced even among gods. Which fool hates, and in what way, the great lord, the creator, protector and destroyer of the worlds, and the soul of all beings? Which man, averse to devotion for him, due to offering whom all acts are fruitful, would not meet with misery? All the four castes, always worshipping Nārāyaṇa, should practise the acts laid down by holy texts, codes of laws and practices of the good. Otherwise, without resorting to the holy texts men go to hell. Therefore, a man should abandon a deed laid down in religious texts which is opposed to the import of the Vedas. Those, deceiving childish people in this world by means of self-composed religious texts, mar the path to bliss, thus harming the world. They censure Viṣṇu, the Vedas, austerities, good brāhmaṇas; therefore, due to their following wrong religious texts, they go to hell, as this very king of the Draviḍa country, hating god Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, and the master of the world, went to hell. Therefore, one desiring religious merit, should give up hatred for especially deities and brāhmaṇas, and should abandon an act outside (i.e. not enjoined by) the Vedas.

61-71. Speaking like this, the sage told the goblin (what was) good (for him): “O good one, go to Prayāga. Think of the month of Māgha. There you will undoubtedly be free from (this) imphood. This is (what) the ancient holy text (says): ‘Those bathing there go to heaven.’ A man casts off there (the fruit of) his former bad acts. There is nowhere any greater expiation in the form of penance, in the form of gifts, in the form of rites than a bath at Prayāga. Know that there is no sacrifice or abstract meditation superior (to that). It is a gate to heaven and salvation that is (kept) open on the earth. There is no other axe barring Prayāga having white and

black water (of Gaṅgā and Yamunā) on the earth, which cuts off (the fetters of him) who is bound by the fetters of sin. What a great disparity there is between the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, Viṣṇu, Sun's lustre and fire, and the poor, despicable, oblation of the grass (i.e. hay) in the form of a heap of sins of men! A man who has bathed at the confluence shines, after his sin is destroyed, like the moon in the autumn, after the mass of impurity is destroyed. I am not able to tell you the importance of Prayāga, by touching a drop of which a brāhmaṇa from Kerala got released." Hearing these words of the sage, the evil spirit was delighted at heart. Free from grief, he affectionately asked the sage: "O great sage, how was the inhabitant of the Kerala country released? Being kind to me, tell the account to me."

Devadyuti said:

72-77. O evil spirit, listen to the meritorious, auspicious tale from me who am telling it. In Kerala lived a brāhmaṇa named Vasu, a master of the Vedas. He was robbed of his wealth by his relatives; he was poor; he was abandoned by his kinsmen. Grieved due to great agony, he left his motherland. He, suffering slightly from a disease, moved from one country to another, and after a long time entered a great forest. While going to another holy place, he, being tired, and emaciated due to hunger, died due to scarcity of provisions on the Vindhya mountain and did not have (proper) funeral and obsequies. Due to that ripening of his acts he became a spirit in the cave of that mountain only and lived in the solitary forest for a long time. He was troubled by cold and heat, was without food and water, was naked, was bare-footed, and sighed and uttered (the words) 'Oh, Oh!'

78-96a. Wandering here and there that Keralite brāhmaṇa, turned into a spirit, obtained happiness nowhere. Afflicted by grief he wailed and did not find a happy state. He experienced the fruit of his act of having never given a gift. All those who do not make offerings into fire, who do not worship Viṣṇu, who do not resort to knowledge of the self, who turn away from holy places, who do not give gold, garments, tām̐būla, gems, food, fruits, water to the distressed, are without any aim

(in life). All those who snatch away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa or another person, or of women, through force or fraud – all such rogues who deceive others, hypocrites, cheats, thieves, who subsist on fire, who are cruel to children, old persons, patients, women, and are without truthfulness, who set fire (to others' property), who administer poison, who stand as false witnesses, who practise illicit intercourse, who act as priest at vulgar sacrifices, who abandon their fathers, mothers, daughters-in-law, children, wives, who are miserly, greedy, atheists, and censurers of religious practices, who forsake their master, and abandon those who have surrendered to them in a battle, who snatch away cows and land, and who defile others' gems, who censure others, who are sinful, who reproach deities and preceptors (or elders), who are always engaged in accepting gifts at great holy places, who are engaged in deceiving others, so also those who harm beings, who accept bad gifts, are born again and again in the vile stocks of spirits, demons, imps, birds and beasts and trees. They do not get the slightest happiness in this world or in the next. Therefore, one should give up a prohibited act and perform one that is laid down (in sacred texts). One should resort to sacrifices, (giving) gifts, penance, holy places, hymns, deities, preceptors. Even all the four castes, having realised the effect of their acts in crores of stocks, difficult to cross, should constantly practise piety. The brāhmaṇa, having thus seen his condition as an evil spirit due to his sins, advised him about piety and again spoke to him. That evil spirit of the Keralite, thus living on the mountain, passed a long time, and saw a traveller on the path. He was carrying two bamboo-boxes (containing pitchers) with water, and was singing (the glory of) the chief god Viṣṇu of good fame. Seeing him the evil spirit suddenly obstructed his way. He presented himself (to him), and said: "Do not get frightened. O best pilgrim, I desire to drink water from you. If you do not give me water to drink, my life will certainly depart." Hearing these words of the evil spirit the traveller spoke through curiosity to him:

The pilgrim said:

96b-99. Who are you overcome with grief, emaciated, melancholy, naked, (remaining) with just your life left, about to

die, deformed, increasing (others') fear, having the form of a fresh smoke, fierce, of fickle eyes. You have not touched the ground with your feet. You are not having (much) flesh (in your) belly and arms.

Hearing these words of him, the evil spirit said (these) words:

The evil spirit said:

100-118. O most pious one, listen, I (shall) tell you the reason why I have become like this. I am a brāhmaṇa who never gave gifts, who am greedy, and whose acts are dirty. I always ate others' food. I ate all alone, and ate sweets. I did not give alms. I did not make any offering to guests. I did not perform the Vaiśvadeva (i.e. an offering to all gods); I never threw (i.e. kept) an oblation outside. I never quenched with water the thirst of beings that were oppressed with thirst. I, wandering over the earth, never gratified my dead ancestors. I never offered a śrāddha and did not at all worship deities. I never gave (anyone, an umbrella) a protection against rain or heat; nor any (sandals) to protect the feet. I never gave a water-vessel, or a tām̐būla, or a medicine (to anyone). I never offered a residence in my house (to anyone), nor did I show hospitality to anyone. I did not satisfy the blind, the old, the poor, the forlorn, the helpless with drink or food. I never gave a mouthful (of grass) to cows; I never gave relief to a patient. I never offered, or gave into fire (the oblation of) pure sesamum-seeds, O brāhmaṇa. On the earth, there are not givers of sesamum-seeds like me(?). At the time of a portentous calamity I did not give any gold having great fruit. I did not give (any gift) on a Saṁkrānti day and on the days of the solar or lunar eclipse. O brāhmaṇa, I passed the parvan days also void (of any gift). All the important days in Kārtika were always fruitless for me. On the Aṣṭakā¹ days or Maghā² days I did not offer anything to the dead ancestors. I did not bathe (at a holy place) in Māgha which gives (good) form, fortune and desired objects. When Jupiter enters Leo, I did not give anything to a brāhmaṇa learned in the Vedas on

1. Aṣṭakā—A group of three days (7th, 8th and 9th) beginning from the seventh day after the full moon.

2. Maghā—Name of the tenth lunar mansion containing five stars.

the bank of Gautamī, in my former existence. Similarly I did not bathe in Kṛṣṇaveṇī, when the Jupiter entered Virgo. I never controlled the cold of brāhmaṇas afflicted by cold, who had bathed after kindling fire with heaps of wood in Pauṣa and Māgha. I did not give cold water (to people) in months like Vaiśākha. I did not plant an aśvattha tree, nor did I rear a fig-tree. I never released beings from a prison. I never protected one who was afflicted through fear of (other) beings and who had sought my shelter. I have not gratified Viṣṇu by fasting for three nights. O brāhmaṇa, vows like Kṛcchra, Atikṛcchra, Pārāka, and so also Cāndrāyaṇa, another vow like Taptakṛcchra, so also Sāntapana vows—all these auspicious vows were observed by gods like Indra. I did not observe them and parch up my body formerly. O best brāhmaṇa, my former existence was fruitless in this way.

119-133. O brāhmaṇa, mark the very cruel and wonderful fruits, very difficult to understand, of my former acts, (which I am having) in this existence. On this mountain there are (pieces of) flesh (of animals) killed by wolves and tigers, so also of fruits abandoned everywhere by parrots. There are good, fragrant and juicy fruits, so also soft, and roots very fit to be eaten. There are honeys of very many kinds. Everywhere there is water of streams and springs. Even though all these things are easily available on the mountain, I do not find any food (as it is) destroyed by destiny. I subsist on air, as do the serpents. O brāhmaṇa, I am alive due to the prowess of the divine stock. (Even) with power, intellect, hymns, valour, brave acts, companions and friends, a man cannot obtain the unobtainable. In this world destiny alone is the cause of acquisition or non-acquisition, pleasure or pain, marriage, death, life, enjoyment, disease or separation. The ugly, those coming from bad families, fools, those of abhorred conduct, the censured ones, those that are without bravery or valour, enjoy kingdom due to (good) fortune. The squint-eyed ones, the lame, the unworthy, the immoral, the vicious, eunuchs, are seen to be enthroned due to (good) fortune. In front of those who have given sesamum-seeds, cows, gold and garments, a fair girl (in marriage), who have given (a piece of) land, a bed, seats, tāmbūla, houses, wealth, eatables, food, sandal and agaru (sandal), stand enjoy-

ments in a forest, at the top of a mountain, in a village, or even in a city, with great care. On this mountain also stay more powerful demons, so also very fierce demons, goblins and female goblins. At some time, somehow, somewhere, they, wandering in the forest, get food and drink in every forest.

134-142. Having heard this you should not be afraid of them. They are not capable of even looking at you, a pure devotee of Viṣṇu. Demons, evil spirits and demonesses neither touch nor see him whose body is protected by devotion for Viṣṇu and who depends upon Viṣṇu. Ghosts, goblins, gandharvas, female attendants of Durgā, respectable Planets, Revatī, Vṛddharevatī, Mukhamaṇḍī, so also (other) Planets, Yakṣas, young Planets, cruel, wicked, old Planets, so also Mātṛgrahas, fierce Planets, other Vināyakas also, Kṛtyās, serpents, Kūṣmāṇḍa, so also other wicked beings, do not look at a pure great brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, O brāhmaṇa. Imps protect a pure and the most religious person, and do not trouble him. The Planets, Stars and deities always protect a pure person. On the tip of your tongue is Viṣṇu's name. In your heart remains the Veda. You are pure and devoted to giving gifts. You have fear from nowhere. O brāhmaṇa, thus I remain undergoing the fruits of my acts. Thinking and deliberating like this again and again, I do not wail. Similarly I am not pained as long as I remember the words of the crane, which I, when I was wandering, heard on the bank of the Jambālīnī.

The brāhmaṇa said:

143. What kind of (i.e. which) words uttered by the crane did you hear? I desire to hear them. O evil spirit, tell them quickly.

The evil spirit said:

144-153. I shall tell you the words of the crane. O best pilgrim, listen to them. In the interior of this forest there is a river Dhūsarā by name, rising from a mountain. She is always violent due to fish, and full of intoxicated elephants, rich with the beauty of great arjuna trees, and charming with glossy jambū fruits. Roaming in the dense forest, I reached her bank. When I remained there with a desire to eat fruits, a crane,

along with a female crane, flew from another forest and came there to resort to the sand-bank with many birds. Having drunk water and sported just there with his mate, and putting the top of his head (i.e. his beak) into the cavity in his left wing, he slept. In the meanwhile was seen a monkey, getting down from the tree. His face was red. His eyes were very red. He was proud, and had strong rows of nails. He had (profuse) hair on his body, had a long tail, was quick in his movements. He speedily came there where the crane had slept. Coming (to the crane), he, with both his hands cruelly seized tightly the leg of the crane even as many birds were watching. All the birds, flew and flew and went elsewhere. The female crane remained (there) frightened and crying. The crane, with his sleep disturbed, with his eyes trembling due to fear, raised his neck quickly and saw (the monkey).

154-160. Seeing the wicked and very fierce monkey, desiring to kill him, the bird spoke to him in a sweet voice: "O monkey, why do you trouble me without any fault (of mine)? In the world, even the kings punish guilty persons. Good persons (i.e. beings) like you do not trouble harmless good birds averse to other (means of) subsistence, eating the moss in water, living in a forest, always bent upon sporting with their own mates, and avoiding others' mates. O best monkey, (beings) like you do not trouble birds free from censuring others and from wickedness, and the best servants. O monkey, quickly leave me who am fully innocent. I remember your (former) existence. But you do not know mine." Having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the quick monkey left him and remaining away quickly said to him:

The monkey said:

161. Tell me how you know my former existence. You are a bird having no knowledge, and I am an animal moving in the forest.

The crane said:

162-172. I know your (former) existence (due to my) clearly remembering your condition in your former life. In the former life you were Parvateśvara, the king of the Vindhya region. I

was the most respected priest in your family. Therefore, O best monkey, I know (the former life of) you. While protecting this land, you, without discrimination, and collecting much wealth, harassed all (your) subjects. O monkey, you were first burnt by the flames of fire due to the torment inflicted on the subjects, and then were thrown into the very fierce Kumbhīpāka. Being repeatedly burnt and being born, you, uttering fierce words, and weeping again and again, and experiencing, with your hellish body, a terrible agony due to the fire in the Kumbhīpāka passed thirty years. After you again crossed (i.e. went out of) the hell, you have obtained this existence of the monkey due to the remaining sin, due to which you now desire to kill me. Formerly through your valour you took away bananas from the grove of a brāhmaṇa without being permitted by him. Note that the ripening of that act is giving its fruit. Therefore, due to it you are still a monkey, and are now living in the forest. The undergoing (of the fruit) of a good or bad act done previously plays among (i.e. is effective on) beings. Even gods cannot pass over it. Thus I know your (former) life properly and with its cause. Not being deluded by my knowledge, I too obtained this crane's body.

The evil spirit said:

173. O brāhmaṇa, hearing this account the monkey too said to the crane: "You know (everything) properly, (then) how were you born as a bird?"

The crane said:

174-187. I shall tell you about that act due to which I met with misery and due to which I went to (i.e. was born in) the stock of a bird. Please listen to all that. To give it to many brāhmaṇas on Carmadā at the time of a solar eclipse you had laid aside (stock of) grains measuring a hundred khāris. Through my arrogance of (being your) priest and through greed, I, deceiving the brāhmaṇas, gave them a little and all (the remaining) I look (for myself). Due to the sin springing from taking the wealth (to be given) in common to the brāhmaṇas, I fell into the Kālasūtra hell, full of mire of blood, which was quite full of moving insects, having a bad odour, foamy with pus; with my

face down and licking the pus, I was plunged into it up to my navel. Similarly from above my body was being constantly eaten up by great vultures and crows, and was being cut off by insects. In that mire of blood I became breathless; and even a short time there was as much as a kalpa for me. For three myriad years I experienced the agony. O monkey, I am not able to describe that misery (I had) in the hell. Priesthood is very fearful and naturally causes sin. In it the living of a brāhmaṇa is like that of a god. Acceptance of gifts from a king is fearful. Due to it brāhmaṇas were burnt. The priest would snatch away even their wealth. Due to that he becomes a hellish (being). The wise declare that the sin which a king first physically commits, is fixed on the priest. Luckily somehow I crossed the ocean of hell. Due to luck I first reached the stock of a bird. I got this condition (i.e. existence) of a crane, as, formerly, after taking a brass-metal pot from my sister, I gave it to a gambler. And this was a very fearful brāhmaṇī, who stole brass-metal. Due to that she has become my lawful wife, the female crane.

188-201. O monkey, I have thus told you the entire fruit of (my acts). Now listen to the past, the present and the future. I shall be (born as) a swan; and you will also be (born as) a swan. This my wife, the female crane, will be (born as) a female swan. We shall live happily in the Kāmarūpa country. After that we shall go to a female devotee, (who will be) good (to us) in future. Then we shall obtain existence as humans, difficult to get, where virtue and its opposite are secured by beings. Śiva, having thus deluded all beings with his Māyā, rejoices by giving pleasures and pains not only to us but to all beings. This is the way created variously in the world, which is full of virtue and vice and the nature of its fruit is pleasure and pain. It is always or repeatedly followed by all beings, gods, demons, human beings, tigers, worms, insects and aquatic animals. Without thinking about detached meditating saints who have mastered the Upaniṣads, no one has crossed this path having thorns of misery. Maheśvara, considering the place and time gives in this world the fruit of virtuous or vicious deed of the size of an atom or a big one. Very intelligent persons, knowing the Māyā of the lord, knowing what is to be done according to the sacred

laws, do not grieve, nor are they tormented, nor are they troubled. O monkey, the effect of the former deeds cannot be changed with means or intelligence even by gods. Formerly you were born as a king, then were born as a hellish being. Now being born as a monkey, you will get an existence like that (i.e. according to your former deeds). Thinking like this, O monkey, being free from grief, and enjoying in this forest, wait for your death. I, too, bound by the Māyā of the Lord, and mustering courage, will pass my existence as a crane in forest after forest.

The monkey said:

202-203. I honoured you before. Even now I praise you. You remember (our) former existence. (Now) I know everything about our former life. O crane, live with the female crane. May you always have well-being. I whose illusion has gone due to your words, will (now) always move.

The evil spirit said:

204-216. O brāhmaṇa, when, on the bank of the river I heard this charming, wonderful, highly purifying dialogue between the bird (i.e. the crane) and the monkey, I too was enlightened, and due to that my grief disappeared. Seeing the very wonderful greatness of the water of Gaṅgā, I, O best brāhmaṇa, now ask you for the water of Gaṅgā. I desire to be emancipated from this state of the evil spirit. I am oppressed with severe thirst. O brāhmaṇa, on this mountain only I saw a great wonder of the water of Gaṅgā. (Therefore,) I desire to drink that water. A brāhmaṇa, born on Pāriyātra, acted as priest at the village-sacrifices. Due to acting as a priest at the sacrifices of those who were incompetent to offer sacrifices, he was born as a brahmarākṣasa on Vindhya. Due to his desire for my company, he stayed there for eight years. O best brāhmaṇa, his good son collected his bones (after burning his corpse). Bringing them to the pure holy place of Kanakhala, he cast them into Gaṅgā. That moment only he became free from the very fierce demonhood. Thus, I actually saw the wonderful greatness of a bath in Gaṅgā. Therefore, I asked (you) for this water of Gaṅgā. Since, formerly I procured many possessions at the holy place, and did not counteract (the

effect of) them in the form of muttering (of hymns) etc., therefore, I, of the form of an evil spirit am not getting water and food easily. On this Vindhya mountain a thousand years have thus passed. Giving up great shame (i.e. being very shameless), I have told you everything. O most religious one, now quickly gratify my life being in the throat (i.e. about to depart), by giving me water. In this world life even in the condition of an evil spirit is difficult to be obtained by beings. By all means men should always protect their body. Even those suffering from leprosy etc. do not desire to abandon their bodies.

Devadyuti said:

217-227. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the pilgrim was much amazed, and feeling compassion for the evil spirit, thought: 'In the world the fruit of sin or religious merit is actually seen as birth as a god, a demon, a man, a lower animal, an insect or a worm—thus birth in many stocks and being troubled by many diseases. So also death of children or old persons, blindness and hunch-backedness. So also affluence, poverty, wisdom, folly. These affects take place. How can they be otherwise? Those who in their place of work give to worthy recipients money earned through just ways, and (thus) accomplish their own well-being, are blessed. Land, gems, gold, cows, grains, a house, elephants, chariots, horses, garments, villages, ready food, fruits, water, so also one's daughter, a divine medicine, food, umbrella, sandals, an excellent seat, a bed, a tāmbūla, flowers, a fan, excellent seat—all this should be given by those desiring to win the three worlds. What is given is received in heaven; what is given is alone enjoyed. Umbrellas, chowries, vehicles, excellent horses, excellent elephants, mansions, excellent beds, cows, buffaloes, and excellent women, food, ornaments, pearls, sons, maid-servants, a noble family, (long) life, (good) health, affluence, skill in arts and lores—all this is obtained by men on the earth as the fruit of giving (gifts) only. Therefore give carefully. That which is not given does not stand by one.'

228-239. This verse was sung by the most religious traveller. Hearing thus, the evil spirit, with his mind afflicted, spoke again: "O traveller, I think you are almost like one coversant

with Dharma. There is no doubt about it. Give me jivana (life/water) as the cloud (gives) water to a cātaka. Do not much delay in giving me the gift of my life.” Then the traveller replied in words pregnant with justice. “O evil spirit, listen. My parents stay at Bhṛgukṣetra. For them I have brought the water from (Prayāga) the lord of holy places. (But now) in the middle (i.e. on my way) you have asked for that white and black water (i.e. from Prayāga). I do not know whether any doubt on my part for a religious act is proper now. For the strength or weakness (of this act) I shall do (i.e. follow) the great order from the Vedas and the religious texts. (I will) not (do anything) through pride only. The sages and deities have looked upon the protection of the life of beings as superior to all the sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. Thus giving you that excellent water and protecting you, the evil spirit, I shall again bring the purifying water and take it (to my parents). This appears to me to be a powerful act giving me religious merit. The wise have said that all else except obliging others is inferior. Men, obliging others, have gladly offered even their (own) life. By giving water there would be an obligation. Then what is not gained by me? This verse, formerly sung by Dadhīci is heard (i.e. well-known) on the earth: ‘Benevolence even with (i.e. at the cost of one’s) life or wealth, which is full of all piety and is its essence, is approved by all those who are conversant with Dharma. The religious merit due to obliging others is equivalent to hundreds of sacrifices’.”

240-249. Speaking like this, that excellent, most religious brāhmaṇa gave to the evil spirit, the water (from the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā for the protection of his life. The evil spirit drank the water and sprinkled his head with it. That moment only he abandoned his body of evil spirit, and became one with a divine body. Seeing that great wonder, the Keralite said: “Oh, due to the drops of the water from Veṇī (i.e. Trivenī), I am freed from the condition of an evil spirit. I think even Brahmā cannot describe the merit of the water. Otherwise, why does Śiva have the water of Gaṅgā on his head? He who would drink the water of Gaṅgā as much as the size of a sesamum (i.e. even a small drop), whose power is inconceivable, would be a god or a siddha. He would not enter the womb (i.e. would not be born

again). There is no accomplishment like Gaṅgā, no knowledge like Gaṅgā, no salvation like Gaṅgā, since Gaṅgā is superior to all. Therefore, O religious one, final beatitude is in the hand of him who, with all efforts and great devotion, always resorts to Gaṅgā. O traveller, live long, do not desist from piety. By giving me a drop of the water of Gaṅgā, you have instantly emancipated me.” Saying so, that evil spirit from Kerala, after having congratulated that excellent brother, the traveller, with blessings, proceeded to heaven. That traveller also again brought the water, and bringing to his mind the wonder (caused by) the water from the holy place, went the same way (as he had come).

Vasiṣṭha said:

250-258. Thus hearing the greatness of Prayāga and saluting the sage, the evil spirit at once and quickly went to Prayāga in Māgha. O best brāhmaṇa, that evil spirit too, having bathed at Prayāga in the month of Māgha, and with his sins destroyed, gave up that body of the evil spirit. Then that Draviḍa king, being one with a divine body, devoutly praising god Viṣṇu, and free from blemishes, being praised by gandharvas, being honoured by divine ladies, went in an excellent aeroplane, to the city of Indra. O brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you, the former, wonderful historical account which instantly destroys sins. You have thus heard (the account) giving knowledge, giving salvation, and destroying misery. I have thus told you the wonderful old account; O best brāhmaṇa, you have heard the old account destroying misery. Now, with me these girls, this your son, and you—all desiring felicity, should come to Prayāga. There we shall have the Māgha bath difficult to be had even by gods. There they will instantly give up their goblinhood caused by sin.

Śiva said:

259-286. Having thus gladly drunk the sweet juice of the story from the lotus-like mouth of Vasiṣṭha, all were much delighted, and they crossed the ocean of hell. Being delighted they proceeded with him in the sky. O Dilīpa, hear all (about) that holy place Sitāsita (i.e. Prayāga). They who were irresistible, having secured their desired object, quickly came

there, and that time they were happy in their heart. Then Lomaśa kindly said in the courtyard of the sky: “Let all see this lord of holy places on the earth. All beings are freed at this Prayāga, (even) without knowledge. The Creator, desiring to create, performed a sacrifice here only. (Then) he obtained the power to create and then created (the universe). Viṣṇu, desiring a wife, bathed here at Prayāga. Therefore, he obtained Lakṣmī as his wife at the time of churning (out) the nectar here (only). Having lived here for six months, and having bathed at Venī at will, the Trident-holder killed with three arrows Tripura. These three ponds are blazing with perpetual fires. This fire is satisfied, and is nourished with even water. Here the thirtythree gods, being contented, were much delighted. Śiva, Nīlakaṇṭha, Kapālabhṛt (literally, holder of a skull), the chap served constantly by gods, came here (to offer) a handful (of water). This is that Viṣṇu, of the form of abstract meditation, in whose fit mouth, the son of Mṛkaṇḍa, having entered when the world was full of flames, stayed. This is that Śiva’s Bhāgīrathī which removes all misery, For perfection she is served by siddhas, and gives enjoyment and salvation. She who always gives bliss, is excellent on the path to heaven. This is that river Bhāgīrathī, the goddess, that is the cause of (i.e. that leads one to) heaven. This is that river Yamunā herself, by merely bathing in whose water, beings obtain the same world as that of the Sun. O sage, the confluence of these two auspicious rivers gives happiness. Those who have bathed here, being sanctified by knowledge, are not roasted in hell. All beings, (even) without (having) knowledge, are liberated at this Prayāga. O brāhmaṇa, listen to another old historical account which destroys all sins and diseases of the listeners. Formerly a gandharva, cursed by Ṛcika, became a crow. He at once got rid of the curse when he bathed here, that is at Prayāga only. Due to Indra’s curse the celestial nymph Urvaśī dropped from heaven. She, desiring (to go to) heaven, bathed (here) and soon obtained heaven. O sage, Nahuṣa’s son Yayāti obtained a propitious son after he, longing for a son, bathed at Prayāga having the holy white and black water (of Gaṅgā and Yamunā). O best brāhmaṇa, formerly Indra, longing for wealth bathed well here. Through deceit he snatched all the treasures of Kubera. Kaśyapa intent on propitiating Śiva, practised penance

here. At this holy place Bharadvāja obtained perfection in abstract meditation. O brāhmaṇa, formerly at this holy place, Sanaka and others, masters of abstract meditation and of tranquil minds, obtained the fruit—the object of their abstract meditation. Those who have bathed here at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in (the month of) Māgha, have become of the form of Stars and have pervaded the entire world. Those desiring (some objects) obtain their desired objects, and those desiring salvation obtain salvation. Those desiring perfection obtain it at Prayāga, O best brāhmaṇa. Now these maidens and your son long for salvation. On my word let all of them bathe here at Prayāga. Due to the efficacy of the water of the Venī (i.e. the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī), may they obtain the entire wealth, the great fruit of the curse received by them*.” Hearing these super-sensible**, true and unsurpassable words of the sage all they, with eager minds, were ready to bathe. Having reached Prayāga, difficult to get, they, in a moment, gave up their goblinhood.

287-289a. Freed from the agony of the curse, they obtained their respective bodies. Vedanidhi, seeing his son and those girls of divine forms, and with his mind pleased, affectionately praised Lomaśa. “Due to your favour only, this great ocean of sin has been crossed. O best sage, now speak what is proper for (these) children.”

Lomaśa said:

289b-298. This young boy has studied the Vedas and has completed his vow. Let him accept the lotus-like hand of these, full of love (for him).

Then by Lomaśa’s words and those of his father, that pious celibate had the auspicious rite performed by the sages with auspicious articles and hymns. According to the religious rule he accepted the hand of all the five girls. All the girls were then delighted and had their desires satisfied. The boy also was pleased. That sage Lomaśa, having granted them permission, and being saluted by them, went to his hermitage, the Meru mountain, resorted to by gods. Then, O king, Vedanidhi, taking with him his five daughters-

*प्राप्तशापमहाफलां (?) **अतीन्द्रिय (?)

in-law and his son, and being delighted, went to Kubera's city. O best king, due to the religious merit arising from the bath in Māgha at the lord of holy places, Prayāga, and due to the words of the excellent sage, the five gandharva girls got free from all sins, and due to having got the desired object had their desires fulfilled. He who everyday listens to this great historical account, which is purifying, which has become an object of veneration, which is the cause of the destruction of sins, becomes complete with all desired objects, and being rare and endowed with religious merit goes to the world of gods. He who, having heard this historical account, would honour the reader with cows, gold, garments,—since the reader is like Brahmā—(obtains religious merit). Since the reader is honoured, Viṣṇu is worshipped; therefore, a man who would desire his worldly existence to be fruitful, should everyday honour him.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTY

Kinds of Devotion to Viṣṇu

Pārvati said:

1-2. O lord, I have heard about the greatness of Kārtika, so also of Māgha. Now I desire to hear about the best act, giving salvation. O mighty lord of the universe, tell me what is called the best devotion, by merely knowing which men would obtain happiness.

Mahādeva said:

3-19. A man should have his heart merged in Him. That devotion is said to be the greatest. He should also be given to practising compassion. He should always be intent upon duties sacred to Viṣṇu. He should subsist on fruits, roots and water. He should have the marks of a conch, a disc (on his body). He should worship Viṣṇu three times a day. That is supposed to be virtuous devotion. Virtuous (*sāttvikī*) devotion is said to be the best. The passionate (*rājasi*) one is said to be intermediate.

The vicious (*tāmasī*) one is said to be the lowest. (Thus) devotion is said to be of three kinds. Those who desire the fruit of salvation should have (devotion) for Viṣṇu. That devotion which people have through egotism, hypocrisy or deceit is declared to be vicious. So also that devotion for the god which is had for the destruction of another (person), or with hypocrisy in mind, is declared to be vicious. That separate (i.e. another type of) devotion in which a man would worship me at the beginning of an act of worship with the aim of (getting) objects of senses, glory or affluence is passionate. Brāhmaṇas intent on knowledge should practise virtuous devotion which is said to consist in the sense of dedicating oneself to Viṣṇu. Therefore, O goddess, Viṣṇu is always to be served. Vice is earned through vicious devotion, passion through passionate (devotion), and through virtuous (devotion) virtue is secured. A brāhmaṇa engaged in Vedic studies, wealthy, free from attachment and hatred, having (the marks of) a conch and a disc (on his person) is always said to be pure. He who is engaged in ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites, who always censures Viṣṇu and his devotees is said to be a great cāṇḍāla. O chief goddess, those who are always engaged in Vedic studies, who are always acting as priests at sacrifices, who are always engaged in maintaining the holy fire, who are averse to Vaiṣṇava religion, are out of (the fold of) the Vedas. The wise, being pleased cause tranquillity in those men, the grandsire etc. bring about happiness, and the best sages give well-being to those men who have devotion for Viṣṇu. Auspicious Planets and evil spirits and goblins, hosts of gods like Brahmā are pleased, and Lakṣmī is steady in the houses of those men who have devotion for Viṣṇu. Holy places like Gaṅgā, Gayā, Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Kāśī, Prayāga, Kuru, Jāṅgala, live devoutly in the bodies of those men who have devotion for Viṣṇu. Thus a wise man should everyday worship the lord with Lakṣmī; and should thus be blessed everyday. He is undoubtedly a brāhmaṇa. The man—a kṣatriya, a vaiśya or a śūdra—devoted especially to the best god, goes to (i.e. secures) salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYONE

*Worship of the Śālagrāma Stone**Pārvatī said:*

1-2. There are the pure images of the Śālagrāma stone on the earth. In how many ways is the worship of those image said to be done? Tell (me), O lord of gods, how many (images) are to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas? (How many) by kṣatriyas? How are they to be worshipped by vaiśyas, śūdras and women?

Mahādeva said:

3-18. The Śālagrāma stone is auspicious, pure and leads to religious merit; even by seeing it a man, (even if he is a) killer of a brāhmaṇa, is purified. That house where this auspicious image of the Śālagrāma stone exists, is said to be the best of all by all holy texts. Brāhmaṇas should worship five, kṣatriyas four, similarly vaiśyas should worship three, or one with care. A śūdra would obtain salvation just by seeing it. O goddess, those men who worship the (Śālagrāma) according to this rite, enjoy all pleasures and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. This is the great image which always removes sins. For, O goddess, the fruit beginning with Kailāsa is produced by worshipping (it). Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Godāvarī, Sarasvatī are there where the stone is. There is no doubt about this. O beautiful lady, what is the use of repeatedly saying much? Men, desiring salvation, should properly worship it. A man is purified by seeing them who, O chief goddess, worship Viṣṇu devoutly. O chief goddess, Brahmā and others are not aware of the religious merit of the śūdras who as their servants, worship them well. Twentyone (generations of) the family of those brāhmaṇas who devoutly worship Viṣṇu are emancipated in those existences. The brāhmaṇa having marks of a conch and a disc (on his person), who would worship (Viṣṇu), has, by means of having worshipped Viṣṇu, worshipped the entire world. The dead ancestors speak with one another: 'Viṣṇu's devotees are born in our family. Till the final deluge they have emancipated that family. They will, after emancipating us, take us to Viṣṇu's abode. That day alone is lucky. The mother is blessed. The relatives are blessed. So also

his father is blessed, and his relatives also.' All intent upon Viṣṇu's devotion should be known to be most lucky. Merely by seeing them one gets freed from a major sin. By seeing Viṣṇu's devotees, all minor sins, so also all major sins perish.

19-29. Those men who are Viṣṇu's devotees, shine on the earth like fires and are freed from all sins like the moon from clouds. All the sins, deliberate, non-deliberate, small, big, committed through speech, mind, (physical) act, perish on seeing Viṣṇu's devotees. On seeing a devotee of Viṣṇu all the sin due to having done harm (to others) knowingly or unknowingly, perishes. On just seeing the good the sinless go to heaven; the most sinful become purified. I have told you the truth. A devotee of Viṣṇu, skilled in washing the smearing of the mud of the mundane existence, is undoubtedly the purifier of the purifiers. Those devotees of Viṣṇu who everyday remember Viṣṇu, should be known to be full of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is undoubtedly there (i.e. in them). Those brāhmaṇas who meditate upon Viṣṇu as dark like a fresh cloud, having long (i.e. big) lotus-like eyes, holding a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, covered with a yellow garment, shining with the Kaustubha, wearing a garland of wood-flowers, with the lustre of his ear-ring being brightened up by the grace of the face, adorned with a crown and bracelets, armlets and anklets, with his lotus-like face pleased, endowed with the grace of four arms (i.e. with four graceful arms), are of the form of Viṣṇu. There is no doubt about it, O Pārvatī. One certainly obtains Vaikuṇṭha by just seeing them, being devoted to them, feeding them or honouring them, O chief goddess.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

Remembering Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1. (Tell me) how is Ananta Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu) remembered, hearing which there would be no delusion produced in human beings?

Mahādeva said:

2-23. O chief goddess, human beings always remember Viṣṇu on realising the truth. I remember Viṣṇu, as one oppressed with thirst (thinks of) water. Gods and others remember Viṣṇu in the same way as the world distressed with cold remembers (i.e. thinks of) fire. They remember Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, the lord of the master of the universe, as a loyal wife always remembers her husband. I remember Viṣṇu, as one afflicted with fear remembers a refuge, a greedy person thinks of wealth, or one longing for a son thinks of a son. I remember Viṣṇu, as one away (from one's house) remembers one's house, as cātaka thinks of spring, as theologians think of the knowledge of the supreme spirit. Swans long for the Mānasa (lake), sages for the recollection of Viṣṇu, devotees for devotion. In the same way I remember Viṣṇu. The body where the soul exists is dear to the beings. Those that live long for a (long) life. In the same way I remember Viṣṇu. As bees remember a flower, cakravākas the sun, those loving the soul think of devotion, so I remember Viṣṇu. As people distressed with darkness long for a lamp, in the same way men long for the recollection of Viṣṇu. As those afflicted with exertion think of rest, as the addicted ones think of sleep, as those free from laziness think of knowledge, so I remember Viṣṇu. Those who are afraid of sins should remember Viṣṇu, as the elephants think of a mountainous region, or the lions of a forest or elephants. As fire is produced in the sun-stone due to contact with (the rays of) the sun, in the same way devotion is produced (in the minds of men) for Viṣṇu by the contact of good people. As the moon-stone would resort to (i.e. give out) water by the contact (of the rays) of the moon, in the same way eternal release takes place by the contact of a devotee of Viṣṇu. As the lotus-plant on seeing the moon has its flowers bloomed, similarly, devotion entertained for the good always gives salvation to men. As a frightened bee would remember a lotus, and would, due to that recollection, have identity of form with it, as the cowherdesses remembered Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) as their paramour and they were absorbed (by him), so I remember Viṣṇu. Those who think of Viṣṇu with a wicked mind, with

a deceitful mind, with greedy thoughts, without any desire, with devotion, affection or hatred, those who remember him as their lord, those who remember him deliberately or non-deliberately with whatever feeling enjoy happiness in this world and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. Oh, the greatness of Viṣṇu is wonderful and thrilling. Even his recollection by chance gives salvation in three ways (i.e. *sālokya* etc.). Not by abundant wealth, nor by great knowledge, is he seen as he is seen through devotion alone in a moment. Though near he stands away as collyrium in the eyes. The ancient one would be seen by his devotees through devotion (alone).

24-44. A man deluded by the lord's Māyā thinks as: 'This is the truth, this is the truth'. When the truth of devotion is obtained, then the (entire) world becomes full of Viṣṇu. O beautiful one, for getting happiness Indra and others secured nectar; but without devotion for Viṣṇu, they were unhappy. Having obtained the nectar in the form of devotion, no unhappiness comes again. Obtaining the position called Vaikuṇṭha he rejoices there in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. As the swan abandons water and always drinks milk (only), in the same way one should, abandoning (other) practices, resort to devotion for Viṣṇu. Giving up devotion for (any) other (deity) one should resort to devotion for Viṣṇu. How would one succeed in binding (i.e. putting) water with (i.e. in) a (piece of) cloth? That stage of life passed without devotion after having obtained the (human) body is in vain. Those men who advise (people) about religious practices without devotion for Viṣṇu, always fall into a fearful hell. There is no doubt about it. As a fool desires to cross (i.e. swim over) the ocean with his arms, so a (foolish) man desires to cross the ocean of the mundane existence without devotion for Viṣṇu. Even if they (i.e. Viṣṇu's devotees) are thrown down due to (the effect of) their deeds, they preserve devotion for Viṣṇu. As a penniless person, full of longing, desires (to get) the Meru (mountain), in the same way, O god, I long for devotion for you, since that devotion of me in the other (i.e. previous) existence, causes it. As in this world even a small fire burns various forests, so the devotion of the size of an atom which I have (i.e. resorted to will destroy my sins). Hundreds hear about devotion. Thousands understand it. But, O goddess, among them, only

one becomes a devotee. Various people will give (i.e. instruct) people (in) devotion. But a man himself practising it is seen to be one among crores. Worship laughs at devotion; success ridicules devotion. He who has such a (strong) feeling for the lord of gods alone takes (to) devotion. As from a fall into the ocean and entering into a tank there is a protection, similarly one takes to devotion according to his thoughts. The leaves of a tree sprinkled at its root are seen on the branches. O goddess, the fruit later proceeds by resorting to (Viṣṇu) only. As one who carries water fixes his mind (i.e. attention) on the pot (containing the water), similarly one should fix his mind on Viṣṇu and get salvation. In his childhood his mother gives (a child) a little jaggery. But the child, through greed, again asks for (more) jaggery. Due to Viṣṇu's grace they do not notice the difference as when water is put into water, milk into milk, or ghee into ghee. As the sun is everywhere, or the fire is everywhere, similarly one remaining in devotion, is never troubled by (fruits of his) acts(?). Ajāmila, giving up his duty and practising sin, certainly got salvation on remembering his son (called) Nārāyaṇa. All those devotees who, day and night, subsist on (Viṣṇu's) name only, live in Vaikuṇṭha. In this case, the Vedas are the authority.

45-64. The fruit of the sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice is seen in heaven. Enjoying all that fruit they fall (from heaven). Similarly the devotees of Viṣṇu enjoy many pleasures. Having reached Vaikuṇṭha when will they return (to the earth)? He who is devoted to Viṣṇu, lives in Viṣṇu's heaven. See the example, O goddess. Due to devotion to Viṣṇu, he made hundreds of stones float on the water. The mind of Viṣṇu's devotee is the moonstone without water. A frog lives in water; a bee lives in a grove and perceives the fragrance of a lotus-plant. In the same way Viṣṇu's devotee lives in his devotion. Some live on the bank of Gaṅgā. Some (at a distance of) a hundred yojanas. One gets the fruit due to Gaṅgā; the other devotion for Viṣṇu. Those that have turned away their faces from Viṣṇu are like the camel that always carries the camphor and agaru (sandal) but does not know their fragrance. Those that are averse to Viṣṇu are like the deer that smell a tree, when they desire a fragrance, but do not notice the musk in their navels. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, as (giving) advices to fools is useless, similarly advice

to one averse to Viṣṇu-devotion is in vain. Water drunk by a serpent becomes poison. Similarly devotion to Viṣṇu for devotees of other deities is poison. Those who are near a lamp or a mirror do not see it without sight, similarly those averse to Viṣṇu (do not see him). As fire is covered by smoke, a mirror by dirt, an embryo by amnion, similarly Kṛṣṇa is covered in (i.e. by) the body. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, as ghee always remains in milk, oil in a sesamum-seed, similarly Viṣṇu exists in the mobile and the immobile (objects). As many gems are held (together) by a thread, similarly the universe including Brahmā and others is woven in Brahman of the form of intelligence. As fire existing in wood is seen after friction only, similarly omnipresent Viṣṇu is seen by means of meditation only. At first there is one lamp. Then thousands are produced (i.e. lighted) from it. Similarly one Viṣṇu alone exists after having pervaded everything. A flash always remains in water at sunrise, and is seen in various ways in the pond. That Viṣṇu is like that in the world. Wind even in its natural state always carries various fragrances. Similarly the god, dwelling in all beings, enjoys the constituents of Prakṛti. As sugar due to its contact with water, turns into water, similarly the soul, being like them (i.e. the acts) enjoys the fruits of his acts. The earth, due to its contact with water, has many trees. Similarly (the soul) due to the contact with Prakṛti's constituents, is born in many stocks.

65-75. He, the steady one, lives in (the body of) an elephant or a gnat, a deity or a human being and is neither superior (in one) nor inferior (in another). As the moon is noticed in water, in the same way he is seen in all those beginning with Brahmā to a clump of grass, men, gods, sacrifices, and serpents that are there on the earth. He that is seen is existence, intelligence, bliss and Śiva (auspicious). He is the great lord. He is also said to be Viṣṇu. He is omnipresent Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). He is known from the Upaniṣads; he is the master of all; he is beyond time; and is sound. O goddess, he who knows him to be like this is undoubtedly (his) devotee. Though one, he should be known to be many; and though many, to be one. Due to his various names and forms he is said to be many on the earth. The sun's lustre does not grow due to the eyes, but the sight

grows due to the sun. The supreme soul (as the individual soul) is always present in every body, as in every jar there is space. (And even) when the jar is broken, it (still) exists. In every form he is like that (i.e. has that form); and when it (i.e. the form) is broken, he remains very stable. As a form made of wood drops (down) without a master, in the same way the body, having differences like an insect, falls without the soul. The various kinds (of forms) of gold, become as before (i.e. gold) due to (being heated by) fire. In the same way the devotees attain the former form. Fools see (i.e. think) the sun to be lustreless due to being screened by a cloud. In the same way fools of ignorant minds do not know that lord who is described by the Upaniṣads as not admitting an alternative and as formless.

76-90. In accordance with his will he becomes one having a form, from his (condition of being) formless. From him ether without sound and quality is produced. Air was produced from ether. Then it had a sound. From air sprang up light, and from light water was produced. In that water was Virāṭ, having a universal form and of a bright interior. In the lotus of his navel there were crores of universes. From it (arose) Prakṛti (and) Puruṣa and then the world of three kinds was produced. From the union of the two arose the combination of the elements. The product of Viṣṇu in *sāttvika*. Brahmā is said to be endowed with the quality of *rajas*. Śiva is said to be endowed with the quality of *tamas*. They have urged all this. In the world there is one condition called Brāhmī (i.e. of Brahmā) due to the seed of the act (of a being). Viṣṇu completely withdraws the world due to it. This immutable lord Viṣṇu then remains there. Thus Viṣṇu is present everywhere—in the beginning, middle and end. People determined by (the effects of) their acts do not know (the truth) due to ignorance. He would cause (people) to do the acts that are proper for the castes at (different) times. That act which is intended for god Viṣṇu is not the cause of (i.e. does not lead to) conception (i.e. birth). This is always thought over by all the sages in the Upaniṣads and holy texts. This knowledge of Brahman is in the body. I shall tell it. Mind alone is the cause and effect of good and bad (acts). Everything is purified by mind. Then it is the ancient Brahman. Mind alone is always

the kinsman and the foe (also). Some are emancipated by mind; some are troubled by mind. Everything is renounced in it, but they have done acts outwardly. Acts when done in this fashion alone, do not taint (the doer), as a lotus-leaf is not tainted by even drops of water, (or) as fire when put into (another) fire. What is the use of devotion? When the flavour of devotion is known, then salvation is not liked. By means of the Yoga of eight kinds¹ Viṣṇu is not reached in this existence. Viṣṇu is reached by devotion and would always be easily accessible.

91-100. Knowledge is obtained through the Upaniṣads. That which is to be known is obtained by means of knowledge. When that which is to be known is obtained, then the world is a void. Viṣṇu is reached through (mental) power. What is the use of the eightfold Yoga? Of all dispositions purity of disposition is commended. When the beloved is embraced by one, one gets the effect as is one's disposition. One having sandals on one's feet feels the earth to be full of hide. One looks upon the world as one's mind is. The nimba tree, though sprinkled with milk, would not give up its bitterness. Beings go to (i.e. behave in conformity with) their nature. Advice is useless. How would one obtain the fruits and the leaves of the (mango) tree after having cut it off? Why should one pass one's life with a desire for the pleasures of senses? As medicine is cooked in a pan of lapis lazuli and then the drug is burnt, in the same way, how would the existence be in vain? How would a good man, after putting the treasure in his house, do service? How would one rejoice on another path (by) leaving the lord of Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu)? What is the use of the recital of the Vedas by those who are without devotion? A cāṇḍāla having devotion is worshipped even by gods. What is the use of mirrors for him who has put on a bracelet on his hand? The servants (i.e. the devotees) to whom affluence is given by gods like Brahmā, Rudra, do not take anything that is offered to the lord.

1. Aṣṭavidha Yoga—The eightfold means of Yoga consists of the disciplines of: (1) restraint (yama); (2) culture or cultivating good habits like purification of the body, contentment etc; (3) posture (āsana); (4) breath-control (prāṇāyāma); (5) withdrawal of the senses (pratyāhara); (6) attention (dhāraṇā); (7) meditation (dhyāna); and (8) concentration (samādhi).

101-109. It is better to give to a devotee who is poor. How can there be meditation on Kṛṣṇa having no body? Many (devotees) seeing him of a form, have, through devotion, gone to his position. How can worship or devotion be possible in the case of one that is non-existent? The wise ones recommend (worship and devotion) in the case of one that has a form. How can a man go along a vacant path without a support? This master has a form. That lord is formless. The one having a form is easily seen. The formless one is not seen. There is pleasure of service of the one having a form; no (such) pleasure in the case of serving a formless one. The formless one himself is known through him who has a form. When the body is horripilated by the grace of the recollection of Viṣṇu, when tears of joy are in the eyes, then salvation becomes a slave. How does the sin committed in childhood, perish? (It perishes) by means of worship, gifts, vows, (visits to) holy places, mutterings (of hymns), sacrifices dedicated to you. How should one, giving up one's duty, practise severe penance? It is better to die in (i.e. while doing) one's duty. Another's duty is fraught with fear. How should one, giving up the practice laid down by holy texts, practise severe penance? A fool without (remaining in) the stage of human life, would not obtain success. The castes are made by Brahmā, and they have been assigned their respective duties.

110-124. Wealth that comes through the performance of the duty of one's own caste is said to be white. That little gift, given with devotion, made with white wealth, gives great religious merit and it cannot be reckoned. The gift given by men with the wealth brought for domestic rites through contact with mean people, would not be fruitful. They would not share its fruit. A fool, weak in knowledge, obtains that kind of stock which (is in conformity with the) kind of acts he performs with a desire for pleasure. The (fruit of the) act done in this world is had in the other world. If in the case of a man doing righteous acts, pain is produced, then he should not be distressed. That is (the result of) the deeds of the former body (i.e. existence). Grief alone is produced in the case of the man committing sins. O chief goddess, at that time one should not be delighted. As the master leads the beasts tied with a rope, men also are similarly led by the bond of their deeds on the earth. A monkey

dwelling in forest dances in every house; in the same way the beings are taken through all stocks by (their) deeds. As the master while playing sends forth a ball according to his desire, similarly a being is taken to happiness or unhappiness by his deeds. The being bound by (the effects of) his deeds, is unable to remove the bond. Gods and other sages also are bound by (the effects of) their deeds. Even the serpents remaining on Rudra's body consume poison on Kailāsa. They are unable to enjoy nectar. The effect of deeds (Karmayoni?) prevail. The charioteer or the Sun, who is said by the wise to give a sound body is a cripple. The effects of deeds (Karmayoni?) prevail. A royal sage Iadradyumna became an elephant due to his deeds. The result of deeds in that case was made ineffective by the powerful lord (?) All gods like Rudra, Brahmā, men and demons, being bound by (the effects of) acts, move on the earth. Viṣṇu formerly created the entire world, (and is) influenced by acts.

125-139. Those acts, dependent on Viṣṇu, perish by means of (repeating) the name of Rāma. Water is present everywhere; but that one at Prayāga gives salvation. To those who do the acts like this, worship of Keśava gives salvation. The being who does an act for the pleasure of senses, and would, through egotism think of the body, should go through an expiation, remembering (Viṣṇu). He undergoes the fruits of his past acts (only). The (fruit of) his acts does not grow later. Some praise the Planets; some evil spirits and goblins. Some praise deities; some have talked about the herbs. Some talk about a hymn, about a super-human power, about intellect or valour. So also about exertion, boldness, courage and prudence. All follow their desires talking about acts resulting from egotism. This is my definite idea. This is what is told by the former wise men. When a being is full of religious merit and there is no sin (in him), and when he has the two-fold knowledge, then his merit would be pleasant. When his sin and religious merit are equal, he remains in (i.e. doing) acts. When he has attained the equanimity of mind, he would reach the place of joy. Of him, who has discarded everything outwardly, but would long for (every thing) mentally, such a behaviour is useless and he will have to undergo (fruits of) his sins. A man does acts outwardly; but mentally he is desireless. Such a sacrifice is mediocre. He would not obtain

its complete fruit. Discarding acts outwardly, and mentally depending upon (i.e. looking upon everything as) void – such a sacrifice is said to be the best – difficult to be had even by the meditating sages. Some abandon everything through anger; some through the power of discussion. Some discard everything with difficulty. All (such) sacrifices are mediocre. A man endowed with devotion through good mind, and not influenced by anger etc., obtains a good position, though smeared with (the effects of) acts. He who is dropped from abstract meditation, would be born in the house of the pure and the rich or in the family – chief being that of a brāhmaṇa – of the intelligent meditating sages. In a short time he acquires complete abstract meditation.

140-153. Due to abstract meditation, devotion (to) and grace (of the lord), he would reach the position of Brahman (of the nature of) intelligence and joy. How can one wash off (the effect of) one's act with a harmful act as mud with mud or blood with blood? How can a sacrifice full of a harmful act be capable of destroying (the effect of one's) acts? Sacrifices performed with a desire for (going to) heaven give little happiness in heaven. Even though many, the pleasures there are transitory. Without devotion for Viṣṇu, there is no eternal happiness in (i.e. from) them. (Except) a sovereign empire giving pleasure and happiness in heaven, I do not desire anything else. I am afraid of living in a womb (i.e. of rebirth). With (hammers of) iron a stone alone is broken, and not a ruby. A crane eats aquatic beings, (but) would avoid frogs etc. Similarly, Yama, the destroyer of everything, would avoid Viṣṇu's servants. He who protects is the one that removes difficulties, and is said to be the guardian. He lodges at his place him who has (committed) hundreds of faults; since Kṛṣṇa favours him who has committed an offence. He gets the fruit today. What does the protector do? In the same way, the soul in this body, shows favour to them depending upon others.¹ Along with the strong, he does not slowly go to the other end.² He gave salvation to the hunter, and himself emancipated Kubjā. He is difficult to be had (i.e. seen even) in a dream by Brahmā and others, but is easily accessible in a cowherd's house. When he ate what was left over

1, 2. verses 148, 149 etc. and many others in this chapter are not clear.

by the cowherds, he himself emancipated them. O goddess, the highest soul, Viṣṇu, is always praised by the meditating sages. The immutable Puruṣa, along with Lakṣmī, is amazing. Those who everyday recite this narration, are freed from all sins, and go to the eternal position of Viṣṇu. One who recites it with this devotion near (the image of) Viṣṇu, would obtain the highest position after enjoying happiness in this world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

The Holy Places in Jambūdvīpa

Pārvatī said:

1. O you of a good vow, tell me about the holy places that exist on this island. This island is fashioned by the lord as the king of all islands. O lord, favouring me, tell me about them with (i.e. counting) their number.

Mahādeva said:

2-12. The Omnipresent (lord) should be seen in all beings on the earth. Whatever primary substance, with the mobile and the immobile, is seen in the seven worlds, is not seen or heard by me to be without him. Therefore, the great god Viṣṇu, Keśava, who removes affliction, would live in the form of a holy place on this island, O chief goddess. I shall certainly tell you about all the holy places. First is the holy place (called) Puṣkara, auspicious and best among the holy places. Second holy place is Vārāṇasī, giving salvation. Third sacred spot is Naimiṣa, said to be purifying by the sages. Fourth is Prayāga, said to be the best among the holy places. Fifth is said to be Kārmuka that has sprung up on Gandhamādana. Sixth is the holy place called Mānasa, pleasing to the gods. Seventh is Viśvakāya on the auspicious Avara mountain. Eighth is called Gautama, formerly fashioned on Mandara. Ninth is Madotkaṭa; tenth is Caitrarathaka. Eleventh is Kānyakubja where Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) dwells. Twelfth is Malaya; then there is Kubjāmraka. (Then there are) Viśveśvara, Girikarṇa, Kedāra, giving a good

position (i.e. leading to salvation). Bāhya is on the surface of Himālaya; similariy there is Gopaka on Gokarṇa. On the Himālaya is Sthāneśvara; and Bilvapatrika on Bilvaka. The holy place Mādhava is on Śrīśaila; and Bhadra is on Bhadreśvara. Vijaya is said to be on Vārāha, and Vaiṣṇava on Vaiṣṇava mountain. On Rudrakōṭa is Raudra; and on the Kāliñjara mountain is Paitrya. The holy place Kampila is on Kampila, and Karkoṭaka on Mukuṭa.

13-30. O Chief goddess, the place holy due to Śālagrāma is on the bank of the Gallikā. On (the bank of) Narmadā is one called Śiva, and on (the bank of) Māyā is Viśvarūpaka. On the Raivata mountain have come up (the holy places, namely) Utpalākṣa, Sahasrākṣa. On (the bank of) Gaṅgā is Pitṛtīrtha, so also is Viṣṇupādodbhava. On (the bank of) Vipāśā is Vipāpā, and Puṇḍravardhana is at Pāṭala. Nārāyaṇa is on Supārśva, and Viṣṇu temple on Trikūṭa. On Vipula is one named Vipula, and Kalyāṇa is on Malaya mountain. At Koṭītīrtha is Kaurava, and Sugandha is on Gandhamādana. Trisandhyā is at Kubjāmraka, and Haripriya at Gaṅgādvāra. In the region of Vindhya is Śaila, and Sārasvata is said to be on Badari. On (the bank of) the Kālindī is Kalparūpa, and Sāyaka is said to be on Sahya. Cāndra is in Candra region, and Ramaṇa is the chief among the holy places. On (the bank of) Yamunā is (the one) called Mṛga; and Kurūdbhava is on Karavīra. The holy place called Umā is on the Vināyaka mountain. Ārogya is in the Bhāskara country. Maheśvara is at Mahākāla. A holy place is named Abhayada. On Vindhya is one called Amṛta. Viśvarūpa is in Maṇḍapa. In Īśvara city is one called Svāhā. On (the bank of) Pracāṇḍā is Vaigaleya, and Cāṇḍika in Amarakāṇṭaka. At the holy place of Prabhāsa is Someśvara, and there is also Puṣkara. Devamātra is situated on the bank of Pārāvata on Sarasvatī. At Mahāpadma is Mahālaya, and Piṅgaleśvara on (the bank of) Payoṣṇī. So also is a holy place on (the bank of) Siṁhikā, and at Saurava one called Ravi. In the Kṛttikā-region is the holy place Kārtika; and Śaṅkara on mountain Śaṅkara. Similarly at the confluence of Subhadrā and Sindhu is a divine holy place called Utpala. Then there is Gāṇapatya on the mountain called Viṣṇu. Then on Jālandhara is the holy place which is called Viṣṇumukha. At Tāra is one called Tāraka on the mountain

called Viṣṇu. Pauṇḍra is in the Devadāruvana, and Pauśka in the Kāśmīra region. The snowy Bhauma is on Himālaya, so also are Catuṣṭika and Pauṣṭika. Similarly the holy place Kapālamocana has come up at Māyāpura. Then is the holy place Śaṅkhoddhāra (of) the god holding the conch. At Piṇḍa is one named Piṇḍa, and Vaikhānasa at Siddha. On (the bank of) Acchoda is Viṣṇukāma, giving religious merit, sensuous enjoyment, worldly prosperity and salvation. On the northern bank is Auśadhya, and Kuśodaka is at Kuśadvīpa. Manmatha is on Hemakūṭa, and Satyavādana on Kumuda. At the bank of Vadantī is the holy place, called Āśvaka, and Mātṛka is said to exist on Vindhya.

31-40. On Citta is the holy place (called) Brahmamaya which is said to be (the most) purifying of all holy places. O beautiful lady, listen to the description of the holy place best of all these. A holy place (like) Viṣṇumaya never existed (before) nor will be there. Merely by uttering (its) name, one who has killed a brāhmaṇa, or snatched gold, or has killed a child or a cow, is freed (from the sin) due to Viṣṇu's grace. In the Kali age Dvāravatī is charming, and god Viṣṇu is excellent. The salvation of those men who see (the image of) the lord, is certain. O great goddess, I, remaining among the wise, thus think of that blessed lord Viṣṇu, the master of all. These hundred and eight holy places are told here. He who mutters their names or hears them is free from all sins. He who, after bathing in these holy places, sees (the image of) Nārāyaṇa Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), is freed from all sins and goes to the ancient Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, said to be the holy place purifying the worlds. Those best men who go to (these holy places) go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). One should get this to be heard (i.e. recited) at (the time of) a rite in honour of the dead ancestors. Enjoying pleasures in this world, one goes to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. (By reciting these names) at the time of the gift of a cow, or the gift at the time of a śrāddha, or (by reciting it) everyday, or at the rite of worshipping a deity, one attains the highest Brahman.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

*The Greatness of Vetravati**Mahādeva said:*

1-10. I shall tell (you) the greatness of Vetravati. Listen, O beautiful lady. By bathing there (i.e. in the river) men are free till deluge. Vṛtra made a tank called Mahāgambhīra. That divine one, destroyer of heaps of great sins, came out from that tank. O best goddess, like Gaṅgā this is the best river. Merely on looking at her heaps of sins come to an end. O goddess, I shall tell you an old account, hearing which sinners are freed from faults and bondage of (their) acts. A king (named Vidāruṇa) ruled in the city of Campaka. He was always wicked, of a wicked form, and he very much harassed people. He was impious, the (very) form of impiety, and given to censuring Viṣṇu. He disregarded deities and brāhmaṇas, and was a great hater of the (four) stages of human life. He was rich, and was given to condemning the Vedas; he was foolish and cruel. He was a rogue, was interested in heterodox doctrines and outraged others' wives. His name was Vidāruṇa, and he was a fool. Once, by chance, he came to that river (Vetravati). O chief goddess, he, intent on hunting, himself became a leper due to his censuring brāhmaṇas. He talked nonsense, was wicked-hearted, a rogue and a cruel beast. He was always engaged in censuring the Vedas and polluted cows and holy texts.

11-31. The king, surrounded by his friends, who was like this, was wandering in a forest; being oppressed by thirst, he got down from (his) horse, drank water and went home. Due to the drinking of the water, his leprosy certainly disappeared. Especially the mind of the king became clear. O chief goddess, at that time in (the mind of) him devotion for Viṣṇu sprang up. From that time he always bathed (in Vetravati). O chief goddess, he became spotless and endowed with handsomeness. Having enjoyed pleasure in this world and having performed many sacrifices, he gave gifts to brāhmaṇas and went to the position of Viṣṇu. Knowing this, O goddess, those brāhmaṇas who bathe especially in Vetravati, are freed, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. The brāhmaṇas—or a kṣatriya, or a vaiśya or a

śūdra—who bathe here are freed, O best goddess. O goddess, an outcast or a censurer of the Vedas, who, in the month of Kārtika or Māgha, bathes at the confluence of rivers, is free from sins. Especially a killer of a brāhmaṇa who bathes there where her confluence with Sābhramatī is seen, is always freed. O sinless one, the village there is a divine city, of the form of heaven. O goddess, Brahmā practised many abstract meditations there. No rebirth is (had by one) who has bathed and eaten there. O goddess, she is said to be another Gaṅgā, especially in the Kali age. Those men who desire happiness and wealth, who desire heaven, bathe there repeatedly, enjoy happiness in this world, and go to the eternal (position) of Viṣṇu. Those born in the solar race and the lunar race, who came here and bathed in Vetravatī obtained bliss. She removes misery when seen, and mental sin when touched. O goddess, one who bathes in and drinks (her) water undoubtedly enjoys salvation. By bathing (in her), muttering hymns and performing sacrifices (on her bank) one gets infinite fruit. One should go to the holy place of Vārāṇasī, and practise Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. O best goddess, the religious merit on having gone there is great. If a man dies especially on (the bank of) Vetravatī, he becomes four-armed, and goes to the highest (position) of Viṣṇu. O best goddess, all the holy places, deities, dead ancestors that are there on the earth, live here in Vetravatī. O you beautiful lady, what is the use of talking much about other things repeatedly? 'O you ancient one, there is no other holy place like Vetravatī on the earth. O great goddess, I, Viṣṇu, so also Brahmā, gods and great sages, deities all stay in Vetravatī. Those who bathe in Vetravatī, once, or twice or especially three times (a day) are freed. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

*The Greatness of Sābhramatī**Śrī Mahādeva said:*

1-9. O goddess, I shall aptly describe the greatness of Sābhramatī. The best sage Kaśyapa practised severe penance. For many years he practised severe penance on the charming Arbuda mountain full of various trees. Having gone there where the charming, sin-destroying Sarasvatī flows, the sage Kaśyapa practised penance. O goddess, one day he went to the Naimiṣa (forest where) all the sages were narrating stories in many ways. Then the sages properly asked that sage Kaśyapa: “O Kaśyapa, for our pleasure, bring Gaṅgā here, O lord. That best river will pass by your name.” Having heard their words, and having saluted those brāhmaṇas, he came to the Arbuda forest, near the bank of Sarasvatī. He practised there very severe penance. That brāhmaṇa Kaśyapa propitiated me. I then appeared in person in front of that excellent brāhmaṇa. “Well-being to you; ask for a boon that is in your mind.”

Kaśyapa said:

10-14. O lord of the world, you are capable of granting a boon. Give me specially that Gaṅgā which is on your head and which is pure and destroys sins. O great god, I salute you.

Then, O goddess, I said: “O best brāhmaṇa, take (her).” Then taking off a hair from my matted hair, I gave him the Gaṅgā. Taking her, the best brāhmaṇa gladly went to his place. The holy place named Keśarandhra is the abode of Kaśyapa. Surrounded by sages, O chief goddess, he went there. That excellent river Kāśyapī was brought by Kaśyapa, on merely seeing which, (even) a killer of a brāhmaṇa was freed.

Pārvati said:

15-16. Tell me about the religious merit acquired by just a bath, O lord of the world. You are kind. Show compassion to me. What would be the religious merit due to seeing her, and what due to the bath? Tell me (that), O lord of gods. O Brahman, please tell me what kind of greatness (she has).

Mahādeva said:

17-35. I have heard about many holy places and sanctuaries. Due to the grace of lord Viṣṇu many rivers flowing into the ocean (like) Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Revā, Tāpī, so also Mahānadī, Godāvarī, Tuṅgabhadrā, Kauśikī, so also Gallikā, (and) Kāverī, Vedikā, Bhadrā, Śarayū, Pāpahāriṇī (destroyer of sins), so also other various rivers, all instant sin-destroyers (are heard about by me). The king of holy places – Prayāga, Kāśī, and Puṣkara, so also the one called Naimiṣāraṇya, so also the holy place Amaraṇṭaka, the excellent holy place of Dvārakā, the excellent Arbudāraṇya – such divine and other various holy places, I have heard about due to Viṣṇu's grace. Formerly, Bhagīratha, desiring (to go to) Viṣṇu's heaven, had solicited me. Then, O Pārvatī, I gave him this Gaṅgā. On the words of the sages I again gave her to Kaśyapa. This Kāśyapī Gaṅgā always removes diseases and blemishes. O beautiful lady, I shall tell you. Listen, what she is called in each age. In Kṛta (age) she was called Kṛtavatī and Girikarṇikā in Tretā. She is named Candanā in Dvāpara, and she is known as Sābhramatī in Kali (age). Those men who everyday (go to her for bathing) are freed from all sins and go to Viṣṇu's (eternal position). O goddess, that fruit which men get by bathing at the holy place Plakṣa, and in Sarasvatī, is got by a daily bath in Sābhramatī everyday. There is no doubt about it, since Vyāsa's statement is to that effect. A man gets that fruit by bathing in Sābhramatī which he gets by bathing in the later half of Śrāvaṇa or everyday, or by properly offering a śrāddha on the new-moon day. A man gets that fruit by bathing in Sābhramatī which he gets in Kārtika when (the Sun) is joined with the Kṛttikā (constellation) at Śrīsthala in front of (the image of) Mādhava. O goddess, this is the greatest (river). It is purifying in all worlds. She is most blessed, is pure, and destroys sins, O goddess. On (the bank of) Sābhramatī always live those connected with the east (i.e. the Easterners), the Northerners. The Westerners and the Southerners all go to Kheṭaka everyday near Brahmā, under the pretext of a pilgrimage only. O goddess, there is no doubt that they come there on the full-moon day of Kārtika. There they offer a śrāddha and feed brāhmaṇas.

36-50. (There) men perform various religious rites daily, so also various sacrifices. They make various gifts everyday in all the four ages. No doubt should be entertained in this matter. Yavakṛita, and Raibhya, Kakṣivat, so also Uśija, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, so also Kaṇva, and the intelligent Punarvasu, Bandin, endowed with virtues, (all) have resorted to the Eastern direction. So also the magnanimous ones (living) in the north—like Madhumat, so also the noble Subandhu, and the powerful Dattātreyā, similarly Śikhin, Dīrghatamas, so also Gautama and Kaśyapa, in the same way Śvetaketu, Kahoda, Pulaha and Devala, and Viśvāmitra and Bharadvāja, and powerful Jama-dagni, Ṛcica's son Garga, so also the sage Uddālaka, and Devaśarman, Dhaumya, Āstika, so also Kaśyapa, and Lomaśa, Nābhiketu, and Lomaharṣaṇa, so also the sage Ugraśravas, Bhārgava Cyavana, Vālakhilya and others, all go there. Bathing (there), fasting and very highly devoted to Viṣṇu holding conches, discs and maces, they always stay on the bank. Pitṛtīrtha, named Gayā, is auspicious and best among all holy places. There the grandsire, the lord of the gods, himself lives. The dead ancestors, desiring a portion (of the offerings) of a śrāddha, have sung a verse: Many sons should be desired; even one of them would go to Gayā, or would perform a horse-sacrifice, or would let loose a black bull. In the same way Vārāṇasī is auspicious, and is always dear to the dead ancestors, which due to my proximity, gives enjoyments and salvation. By my order the lord of gods called Bindumādhava, always especially dwells at Vārāṇasī, O chief goddess. Therefore, this my city is always the most blessed and the greatest. Vimaleśvara is auspicious, and is a holy place dear to the dead ancestors. Pitṛtīrtha—Prayāga—is endowed with all holy places.

51-60. They come into the water of Sābhramatī on my words. The noble Vateśvara is endowed with Viṣṇu. O chief goddess, Daśāśvamedha and the auspicious Gaṅgādvāra always live in Sābhramatī by my order. Nandā, Lalitādevī and the holy place with seven streams; so also the (holy place) called Mitrapada and Śaṅkara's abode Kedāra; and Gaṅgāsāgara as they call it; all this, being full of holy places, is auspicious. Like this there is the holy place called Brahmasaras in the pool of Śatadru. So also the holy place called Naimiṣa. All these, O

goddess, undoubtedly live in the water of Sābhramatī. The auspicious river Śvetavalkalinī, (the river) Śvetahiraṇmayī, (the river) Hastimatī, or Arthaghnī, flowing towards the ocean—all these are dear to the dead ancestors, and give the fruit of a crore of śrāddhas. Śrāddhas should be offered there by sons for the good of their dead ancestors. There is a city named Pātala or Vāḍava, O beautiful lady. All these rivers have always especially reached (i.e. flowed into) Sābhramatī. Those men on the earth who bathe there and offer gifts, enjoy happiness in this world and go to the eternal (place) of Viṣṇu. Jambūdvīpa is very meritorious, where religious merit grows. There is a very meritorious (region), called Ārya, fulfilling all desires.

61-81a. (Then) there is a holy place called Nīlakaṇṭha; (then there is) Nandahrada; so also the holy place Rudrahrada, and the auspicious Rudra-mahālaya. Presenting themselves, the very auspicious Mandākinī, so also the great river Acchodā—these two flow into Sābhramatī. Due to offering piṇḍas (i.e. oblations to dead ancestors) into Gaṅgā, the wise say that these—Dhūmrā, Mitrapada, similarly Vaijanātha, Dṛśadvara, river Kṣiprā, Mahākāla, so also the mountain Kālīnjara, Gaṅgodbhūta, Harodbheda, Narmadākāra—are equal (in religious merit). O chief goddess, these places sacred to Brahmā are on the northern bank of Sābhramatī, are protected by gods led by Brahmā. O great goddess, they destroy people's sins merely by their being remembered. Then what to say of those men offering śrāddhas, O chief goddess? Oṃkāra, a holy place of the dead ancestors, the water of Kāverī, Kapilā, the union of Caṇḍavegā.—bathing in this would be a hundredfold more meritorious than (at) Kurukṣetra. O goddess, formerly (Śiva's) attendants took the holy place Kadamba, along with the chief of the attendants, to the confluence of Vātaghnī. This congregation of the holy places is narrated by me by way of illustration. Even the lord of speech cannot correctly (describe) the expanse of the holy places. Truth, pity and control of senses are holy places. One should certainly bathe in her holy place with effort. The morning is of the three muhūrtas (i.e. periods) up to saṅgava¹—a bath at this time is dear to the gods. Mid-day

1. Saṅgava—Name of a particular part of day, said to be three

consists of three *muhūrtas* (i.e. period); after that is afternoon. Bathing, offering *piṇḍas* causes delight to the dead ancestors. Evening has three *muhūrtas*. One should not perform a *śrāddha* etc. at that time. That time is called demonish, and is censured for all (religious) acts. Always the fifteen *muhūrtas* of the day are well-known. Among them the eighth one is said to be *kutapa*. Since at mid-day the sun becomes dull (in lustre), therefore, it gives infinite fruit by offering *piṇḍas* to the dead ancestors. Mid-day, a vessel made of buffalo's horns, so also a *Nepāla*-blanket, silver, *darbhas*, so also cows, daughter's son, and sesamum-seeds are *kutapa*. Sin is said to be mean. Since all these eight cause remorse for it, they are known as *kutapa*. That group of four *muhūrtas* subsequent to *kutapa*, and the group of five is desired as the time for a *śrāddha*. *Darbhas* and sesamum-seeds are said to have sprung from the body of Viṣṇu for the protection of *śrāddha*. Thus the residents of heaven say. Those living at the holy places should offer water with sesamum-seeds to the dead by standing in water and with *darbhas* in their hands. Thus the *śrāddha* is not harmed.

81b-94. Giving the holy places these names and putting them into *Sābhramatī*, O goddess, I gave (the river) to *Kaśyapa*. This *Kaśyapa* is my devotee, and he is always dear to me. Therefore, I gave (him) this pure *Gaṅgā* destroying sins. O noble one, having placed myself—I am having *Śaṅkara* as my name there—at the holy place, viz. *Brahmacārika*, I, called *Īśa*, remain there for the good of the world, and am named *Brahmacārīśa*. When in the vicinity of *Sābhramatī*, one devoutly worships especially *Brahmacārīśa* in the *Kali*-age, one enjoys pleasure in this world and goes to the great position of *Śiva*. Even if a man suffering from severe diseases goes there, his disease quickly vanishes on merely seeing the deity, O great goddess. When the man with his senses controlled, and fasting, and being very steady, devoutly worships (the lord), then I appear before him in the form of a meditating sage. I give him the desired objects. O you beautiful lady, I am telling the truth and the truth only. I quickly remove the disease of those

muhūrtas after *Prāṭastana* or early dawn and to form the second of the five divisions of day.

persons who especially come to my place. I have described diseases to be of eightyfour names. Each one of the diseases would perish merely on seeing (the image). O daughter of the (Himalaya) Mountain, my phallus would not be there. My place is only there. There is no doubt about it. On one occasion the powerful king Brahmadaṭṭa of the solar race, of a severe penance, once practised penance there for a long time, O chief goddess. There he practised in many ways the (vow called) Pañcāgnisādhana.¹ He practised many austerities like fasting for a month etc.

95-113. In this way the king practised a severe penance for a long time. Then I appeared before him in person for (granting him) a boon, O beautiful lady. “O Brahmadaṭṭa, listen to (these) great (i.e. important) words. I shall undoubtedly grant you everyday whatever you desire.” He said: “O lord of gods, if whatever I desire is (to be) given, then always grant me one boon. May the lord be born by my name on the earth, O lord of gods.” O sinless one, being pleased with those words, I granted him the boon. (Since) then, O chief goddess, I stay with him. (To him) who remaining here, fasts and is fully devoted, I grant the desired objects as long as the fourteen Indras rule. Listen to what I give to the brāhmaṇas who, having come here, especially mutter the Rudra hymn etc. A man obtains quickly all that is desired in the Kali-age, like pleasure from his wife, pleasure from his son; it increases wealth. It gives glory and affluence, and destroys diseases etc. O Pārvatī, my devotees on the earth come here and perform rites like bathing, giving gifts in this terrible Kali-age. O chief goddess, I give the desired objects. This is the truth and the truth only. The king, having posted there another celibate named Gaṅgādhara, and having lived there for five days, then went to his own kingdom. The very great Brahmadaṭṭa, famous in the world, who knew piety, ruled for five myriad years. Then the king, having enjoyed the kingdom for some time, went to Śiva’s world, (and) to the excellent position called Brahmā. The two gods having my name stay there—one is Brahmācāriśa, and the other one is said to be

1. Pañcāgnisādhana—A kind of penance in which one has to bear five fires: one in front, one at the back, one on the left, and one on the right, and the fifth fire is the sun.

Gaṅgādhara. To those men who worship especially at my place, I certainly give everything wanted by them in the world. The place itself is always the Phallus. Men should always go there. That wise man who offers there flowers, incense, eatables of various kinds, certainly obtains everything. I give all to them who worship at my place with bilva-leaves, flowers and sandal etc. He who everyday listens to the account of Brahmācārin, obtains happiness in this world, and goes to the vicinity of Śiva, where god Gaṅgādhara, Bhūtida (i.e. giver of happiness) always dwells.

114-135. The other one called Brahmācārīśa always lives (there). From them one certainly obtains the position of Śiva by means of meditation. A disease perishes on seeing him. By worshipping (him) a man would obtain (long) life. O chief goddess, there is no doubt that by bathing there a man would enjoy salvation. O beautiful lady, listen. I shall describe a very wonderful holy place, known as Rājakhadga, especially on the Sābhramatī. King Vaikartana, born in the solar race, was of a bad conduct, sinful, and censured brāhmaṇas. He bore malice against his preceptors; was always angry; censured all (religious) acts; he was always interested in others' wives; and he always harmed Viṣṇu. He always harassed his subjects in many ways. Such a wicked one, as he was, lived on the earth always. O beautiful lady, listen properly. When some time passed, leprosy was produced in (i.e. overcame) him due to his sin (and) his (ill) luck. Observing his body, and thinking repeatedly as to what to do, he was full of anxiety. Once, by chance, he went into a forest for sport. Having reached the bank of Sābhramatī there, he remained there. He bathed there, and drank excellent water. Due to the bath there, his body instantly was seen to be divine. His figure was seen to be of good gold, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. Just then the king certainly became (like that). Having got the divine form, the king enjoyed the kingdom there for some time, and then went to the highest position of Śiva, O chief goddess. Then this holy place, called Rājakhadga, came up. He who bathes here and gives gifts, enjoys happiness in this world, and goes to the eternal (place) of Viṣṇu. They have no disease and never have grief. A man who everyday bathes in this (holy place) called Rājakhadga, would obtain

heaven, and is honoured by Brahmā and others. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he was called Satyeśvara in the Kṛta age, Bhuvaneśvara in the Tretā age, and Rājeśvara in the Dvāpara age. In this Kali age, the lord of the universe has vanished. Therefore this holy place, called Rājakhadga, has come up. Those men who devoutly offer oblations to their dead ancestors here, are declared to be of religious acts on the earth. The killers of brāhmaṇas or of children, who bathe here, get free from blemishes, and go to the vicinity of Śiva. The dead ancestors of them who offer a dark (cow) on (the bank of) Sābhramatī, are pleased till the deluge. O goddess, there is no fear for those men who listen to this divine account called Rājakhadga. In the same way diseases and blemishes vanish by listening to and reciting it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

The Greatness of Nanditṛtha

Pārvatī said:

1. Tell me which regions that Sābhramatī, having flowed out from Nandikuṇḍa, purified, and which holy places she, crossing the Arbuda mountain, brought about.

Sūta said:

2. When the goddess spoke this, Śiva, the lord of the universe, spoke (these) words to Pārvatī who fascinated the world.

Mahādeva said:

3-19. The sages first got fashioned the holy place called Kapālamocana, after the very purifying holy place Nandikuṇḍa. The holy place is more lustrous than all (others), and is extremely purifying. Here I had dropped the skull called *Kapāla*. Therefore, O Pārvatī, it became the holy place (called) *Kapālamocana*. It clearly purifies all the beings, and is well-

known in the world. That holy place, the lord of holy places, is called Kapālakuṇḍa, at which pure and auspicious holy place the noble ones (like) gods, so also nāgas, gandharvas, and kinna-ras etc. live. The holy place is known in the three worlds and gives knowledge and salvation. Having bathed there and having purified oneself, one should fast for a night, worship Kapāleśa and feed brāhmaṇas. Even by giving (a piece of) cloth (to a brāhmaṇa) there, one would get the fruit of an Agnihotra. One who, at that holy place, has resorted to the vow of seeing (the lord), would certainly go to Śiva's heaven after having cast one's body. O chief goddess, formerly Saudāsa, on bathing at this holy place, was freed from (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder, and obtained knowledge. The very powerful Sudāsa was born in the family of Bhagiratha. His son Mitrasaha was also known as Saudāsa. Due to the curse of Vasiṣṭha Saudāsa obtained the body of a demon. After having bathed in Sābhramatī, he became free from the sin due to the curse. Here, at this holy place called Nandi, are always present the pure rivers giving religious merit like Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Godāvarī and Sarasvatī. Learned men should especially make the gift of a cow, land, bed, daughter. A bath in Sābhramatī is said to be like this gift. Here even all the fallen are purified merely by means of the touch of the water. The dead ancestors of the man who, being greatly devoted, performs a śrāddha here, are pleased, and go to the highest position.

Those men who always listen to this divine account, are freed from all sins and would obtain absorption into Viṣṇu. For them who praise Maheśvara by means of their acts, mentally and by words, there is no grief till deluge.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

Vikīrṇatīrtha and Śvetodbhava

Mahādeva said:

1-14. The river Sābhramatī, (flowing) from the region of Nandi(tīrtha), came to the Vikīrṇa forest resorted to by brāhmaṇas and sages. Due to the great speed of her water and the resistance of the mountains she was divided into seven (streams) and flowed toward the southern sea. The first (stream) is the auspicious Sābhramatī. The second one is Setikā. The third auspicious one is Valkinī, and the fourth Hiraṇmayī. The fifth one, Hāstimatī, is said to remove all sins. The sixth one, Vetravatī, was formerly fashioned by Vṛtra. This highly divine one moved (i.e. flowed) out from the pool of Vṛtra. So she became (i.e. came to be known as) Vetravatī, destroying great sins. The seventh one, Bhādrāmukhī purifying the world, is rich in auspiciousness. She, purifying those regions with these seven streams, has proceeded with the seven streams. He who offers a śrāddha at Vikīrṇa-tīrtha to the dead ancestors, gets that fruit which will be (i.e. is) the fruit of a bath at Gayā. Those who have violated their vows, who are fallen, who missed the piṇḍas with oblations of water, get freed when piṇḍas and water are offered to them at Vikīrṇa. He who would offer a śrāddha there, would certainly be one of Śiva's attendants. Therefore, one should devoutly offer a śrāddha there as is laid down in the three Vedas. "O brāhmaṇas, especially take a bath at this (place of) rise of the seven rivers, O best brāhmaṇas, longing for the world of sages." Kaśyapa especially spoke thus to brāhmaṇas. If a bath is taken here, it always removes all griefs. This holy place (Vikīrṇa) is best among holy places, is best among the best. This holy place Vikīrṇa gives auspiciousness and removes diseases and blemishes. Those men who especially always bathe here in the Kali age, become meritorious. There is no doubt about it. Vikīrṇatīrtha is very purifying like Gayā-tīrtha. It always gives religious merit to the dead ancestors, and destroys people's misery. Thus Vikīrṇa-tīrtha is described.

15-23. A holy place superior to this, and an excellent one, is called Śvetodbhava, wherefrom the river Śvetā has sprung up

due to the ash (applied) to my back and belly. She, the destroyer of all sins, is well-known in the three worlds. She has been produced due to the contact with the ash applied to Śiva's body; and is honoured by gods. A man who has bathed in it, has become pure and controlled, has lived there for three nights, is honoured in Rudra's world after seeing Mahākāleśvara. There is no doubt that the dead ancestors of him who offers (them) a piṇḍa with darbhas and sesamum-seeds on her bank, are very much gratified. Śvetagaṅgā is very auspicious, and frees one from misery and poverty by bathing in which, O goddess, great happiness is obtained. O Pārvatī I always stay at its confluence. The bath which men take here, and the gifts they give, would undoubtedly be for them infinitely fruitful. On the confluence at that place god Bhūteśvara certainly lives. Those best men who offer incense, lamp, flowers and wave lights are meritorious. He who, getting a bilva-leaf, offers it on (the Phallus of) Śiva, always obtains the desired object in the vicinity of Śiva on (the bank of) Śvetā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

The Greatness of Gaṇatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-15. One intent on a pilgrimage to holy places, should then go to Gaṇatīrtha. It is called Triviṣṭapa by Śiva's attendants and is on the bank of Candanā. A man bathing on the full-moon day at Triviṣṭapa, and being composed, is freed from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. No doubt should be entertained about this. He too, the noble and meritorious one, who stays at Triviṣṭapa during the four months of the rainy season, is also honoured in Rudra's world. A man, having bathed at Gaṇatīrtha and fasted on the Aṣṭamī (day), and having bathed at the confluence of Bakulā, goes to heaven. A man, having bathed at that holy place and having seen Bakuleśa, would obtain the position of the chief of Śiva's attendants due to the grace

of the lord of Śiva's attendants. A man hearing (about) this which is pure, very meritorious, increasing religious merit and (span of) life, obtains religious merit equal to (that obtained from) a bath in Gaṅgā. Having stayed here, a man, observing a fast, with his senses controlled and composed, who thus mutters the names of the charming lord of Śiva's attendants, obtains all pleasures. This is the truth and the (only) truth, O you of a beautiful face. (There was) the powerful king, Viśvadatta, of the lunar dynasty. He practised penance here for a long time, O chief goddess. Then due to Śrī Gaṇeśa's grace he obtained the position of the chief of Śiva's attendants. All the meritorious sages like Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Hoḍa, Kauśītaka, Bharadvāja. Aṅgiras, Viśvāmitra and Vāmana, everyday serve (the lord) due to Gaṇeśa's grace, O great goddess. A sonless man obtains sons, a poor man gets wealth, an ignorant man obtains knowledge, and a man desiring salvation would obtain salvation. O you beautiful lady, what is the use of repeatedly talking profusely about any other thing? He who would bathe here and offer worship, is freed from all sins, and goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu, (and reaches) Śiva of the form of Viṣṇu, and Viṣṇu of the form of Śiva. Due to Viṣṇu's grace, O goddess, I do not see any difference (between the two of us).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

The Greatness of Agnipāleśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-19a. On the northern bank of Sābhramatī (the holy place called) Agnitīrtha is known. The holy place Tirthapāleśvara is situated not far away in the north-eastern direction from her, where Caṇḍī has settled. That seat of the Yogamātṛs brings in complete welfare. There the great mothers have stayed with great effort and for favouring the world. A man of a firm vow, having stayed there for three nights, should go to that god Caṇḍikeśvara, the lord of gods. Having bathed in Sābhramatī

near Mātṛtīrtha, he being fully concentrated, should go to Mātṛmaṇḍala. A man obtains the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows after having bathed at Agnitīrtha and seen Cāmuṇḍā. For him there is no fear from demons, evil spirits and goblins. O chief goddess, at the place where river Gokhurā has joined Sābhramatī, there are thousands of holy places. O Pārvati, there a srāddha should be offered with sesamum powder. (A man) having offered piṇḍas and fed brāhmaṇas, would obtain an undecaying position. There was a king Kukardama, who was most sinful, irresistible, wicked, foolish, who possessed ego, who censured brāhmaṇas, killed cows and children, who was most sinful and always indomitable. O chief goddess, when he was ruling in the city called Piṇḍāra, he died at an auspicious time. He who was dead, was born here as an evil spirit, O great goddess. He, of a yellow face, with his mouth parched up, having yellow hair, and harsh, very tall, having profuse hair, oppressed by hunger and thirst, subsisting on air, moved here and there. Accompanied by many evil spirits he wailed 'Hā, Hā'. The evil spirits near him also said: "What should be done?" Those other wicked evil spirits also crying and oppressed by hunger, thirst etc., came in contact with the king. With the king they moved to many uninhabited countries. On the way neither water nor food was ever seen (by them). Those evil spirits of wicked forms moved on the earth. They ate the flesh of corpses and always drank blood. King Kukardama was thus always surrounded by them. Some time by chance he went to the hermitage of (his) preceptor. He had done religious acts in the former existence. Due to that he came in contact (with the preceptor).

Pārvati said:

19b-20. O master, O lord of the universe, tell (me) what religious deeds he did. This was a sinner, a wicked one, and troubled brāhmaṇas. How did he have good company. Tell it to me (though) difficult.

Mahādeva said:

21-29a. I shall tell (you) all that this king had done in the previous existence. Listen (to it), O daughter of the (Himālaya)

Mountain. O goddess, in his previous existence, he was a brāhmaṇa who recited the Vedas. Having everyday worshipped Mahādeva, and honoured guests, this best brāhmaṇa took his food. Due to the prowess of that religious merit, he became a king in the city of Piṇḍāra, and was known as Kukardama. Through his body and mind, he did not perform religious acts. Due to that (ill) luck, he died and became the king of the evil spirits. His face was dry, his figure was dry, his complexion was yellow, and he was fearful. O chief goddess, (the effect of) the religious deeds done in a former existence does not perish. Due to that religious merit he came in the company of the preceptor in the (latter's) hermitage. Kahoḍa lived there. He saw the king of the evil spirits, whose face was dry, figure was dry, complexion was yellow, and who was fearful. His eyes were deep, he was a great sinner, and was accompanied by wicked evil spirits. His hair was raised, he had matted hair, he was of the nature of death, and was fierce. Seeing him like that at that time, the brāhmaṇa (Kahoḍa) was afflicted.

Kahoḍa said:

29b-31. At this charming, very wonderful place, viz. at the holy place of Agnipāleśvara, I always live. O king, you are our patron. How have you become the king of the evil spirits? On this auspicious earth, due to the result of which deeds have you become a wicked one, of a wicked form, of the nature of death, and fierce?

The evil spirit said:

32-39. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the sin I committed in the previous existence. I was king Kukardama in the city called Piṇḍāraka O divine one, listen to what I, living there, did. Formerly, (I indulged in) killing brāhmaṇas, telling lies etc. I harassed my subjects, always killed beings. I harmed the cows, and destroyed brāhmaṇas' vows. O brāhmaṇa, I always remained without a bath. I hurt the good. I was always given to censuring Viṣṇu, and blamed the devotees of Viṣṇu. My conduct was bad, I was wicked, and was always accompanied by śūdra females. I ate anywhere, and was never intent on being pure. Due to that (evil) deed, O lord of brāhmaṇas, I died and reached

the stock of an evil spirit and have become unhappy in many ways. The preceptor alone is the kinsman, the preceptor, the mother, the father of him who does not have a mother, a father, relatives and kinsmen. Realising this, O brāhmaṇa, please relieve me.

Kahoḍa said:

40-46. Listen, O best king. I shall do as you tell me. You will instantly attain salvation. There is no doubt about it. Even the pre-eminent evil spirits who are in your company, will also get release, especially at this excellent holy place.

Then, O chief goddess, that brāhmaṇa, having gone to the holy place, made them perform rites like offering water with sesamum-seeds. There is no (restriction as to) month or date. Repeatedly going to a holy place, one should perform rites like a śrāddha as formerly told by Brahmā to me. O goddess, when the (śrāddha-)rite was performed at the chief holy place, they were released and seated in an aeroplane they went to my city. O chief goddess, bathing and giving gifts at the place where Gokhurā has joined Sābhramatī, would secure the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. Salvation is said to be obtained there, where there would be (i.e. is) the holy place Agnitīrtha called Kapāleśvara. It would certainly be true (and) true (only).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTY

Hiraṇyāsaṅgama Tīrtha

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-16. O goddess, I shall tell you about the great confluence of Hiraṇyā (with Sābhramatī). When that Sābhramatī Gaṅgā formerly had seven streams. then she—the daughter of Brahmā—was known as Saptasrotā. The seventh stream is known as Hiraṇyā. A sinful man having bathed at that holy place would obtain heaven. The mountain Satyavān is between Ṛkṣu and

Mañjuma. To its east is the auspicious confluence of Hiranyā (with Sābhramatī). Having bathed there and drunk (water) one would obtain an auspicious course. Having seen Nārāyaṇa Hari at Vanasthalī, one should then go to Hiranyāsaṅgameśvara, a holy place, auspicious for celestial nymphs, where Urvaśī, (the most) beautiful among the celestial nymphs, was formerly born. There Nara and Nārāyaṇa practised excellent penance. At the charming and auspicious confluence of Hiranyā (with Sābhramatī), which removes great sins, all sages, with their sins gone, bathe. O goddess, the brāhmaṇas like Vasiṣṭha and like Vālakhilya, bathe there at the confluence of Hiranyā (with Sābhramatī). By bathing there one's form certainly becomes golden. A mortal always obtains that fruit (by bathing) at the confluence of Hiranyā (with Sābhramatī) which is equal to the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows. And at Hiranyāsaṅgama the fruit is said to be infinite times more than the one obtained at the time of lunar or solar eclipse at Daśāśvamedha. Hiranyākṣa was a great demon. He practised severe penance (here). His body formerly became like gold there. When king Janamejaya bathed at that place, his (sin due to the) murder of a brāhmaṇa vanished. The royal sage Viśvāmitra came here for a bath. Having especially bathed here he went to my city. O chief goddess, brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras, who bathe here, go to Śiva's abode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYONE

Madhurāditya

Mahādeva said:

1-11. O goddess, then I shall, after the description of Hiranyāsaṅgama, describe the holy place where the river Dharmavati joins (Sābhramatī). There is no doubt that a fortunate man bathing there goes to heaven. He who sees there the holy place fashioned by Yama is meritorious. Those who perform a śrādhā there are free from the debt of their dead ancestors. Then

there is the Madhurā-tīrtha, which destroys all sins. One should bathe at Madhurā-tīrtha, and see Viṣṇu, the killer of Madhu. Here, Kṛṣṇa, full of the fear of Jarāsandha, had rested. After the murder of Kaṁsa demon had taken place, he, desirous of going to Kuśasthalī, lived for seven nights on the bank of Candanā, surrounded by Bhoja, Vṛṣṇi, Andhaka and Yādava heroes. He reached Madhurātīrtha and bathed as per rules. There Viṣṇu established (the image) by name Madhurāditya. He settled (there) eighteen thousand brāhmaṇas performing sacrifices, and left after giving them various vehicles. O chief goddess, there are thousands of holy places. One desiring the good of the dead ancestors, should perform a śrāddha there. "You who are staying in my holy place, should never be afraid of Jarāsandha." Having thus told those brāhmaṇas Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā. A man having bathed in that holy place, should worship Madhurārka. Due to the gift of a tawny cow on the seventh of the bright fortnight of Māgha, a man after enjoying pleasures here for a long time, would go to the position of the Sun.

12-23. O beautiful lady, listen, I shall tell you an ancient account, hearing which people are free from such sins as the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O goddess, on one occasion, the best sage Māṇḍavya practised very auspicious and severe penance at Gaṅgādvāra. He ate leaves and fruits and always ate (i.e. subsisted on) air. O goddess, day and night he was always greatly devoted to meditating on Viṣṇu. He was engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, and was always given to religious practices. O goddess, king Viśvamohana lived in that country. He had abundant wealth (consisting) of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers on the earth. His son, of auspicious marks, was Somacandra by name. O goddess, once he went for hunting in the forest. Having gone there, and having had the sports of hunting, he, surrendered by his own people, amused himself. When he was engaged in sports, it was night, O goddess. During the night the king stayed in the forest for hunting. When the night passed, and when it was the period (of the day) called Brāhma, his horse was stolen by a wicked thief. Then there was a cry, 'Hā, hā' 'Where has the horse gone?' Then all of them desirous of going away and eager, through the fear of the king, said to

one another: “The horse is specially stolen by a thief.” Looking for (it), they all came to Haridvāra. There the sage Māṇḍavya always practised penance. At that time the soldiers saw him lost in meditation: ‘This thief, always a sinner, remains in meditation’.

24-32. Suspecting that he had come (there) after having tied the horse, the king’s soldiers thought like that and seized the great sage. They reported to the king about the thief, viz. the best sage. “O king, this snatcher of the horse is brought. O king, he is always a thief.” Then he gave an order to transfix him on a stake. Then all the soldiers came together, and tied him. Then in a moment he was transfixed on a stake. He did not notice that act of being transfixed on a stake. Since he was engaged in abstract meditation and highly devoted to meditation on Viṣṇu, he noticed being transfixed on a stake after some time. “I am Māṇḍavya, the best of sages. Who has done this act?” The revered, omniscient one, who knew (the events of) the three times, thought: ‘This must be the act of Dharma, and of none else’. Engaged in abstract meditation, the pious one went to Dharma. Having gone there, he spoke these (words): “O Dharma, listen now. You are always known as Dharma in the world and the Veda. How did you do the act of transfixing (me) on the stake? O sir, I certainly desire to know all that from you.”

Dharma said:

33-39a. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the cause of your fall in the previous existence. I shall tell (you) that. Please favour me. In your childhood you did this act—the sin—in your previous existence. O very wise one, listen to the cause of your fall in this existence. O brāhmaṇa, once you had gone to a solitary forest. O brāhmaṇa, having gone there, you put a living moth on a stake. Due to that act it was pained. O you of a good vow, due to that act, you were transfixed on a stake by the king. By all means (the effect of) an auspicious or inauspicious act done by one has to be undergone. You have undoubtedly suffered (the fruit of that) very small act. O best brāhmaṇa, be happy. Go at your will.” Having heard these words, that best brāhmaṇa,

Māṇḍavya, with his eyes reddish due to anger then spoke (these words):

Māṇḍavya said:

39b-45. O most sinful one, O you of a bad conduct, what great sin had I committed, having done which, I was (thus) transfixed on a stake? Due to the wrath (contained) in my words, be a śūdra by all means.

After some time, he was born in the family called Candra, was known as Vidura, and was highly devoted to Viṣṇu. O chief goddess, for a pilgrimage he went to the river Sābhramatī, where there is (her) confluence with Dharmavatī. Vidura, of the form of Dharma, bathed there only. He certainly cast his śūdrahood in Dharmavatī. Therefore, O goddess, those meritorious men who bathe here, go to the highest position. Those men who offer a śrāddha and gifts here on the earth, get great prosperity in this world, and rejoice in heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYTWO

Kambutīrtha and Kapitīrtha

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-6. A man having bathed at Kambu-tīrtha, and having offered oblations to his dead ancestors, should worship Anāmaya Viṣṇu. By giving various gifts to brāhmaṇas according to the precepts he obtains Viṣṇu's heaven due to the efficacy of this holy place. O beautiful lady, formerly the intelligent royal sage Viśvāmitra, desiring progeny, especially practised penance here. He ate (i.e. subsisted on) air, fasted, and had air as his food. He was always intent on Viṣṇu's worship and engrossed in meditation on Viṣṇu. Due to this penance he obtained progeny. A man who desiring progeny, goes to Kambutīrtha, always obtains progeny, O you of a beautiful face. This is the truth and the (only) truth.

This is the greatness of Kambutīrtha.

7-13. Then, O best goddess, a man should go to the holy place Kapīśvara by name, which, the destroyer of great sins, is near Raktasiṃha. Formerly, during the war between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, when the bridge was being built, the monkeys took the best mountain and particularly fashioned the excellent holy place, Kapīśvarāditya by name. Here a man, after bathing and offering oblations to his dead ancestors and seeing Kapīśvarāditya is freed from (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Especially on Aṣṭamī a man should bathe there. Hanūmat and others bathed there on three days. I have told you this efficacy of Kapitīrtha. There is no doubt that a man, having bathed here and having worshipped Kapīśvara, becomes handsome and very fortunate. A man who desires strength or piety or a son in the world, would obtain all (that) due to the efficacy of Kapitīrtha.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Ekadhāra and Saptadhārātīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. Then a man should go to the very purifying holy place (called) Ekadhāra. A man, having bathed at Ekadhāra and fasted for a night, and worshipping the master, the lord of gods, would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family. The bath here should be regarded as equal to (a bath in) Svāmitīrtha. Due to the efficacy of this holy place a man would go to Rudra's heaven. By bathing and drinking (water) here he goes to Brahmā's heaven. Those doing meritorious deeds in the three worlds, live on this bank. They do not have a fear that is due to the sword's edge etc. All that would quickly perish at this holy place Ekapradhāraka.

Thus is the description of the holy place Ekadhāra.

6-19. Then he should go to Saptadhāra, the best among sacred places, to which the sages have given the name Saptasārasvata. The great sage Maṅki made the Maṅkitīrtha in the Tretā age. In the Dvāpara age the sons of Pāṇḍu set up the Saptadhāra. The holy water that dropped from Śiva's matted hair had seven streams. All those seven auspicious forms of Gaṅgā which flow in the seven worlds are here in Saptadhāraka. The śrāddha offered at Saptadhāra gives satisfaction to the dead ancestors. O goddess, listen to an ancient account I shall tell, hearing which, O chief goddess, a man would certainly go to Brahmā's world. The son of Kaupitaka was well-known by the name Maṅki. He was always engaged in meditating upon Viṣṇu, and honoured Viṣṇu's men. He studied the Vedas, and was interested in maintaining sacred fire. In his house he had two wives: Sarūpā and Viśvarūpā. Seeing them childless he feared; worried as to what to do, he was very much thoughtful. 'Due to a son the family is stable. Otherwise the man would go to hell'. Thinking like this he never obtained pleasure. Then leaving his house, he went to the vicinity of his preceptor. "Salutation to you, O preceptor, who obliged gods. You are the lord of all the worlds, and protector of brāhmaṇas. You are the performer of sacrifices. O lord of brāhmaṇas, I salute you. O brāhmaṇa sage, I am sonless. O lord, what should I do? Tell me everything by which I shall certainly have a son. 'A sonless man does not at all get a good position in heaven. He should, by this or that means, beget a son'. Having remembered this statement I have come to you."

The preceptor said:

20-26. O best sage go there where the river Sābhramatī is. O best sage, having bathed there you will certainly obtain sons.

Having heard his words, and having saluted him (by prostrating himself) like a staff, the lord of brāhmaṇas went to Sābhramatī. The brāhmaṇa sage Maṅki, having gone there, then practised severe penance for fourteen years. There Maṅki, the teacher of Vedas, made in the Tretā age, a very wonderful holy place, O goddess. All that proved to be the giver of a son and as fulfilling his desires. Even till today there was or there will

not be a holy place like Maṅkitīrtha. That best brāhmaṇa Maṅki, having obtained sons comfortably, and having enjoyed pleasures of various kinds, went to my abode. This is a divine, pure, and very great account. By listening to it a man gets everything like sons and grandsons.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Brahmavallī and Khaṇḍatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-10. O chief goddess, a man should then go to the great holy place (called) Brahmavallī. O best goddess, listen to the actual nature of that holy place. That Brahmatīrtha where the water of Sābhramatī joins the water of Brahmavallī, is said to be equal to Prayāga. By offering piṇḍas there the dead ancestors are gratified for twelve years—as this is the statement of Brahmā. Knowing that the religious merit due to a śrāddha offered there is equal to that of a śrāddha at Gayā, men offer it, and the dead ancestors would (thereby) be pleased. A gift particularly at Brahmavallī has religious merit equal to that due to the gift of a cow, of land or of food also. Here only Sanaka and others having bathed according to the precept, obtained Viṣṇu's world by meditating upon the position of the highest Brahman. O chief goddess, a man obtains particularly that fruit at Brahmavallī which he obtains by going to Puṣkara, (bank of) Gaṅgā, and the holy place Amarakaṇṭaka. Men obtain that fruit at Brahmavallī which (they get when) they give gifts at the lunar or solar eclipse, O chief goddess. Those who have divine forms and hold conches, discs and maces, also go to heaven on bathing (here), O chief goddess. A man, holding a rosary made of Tulasī(-wood), and remembering Viṣṇu, goes to the divine Vaikuṇṭha, the highest position (full of) bliss.

Thus is the greatness of Brahmavallī-tīrtha.

11-12. From there a man should go to Vṛṣatīrtha well-

known as Khaṇḍatīrtha. Having formerly bathed there the cows went to Goloka. The cows, the mothers of the world, that had fallen due to a curse were protected by Dharma in the form of Khaṇḍa; therefore it is called Khaṇḍatīrtha.

Pārvati said:

13. Who formerly gave a curse to the cows, the mothers of the world? How did they fall from (their) world? How were they protected by Dharma?

Mahādeva said:

14-29. Formerly Vṛṣa, playing with the mothers in Goloka, discharged feces and urine. That fell on the head of Hara. So, due to their fault Hara gave a curse: “O cows, losing your intellect, you will go to the earth.” The cows cursed by the lord, again went to Hara, and requested the god: “May we obtain (i.e. go back to) our world.” “When you will bathe in the pool called Khaṇḍa near Brahmavallī at the holy place on (the bank of) Sābhramatī, you will certainly obtain heaven.” Then the cows having bathed with the lord of cows in the pool, (became) most pure (and) went to heaven near Mahādeva. A man having bathed in Gohrada, and having offered oblations to his dead ancestors, obtains Goloka free from heat and destruction. The man, who, living there without food, offers piṇḍas to cows, would obtain happiness as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). There is no doubt that a man obtains that fruit at Khaṇḍatīrtha which he certainly gets by the gift of a crore of cows. Taking a bull’s urine, one who drinks the holy water gets purified at that moment only. There is no doubt about it. There was not and there will not be a holy place superior to Khaṇḍatīrtha. Those men, O best goddess, who go there, are meritorious. Having gone there, a man should worship cows, O best goddess. Then having bathed and being composed he should worship Vṛṣabha. Undoubtedly by worshipping him he would live in Goloka for a long time. Those men who, having gone there, particularly offer a golden (image of a) cow enjoy happiness as long as the fourteen Indras (rule). A man, who having fashioned (golden images of) ten cows gives them to a

brāhmaṇa at Khaṇḍatīrtha—that is said (to give) infinite fruit, O best goddess. Having gone there the wise should plant a pippala tree. Having done so, O chief goddess, he goes to the world of the dead ancestors. Those who plant five āmalakī trees, enjoy happiness in this world and go to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

Saṅgameśvara

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-16. Then (a man) should go to the great, excellent holy place called Saṅgameśvara, where the auspicious Hastimatī has joined Sābhramatī. Having received a curse from the sage Kauṇḍinya, the river became dry and came to be known in the world as Bahiścaryā. I shall describe to you that auspicious holy place, well-known in the world. It is auspicious, removes all sins, and is well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed at that holy place, and having seen Maheśvara, a man being free from all sins, goes to Rudra's heaven. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you the reason for this curse, due to which curse she became dry. At that place where that auspicious, great river Sābhramatī, named Gaṅgā (also) is, Hastimatī joined Gaṅgā. There the sage commenced a very severe penance. When so much time passed like this, the noble sage worshipped Nārāyaṇa Nirañjana (i.e. Viṣṇu). On her bank, O chief goddess, the sage particularly passed many years. O Pārvatī, sometime by chance the rainy season arrived. In course of time, O you of a good vow, the river was full (of water). Then at night the sage Kauṇḍinya abandoned that place. At night, he was very unhappy, and crying 'Hā, Hā', he wept piteously. Thinking what to do, he was very much anxious. The very divine hermitage with (i.e. occupied by) the sage, went (i.e. collapsed) into Sābhramatī, due to the flood, O best goddess. O beautiful lady, many fruits, roots, and even books, went (i.e. fell) into the river, due to the flood. That best sage Kauṇḍinya cursed the

river: “In the Kali-age you will be without water.” Having thus given a curse to Hastimatī, O great goddess, the best brāhmaṇa went to the ancient heaven of Viṣṇu. Even today that holy place called Saṅgameśvara exists. Seeing that a sinner is freed from such sins as the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Rudramahālayatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-8. O chief goddess, then a man should go to the holy place Rudramahālaya resembling Kedāra, and actually fashioned by Rudra. There he should offer a śrāddha causing delight to the dead ancestors. By offering a śrāddha there, the dead ancestors, along with the grandsires are gratified and go to the highest position of Rudra. He who lets loose a bull there in the great abode of Rudra on the full-moon day of Kārtika or Vaiśākha rejoices with Rudra. On drinking water at Kedāra, there is no rebirth. Having bathed here, a man undoubtedly enjoys liberation. O goddess, on one occasion, having left Kailāsa, I came to Sābhramatī, knowing her to be Gaṅgā for the well-being of the world. Having bathed there, and drunk (her water) and having made (the place) an excellent holy place, I then went to Kailāsa, my abode, O beautiful lady. Then the Mahālaya (the great abode) became a great holy place, and will be known in the world as Rudra-Mahālaya. Those who go to (i.e. visit) it on the full-moon day of Kārtika or Vaiśākha, do not have the misery due to the entire mundane existence.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

*Khaḍgatīrtha**Mahādeva said:*

1-7. O goddess, listen to (the description) of the holy place, difficult to be reached even by gods. It is called Khaḍgatīrtha, and it desrtoys all sins. A man, having bathed at Khaḍgatīrtha, and having seen Khaḍgeśvara Śiva, would not meet with misery, (but) goes to heaven; (so also he) who sees the god Khaḍgdhāreśvara. One should especially worship (the god) there on the full-moon day of Kārtika. O dear one, this god, the lord of the universe, the lord of all, always gives everything in the world. He gives the desired objects. A man who, desiring a kingdom, sees the lord in Vaiśākha, gets that object quickly due to the grace of Viśvanātha. He should especially worship him with flowers, incense, eatables, or lamps, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. So also with the offerings of fruits and bilva (-leaves). There is no doubt that wealth, grains, sons, grandsons, riches are obtained due to the worship of Śrī Vjśveśvara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

*Mālārkatīrtha**Mahādeva said:*

1-9. On the bank of Sābhramatī is the excellent Gayā-tīrtha, called Citrāṅgavadana, auspicious and occupied by Mālārka. It is adorned with kalpa trees, santāna trees, and mandāra trees, and with mango, nimba, kadamba, kāśmarī, aśvattha and tinduka trees. Even by remembering it from a yojana leprosy would be cured. Mālārka would remove the leprosy of him who suffers from it. That woman whose child is dead, or who is barren, who bathes there according to the Vedic precept, soon obtains a son. The muttering (of a hymn), a sacrifice, self-study, worship of a deity done (there) by the Sun's devotee would be inexhaustible.

O chief goddess, having gone to this place a man should observe the vow of Śrī Ravi. Having enjoyed pleasures here, he goes to the Sun's world. A royal sage whose child was dead, went there and practised penance. The king obtained a son due to the grace of Śrī Mālārka. He who, particularly observing a fast, and with his senses controlled, would worship Mālārka, would certainly enjoy salvation. O best goddess, brāhmaṇas led by Vasiṣṭha and gods like Indra always stay at Mālārka near the Sun.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Candaneśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-11. From this holy place Mālārka a man should come to Candaneśvara, an excellent place of joy near Mālārka. Having drunk the blood of Duśśāsana, the very mighty Bhīma, fulfilled his very fierce pledge fully, and he tied Draupadi's hair with his hands smeared with blood, and having given (gifts to) brāhmaṇas, he went on a pilgrimage. With his brothers he went to the charming bank of Sābhramatī. That candana tree which was brought to Sābhramatī from heaven, had become a Phallus due to the power of the auspicious holy place. A man, by bathing there and drinking (water there) and gratifying his dead ancestors would not go to hell (but) would obtain Rudra's heaven. Then having seen Candaneśa, the lord of the universe and the cause of the well-being of the worlds, he should worship him according to his capacity; having gone there he does not repent. King Kaivartaka, having many times worshipped (the lord) here, went to that Śiva's world having gone where one does not regret. The sages bathe here; the ancient god, the highest soul Viṣṇu, causing welfare, always actually stays here. This Sābhramatī is blessed. Blessed is the lord, the ruler of the universe. O Pārvatī, here many holy places have come up on the earth. Here is Āmardakī with auspicious fruits of many kinds. O beautiful lady, respectful offering should be made there.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTY

Jambūtīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-14. From there a man should go to Jambūtīrtha, the destroyer of sins, for a bath, which has become like a staircase in the Kali-age. Here formerly Jāmbavat established on Daśāṅga—the best mountain—Phallus Ṛkṣarājaśa, worshipped by hosts of gods. When formerly Rāma killed the demon Rāvaṇa, Jāmbavat proclaimed with the sounds of drums ‘Rāmacandra has won; Rāvaṇa is killed in the war. Sītā is (re-)secured.’ Having proclaimed like this, he bathed in the auspicious holy place. O chief goddess, with his own name he installed a Phallus there. A man having bathed there and instantly remembering Rāma with his younger brother is honoured in Rudra’s heaven. O goddess, wherever Rāma is remembered, there freedom from the bondage of the worldly existence is noticed in the mobile and immobile (world). I should be known to be Rāma, and Rāma as Rudra only. Having realised like this, O goddess, no difference exists between (Rāma and me). In every age they who mentally mutter ‘Rāma, Rāma, Rāma’, obtain all objects. O goddess, I always remember Rāma, having heard (the name of) whom, there would never be rebirth. O goddess, living in Kāśī, I always remember the lotus-eyed Rāma with devotion and according to the sacred precept. Formerly Jāmbavat remembered that very handsome Rāma, and installed the lord of the worlds known as Jāmbavat. Having bathed, eaten and worshipped the deity there, a man obtains (and lives in) Śiva’s heaven till the fourteen Indras (rule). Merely by bathing here a man obtains strength like that of Jāmbavat due to the grace of Śrī Viśveśvara. A man who having gone here, makes a gift of land, gets a thousandfold fruit on seeing Jāmbavateśa.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYONE

*Dhavalesvara**Mahādeva said:*

1. A holy place superior to this is known as Indragrāma, having bathed where formerly Indra became free from a terrible sin.

Pārvatī said:

2. Due to which act did Indra acquire that terrible sin? How did he become free from that sin? Tell it (to me) in detail.

Mahādeva said:

3-19. Formerly Indra, the lord of gods, and Namuci, the lord of demons, mutually agreed to kill each other without a weapon. Due to being ordered by a divine voice, Indra took foam and killed Namuci. Then it was the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Indra asked Bṛhaspati the means of destroying the sin. And by the order of Bṛhaspati the lord of gods came to this place on the northern bank of Sābhramatī, and fashioned (there) a (holy) place. Due to his having bathed here he became free from the sin instantly. On his body was produced lustre white like the full moon. The killer of Vṛtra (i.e. Indra) installed the (representation of) the god (called) Dhavalesvara. The Phallus is well-known in the world after Indra. When a śrāddha is offered on a full-moon day, a new-moon day, saṁkrānti (day), at an eclipse, the dead ancestors are satisfied for twelve years. He who, having reached Dhavalesvara, would feed brāhmaṇas, for him, having fed one brāhmaṇa a thousand brāhmaṇas would be fed. A man should give (to a brāhmaṇa) gold, land, garments according to his capacity. A white milch-cow with a calf should be given to a brāhmaṇa. The muttering (of the names of) Rudra etc. which a brāhmaṇa would do after coming here, becomes a crorefold (in merit) due to Śrī Maheśa's grace. A man who would observe a fast etc. at this holy place, certainly is endowed with all his desired objects. There is no doubt about this. A man who, having brought bilva-leaves, worships the lord, obtains on the earth religious merit, worldly objects and sensual

pleasures. Dhavaleśvara will remove the disease and blemish of those best men who go (to this holy place) especially on a Monday. O goddess, I have not at all understood the greatness of those who especially offer worship to the lord on a Sunday. Those men who worship (the lord) here with a dūrvā, arka-flowers, white lotuses, (other) lotuses or petals, are meritorious. A man, having brought a flower of śvetārka and having worshipped Dhavaleśa, always gets his desired (object) by the grace of Dhavaleśa. In Kṛta (age) he was (called) Nīlakaṇṭha who always brought about the well-being (of his devotees). The revered lord was known as Hara in Tretā (age). In Dvāpara he was named Śarva, and Dhavaleśvara in Kali (age).

20-31. O chief goddess, listen to the old account in this regard. Formerly a vaiśya named Nandin lived in Indragrāma. Intent on meditating upon Śiva, he worshipped Śiva. There always stood in the penance grove, the Phallus called Dhavala. He to whom Śiva was dear, having got up everyday at dawn, was very much engrossed in worshipping Śiva. He was engaged in the worship (of the lord) with flowers according to the rite laid down in the holy texts. Once a greedy hunter, a killer of beings, a sinner of sinful acts, wandered on the bank of Sābhramatī, crowded with beasts of prey, and killed the deer with arrows. The hunter, the killer of beings, wandering like this, came, by chance, where the Phallus was well worshipped. He saw the Phallus—the well-known Dhavaleśvara, full of many wonders—well worshipped with many flowers and fruits. Having embraced the Phallus, he went to the bank of Sābhramatī. There he drank water and had his mouth full with water. With one hand he carried the flesh of deer, and in the other hand he carried bilva-leaves for worship. Quickly coming near the Phallus he struck with his foot the worship (offered by Nandin). All the flowers were scattered here and there. With the mouthful of water he bathed the Phallus. With one hand he offered the bilva-leaves for worship. With the other hand he offered the flesh of deer. With a salutation by prostrating himself he made a mental resolve.

32-48. 'From today I shall carefully offer worship. O Śaṅkara, from today you are my master, and I am your devotee.' Taking such a vow, the hunter came home. (When) in the morning

Nandin came to the temple, he saw all that the hunter had done. Seeing those misplaced (i.e. scattered) and impure things near Śiva, (and seeing) all those (things) disturbed by the wicked one, Nandin was anxious (thinking) 'what strange (thing) has today happened to me. Due to my ill-luck the obstacles that are told in the case of one who is engaged in Śiva-worship, have approached.' Having thus thought for a long time and having washed the Śiva-temple Nandin went home along the same way as he had come. Seeing Nandin dispirited, his family-priest said (these) words to him: "Why are you despondent?" Then to the family-priest Nandin said (these) words: "O brāhmaṇa, today I saw impurity near Śiva. I do not know who has done it there". Then the priest said (these) words to Nandin: "He who disturbed the worship of (i.e. offered with) flowers etc. is certainly a fool. He is dull-witted in what to do and what not. Therefore, O lord, you should not worry. In the morning go to the temple with me to catch the wicked one. I shall punish him." Hearing these words of the priest, Nandin remained at home at night with a pained mind. When the night Passed, he called the family-priest, and with the noble one Nandin went to the Śiva-temple. Having washed (the Phallus) he worshipped it with brāhmaṇas, covering it with many jewels and doing the five ways of homage. When Nandin was eulogising like this two watches passed. He (hunter), Great Death of that form and very strong, came there. He was of the form of death, very fierce, brave with a bow in his hand. Seeing him, Nandin being frightened, hid there. The family-priest also then became suddenly scared.

49-61. The hunter did there as before and without making any mistake he disturbed the worship with his foot and offered bilva-leaf. The hunter worshipped with the eatable of meat. Having fallen on the ground like a staff, he got up and went home. Seeing the great wonder, he (Nandin) thought for a long time along with the family-priest. Then he with his mind afflicted, asked the brāhmaṇas: "Tell the truth." All the brāhmaṇas together thought and spoke, according to the holy texts, to Nandin who had a fear: "Danger to the lord has come up. It is difficult to be warded off even by gods. Therefore, O best vaiśya, take the Phallus to your house." Agreeing to do so

Nandin uprooted the great (Phallus) of Śiva, brought it to his house and installed it in the proper manner. He fashioned a golden seat, well-adorned with fresh plantain-trees. With many offerings he worshipped (it). The next day the hunter came to the Śiva-temple. When he looked (for the Phallus) he did not see it. Breaking his silence he suddenly said these words with a wailing: “O Śambhu, where have you gone? Show yourself to me, today. If I do not get your sight I shall cast my despicable body today. O Śambhu, O Jagannātha, O Tripurāntaka, O Śaṅkara, O Rudra, O Mahādeva, show yourself (to me).” Having thus scolded Śiva with taunting (but) sweet words, the courageous hunter pierced, with a knife, his belly. Then having quickly pierced his arm he loudly and angrily said: “O Śambhu, show yourself (to me). Where will you go having abandoned me?”

62-70. With these words the hunter threw his intestines, and took out flesh from everywhere (i.e. every part of his body), and threw it suddenly with his hand into the pit (where the Phallus was). Having purified his heart, he plunged into Sābhramatī. Similarly having brought water and bilva-leaf, he quickly worshipped (the lord) properly, and fell on the ground like a staff. When the hunter remained in meditation near Śiva, then Rudra, surrounded by his attendants appeared there. He was fair like camphor, had braided and matted hair, and had the (crescent-moon) on his crest. Seizing him by his hand, and consoling him, Rudra said: “O brave one, O very wise one, O very intelligent one, you are my devotee. O devotee, ask for a boon which you have in your mind”. Thus addressed by Rudra the very fierce (hunter) was full of joy. With great devotion he fell like a staff on the ground. Then he said to Rudra: “I do not ask for a boon. O Rudra, I am your servant, and you are my master. There is no doubt about this. Give this—the most praiseworthy (condition) in the world, in existence after existence. You are my mother, my father, my brother, my friend. You are my preceptor, a great hymn, always known through hymns.”

71-78. Having heard the words of the hunter without (i.e. expressing) any desire, Śiva made him the chief of his attendants and his doorkeeper. Then the three worlds were resonant with the sound of small drums, so also with the sound of kettle-drums and of conches. Large drums then sounded, so also hundreds of

tabors sounded. Being amazed at hearing that sound Nandin quickly went to the penance-grove where Śiva was surrounded by his attendants. Then Nandin also saw the hunter, and the modest Nandī, full of amazement, said many words; he desired to praise the hunter with a great concentration: "You have brought here Śambhu; you are a devotee (of Śiva), and a tormentor of enemies. I who am your devotee, have come here. (Please) report me to Śaṅkara." Having heard those words of him, the hunter quickly held his hand and (with him) approached Śaṅkara. Revered Rudra laughed and said (these) words to the hunter: "Tell me who this one is, whom you have brought near the attendants."

The hunter said:

79-80. This is your devotee, so he is engaged in your worship. Everyday with gems, rubies and with diverse flowers, so also with his life and wealth you are undoubtedly worshipped. Therefore, O master, to whom your devotees are dear, know this to be Nandin.

Mahādeva said:

81-89. O you noble one, I know Nandin, living as a vaiśya. O very intelligent Mahākāla, you are my devotee and friend. Those best men who are not deceptive, whose mind is free from fraud – such distinguished devotees are dear to me.

Śambhu accepted the two as his attendants. Then there arrived many very bright aeroplanes. That very lustrous, excellent hunter emancipated the excellent vaiśya. The two reached Kailāsa-world in very speedy aeroplanes, and obtained absorption into the magnanimous god. Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) waved lights before the two attendants as before her sons, and the goddess with a stately elephant-like gait laughed and spoke: "O Mahādeva, there is no doubt that they are (dear to me) as you are. You are identical, have same gait, similar laughter and well honoured." Hearing those words of the goddess, the hunter and the vaiśya also instantly turned away their faces, and in the presence of Śaṅkara the two attendants quickly

spoke: “O Śiva, you should pity both of us. We shall always stand at your door. We repeatedly salute you.”

90-100. Lord Śiva, knowing their sincerity, spoke to them with great attachment: “May you get your desired object.” Since then the two have become doorkeepers (of Śiva). O goddess, they remain at Śiva’s door, and see him at mid-day. One is Nandin, (the other is the hunter) Mahākāla. The two are dear to Śiva. Those sinners, irreligious men, blind men, dumb men, crippled men, who are abandoned by their families, the wicked men, and men like cāṇḍālas, or men of whatever types, who have gone (back) after having worshipped Dhavaleśvara, will also go (to Śiva). No doubt should be raised in this case. A bath (taken) here, and a gift (given) here (lead to the) proximity of Śaṅkara. Those who have bathed in Sābhramatī and have worshipped Dhavaleśvara, go to Rudra’s heaven. No doubt should be raised in this case. Those best men who bathe and give gifts here, enjoy moral merit, worldly prosperity and sensual pleasures and go to Śiva’s abode. A man certainly obtains that fruit which he gets (by bathing etc.) on the day of the lunar or solar eclipse, and on the (death) anniversary day of his dead ancestor. The desire-yielding cow everyday comes there by all means. And having come (there) she Properly worships god Śiva. O best goddess, she undoubtedly goes to heaven. Due to the contact with that milk (of her), the Phallus is whitened. Since then its name has always come to be Dhavaleśvara. O goddess, the beings that die there being urged by Death, go to the position of Śiva (and stay there) as long as the moon and the sun (remain in the sky).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Bālāpendratirtha

Mahādeva said:

1-11. On the bank of Sābhramatī is the holy place, best among the holy places, known as Bālāpa, which gives enjoy-

ment and salvation. The holy place is supported by ascetics and is the resort of the wise. There a maiden, of a very strong vow, practised a severe vow. She, the virtuous one, matchless in beauty on the earth, was the daughter of the sage Kaṇva, was an unmarried religious student named Bālāvatī. With many restraints the beautiful girl observed the vow of Sāvitrī with the resolve: 'The Sun should be my husband'. Devoutly observing those restraints very difficult to practise, she passed ten years on the bank of Sābhramatī. By that vow of her, penance, and devotion, the lord was pleased; and due to that abundance of her devotion, god Divākara (i.e. the Sun) came to the hermitage. The large-hearted one entered (the hermitage) after taking the form of a brāhmaṇa sage. Seeing the brāhmaṇa, the best due to his penance, the best among those who knew the Vedas, she honoured him in the manner of an anchorite. She, the auspicious devotee of the Sun, said to the ascetic: "O revered best sage, O lord, what is your order? I shall give you everything according to my capacity except my body. I am the Sun's devotee. I shall never give you my hand. O ascetic, by means of vows, restraints and austerities I have to propitiate the Sun, the lord of the three worlds."

12-23. When she spoke like this, Bhāskara, smiling and observing her who remained in the vow, spoke to her as it were consoling her: "O auspicious one, you are practising a severe vow, very difficult to practise. O maiden, your undertaking is as it should be. Everything is obtained by penance. Everything subsists in penance. O good one, by means of penance godhead, so also salvation, is obtained. O fortunate one, take these five badara-fruits from me." Giving her the badara-fruits, and telling her "Cook (these)" the Sun left. He, of a great glory, taking the form of a brāhmaṇa, left that auspicious one, and waited not far away at Indragrāma without being seen by her. The Sun desiring to know her devotion remained as a brāhmaṇa. Bhāskara (i.e. the Sun) fashioned a grove of badara trees. Then the restrained girl, with the palms of her hands joined, and free from fatigue, resorted to (i.e. took) fire to cook the badara fruits. O goddess, the great one, very lustrous, cooked the badara fruits. O chief goddess, very long time passed when she was cooking (them). A great heap of ash formed

there, and the day came to a close. A great heap of wood was burnt by the fire. With a desire to please the brāhmaṇa, she, after washing her feet, put them into the fire, looking charming, and burnt them for the badara(-fruits). O sinless one, again and again burning her feet, she held them up. Seeing that act of her, the Sun was pleased. Then he manifested his form to the maiden; and being very much pleased, he spoke to the girl of a severe vow:

The Sun said:

24-32. O girl, I am pleased with your devotion, penance and observance of the vow. Therefore, O girl, may your desired object be accomplished. Endowed with penance, you will stay in my abode at this holy place. This excellent holy place will be known by your name.

It is known as Bālāpa. It stands on the bank of Sābhramatī. It is well-known in the three worlds, and was formerly praised by brāhmaṇa sages. A pure man who stays at Bālātīrtha for three nights and having bathed at sunrise looks at the reddish Sun, goes to the Sun's heaven. No doubt should be raised in this matter. On a Sunday, or on a Saṅkrānti day, especially on the seventh, during the Sun's equinoctial passage, so also on the lunar and solar eclipse day, he should bathe and gratify gods, dead ancestors and grandsires. Then he should give a cow made of jaggery to brāhmaṇas, and rice mixed with jaggery. Those men who worship the reddish Sun with karavīra and japā flowers, live in the Sun's world. A man should give a red cow and a bull also. That man obtains the fruit of a sacrifice, and would not go to hell. A sick man is free from his disease, and a man that is bound becomes free from bondage. By offering piṇḍas at this holy place, grandsires are pleased.

Mahādeva said:

33-45. O ascetic lady, like this there is another greatness of this holy place. Listen to an old, great account, narrated by Vyāsa. Formerly there was an old buffalo disabled due to old age. He was unable to carry loads. (So) the trader abandoned him. In the summer he went to the great river to drink water.

Due to (ill) luck, he plunged into the mud and died. Due to the glory of this holy place his bones were washed away into the holy water. He became (after rebirth) the son of the king of Kānyakubja, and remembered his former birth. Remembering his own account, and the great glory of the holy place, he came (there), and after bathing (there), gave many gifts. He installed there (the representation of) Maheśvara, the god of gods. A man having bathed at this holy place, having worshipped Mahiṣeśvara, and having seen the red Sun, is freed from all sins. The water of Sābhramatī, which flows there from the east to the west, is holier than even that at Prayāga, is great, and fulfils all desires. The gifts given here to best brāhmaṇas, the oblations offered into fire here, the śrāddha offered here, and the muttering (of a hymn done) here would be inexhaustible. (By giving) the gift of a cow, land, sesamum seeds, gold, garments, grains, a bed, a seat, a vehicle, an umbrella, a man obtains whatever object he desires. Due to the grace of Śrī Maheśa and the glory of this holy place, this holy place Bālāpendra is auspicious, and always removes sins. Seeing it the sages are always free from attachment. There the holy place named Mahiṣa (and) Śveta gives great religious merit. O chief goddess, having bathed there a man is not reborn. O goddess, there is no doubt that a man gets that fruit (by bathing) at this holy place, which a man gets by bathing in Godāvarī.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Durdharṣeśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-6. I shall (now) describe another excellent holy place Durdharṣeśvara, by merely remembering which even a sinner would become meritorious. When the war between gods and demons had taken place, and when the demon had died, Uśanas (i.e. Śukra), the son of Bhārgava, had observed here a vow difficult to practise, had propitiated Mahādeva, not easily

accessible and the cause of the world, and obtained the formula (called) Mṛtasañjivani (bringing the dead back to life) from Śiva, for the demons. It is well-known in the world. A man who has bathed at Kāyatīrtha and worshipped Maheśvara called Durdharṣeśvara, is freed from all sins. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, in this respect listen to an old account. Formerly when the battle between Vṛtra and Indra took place, the gods were vanquished by the demons. Indra, the lord of gods, thinking what to do, went to Bṛhaspati.

Indra said:

7-8. You are our preceptor. You are always actually the guardian of gods. You are famous, the best of sages. O treasure of kindness, favour me. I am vanquished by Vṛtra, O you of a good vow, where shall I go?

Bṛhaspati said:

9-12. O lord of gods, listen. I shall tell you (that) by which you (will) always (be) happy. If you desire your well-being, then do as I tell you. Go to Sābhramatī, and having gone there be happy. The god called Durdharṣa, causing well-being, always dwells there. O lord of gods, he gives desired objects. This is the truth and the truth only.

Having heard Bṛhaspati's words, he went to that river. Having bathed there, the lord of gods worshipped that Maheśa. Due to the bath and worship Śrī Maheśvara was pleased.

Mahādeva said:

13. I will always give every object that you desire.

Hearing (these) words, the lord of gods said (these) great (i.e. important) words:

Indra said:

14-15. You are the lord of all the worlds. You are the cause and the (highest) position. You are always perceived by me to be god Viśveśvara. O Viśveśvara, O master of gods, if you are pleased, then, O Mahādeva, kill Vṛtra. This is my great desire.

Mahādeva said:

16-17. O lord of gods, at your words, this Vṛtra is (i.e. will be) killed by me. O lord of gods, take the weapon which will be given by me. Due to its contact with (his) life, you will certainly kill him.

Indra said:

18. O lord of the universe, what is that missile with which I shall kill Vṛtra? What is that which you have fashioned as superior to the thunderbolt? When have you fashioned it?

Mahādeva said:

19-23. This is the Pāśupata missile which I have formerly fashioned. It was not given to anyone (else). O Indra, I have preserved it for you. O god, you have bathed here and worshipped (me) here. Therefore, take this weapon from me, with which you will kill Vṛtra.

Due to Śrī Maheśa's favour, Indra obtained it; and with that he killed the very mighty Vṛtra. All that took place here by the grace of Durdharṣeśa. That was secured merely by a bath and worship, O goddess. It was secured due to the glory of the holy place. O beautiful lady, this is the truth and the (only) truth. Realising this, O chief goddess, a man should bathe there. Seeing Mahādeva destroys all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

Khaḍgadhāreśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-5. On the bank of Sābhramatī is a very great purifying secret holy place. Known as Khaḍgadhāra, it will be concealed in the Kali age. A man who happens to bathe here and drinks water here occasionally, is freed from all sins and is honoured

in Rudra's heaven. Here that meritorious, auspicious Sābhramatī, following Kaśyapa, and going to the nether world, was held in his matted hair by Rudra. Rudra, with the name Khaḍga-dhāra, dwells there only. O chief goddess, sinners having bathed here, have gone to heaven. In this case they narrate this old account about the very difficult vow practised by a mountaineer.

Pārvatī said:

6-7. What was the name of the mountaineer? Which vow did he practise? I desire to hear all that. Tell it to me properly. O best among speakers, there is none else but you. Therefore, O god, tell me all that (as) it is beneficial to hear.

Mahādeva said:

8-22. Formerly there was a very fearful, wicked (man) named Caṇḍa. He, the cruel one, was a rogue, was of a bad conduct, and fearful to beings. The wicked one constantly killed the fish with a net. He would cause to fall down deer, beasts, black antelopes and porcupines, so also many kinds of birds and pierce them with spear. The angry one killed birds and especially peacocks. The fowler was very sinful, wicked, and dear to wicked people. His wife was of that sort(only)—unchaste and suffering from severe diseases. When he was amusing himself like this, much time passed. Once the sinful one remained on a bilva tree at night with a bow in his hand to which an arrow was fixed to kill a boar. Thus he, without winking his eyes, passed the night. Even though he was angry, he cut off (i.e. plucked) many leaves of the bilva tree on the Caturdaśī of the bright half of Māgha, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. Those (leaves) fell on the Phallus that was at the root of that bilva tree through (his good) luck. All that became the worship of Śiva. By throwing mouthfuls (on the Phallus) the ignorant, wicked fowler gave it a grand bath. That wicked fowler became free from sins at the time of moonrise in the bright half of the month of Māgha. His impetuous wife devoid of hope and without food, also came near him—i.e. at the place where the fowler remained. He had not secured any hog, or deer or buffalo (as his hunt). So that woman had brought (for him)

food to eat. He saw his impetuous, cruel-eyed wife coming (to him). That wife of him fell into water—into a river. Just then she said to Caṇḍa: “Come on, eat quickly the flesh of fish that I have now brought for you. O fool, what did you do the previous day? Flesh is not seen by your side. You have ruined your family (as) it (will have to) fast (now).”

23-31. Having heard these words of Caṇḍā, he of a fierce form, had become one of a pure heart due to the Śivarātri-fast and keeping awake at night. He of a pure vow (went) to the river to bathe. When the wicked one was bathing, a dog came there. O chief goddess, the dog ate all that flesh there. Caṇḍā was very angry, and approached the dog to strike him. Then that angry Caṇḍā was warded off by Caṇḍa: “Do not hit him. What evil has he done?” She said: “This wicked one has eaten the food. O fool, what will you who are hungry, eat today?”

The mountaineer said:

I am pleased with (the fact) that the dog has eaten the food. What is the use of this transient and infirm body? O passionate woman, those who with full sincerity nourish their bodies, should be known as sinners, outcast from both the worlds. Therefore, giving up pride, passion and wickedness be composed by considering the truth; and be steady with the knowledge of the truth. O you beautiful lady, with the vow of Khaḍgadhāra I shall today abandon this my body. What is the use of my living long?

32-36. Saying so, when he drew his sword and (was about to) cut off his head, many attendants prompted by Śiva came (there). Many aeroplanes also came near him. The mountaineer having seen those aeroplanes and the attendants also, spoke with great devotion to them: “Why have all of you, wearing (rosaries of) rudrākṣa, come (here)? All of you resemble crystal; all of you have the crescent moon on your crests; all of you have braided and matted hair; you have your garments covered with hide; you have adorned yourselves with the necklaces of serpents’ hoods. You are endowed with majesty. Your valour is like that of Rudra. O tell me the proper truth.” The attendants of Rudra, asked at that time by the mountaineer, spoke:

The attendants said:

37-41. O Caṇḍa, we are sent by Śiva, the highest lord. Accompanied by your wife, come quickly, and get into the carriage. Due to the effect of the act, viz. your having worshipped the Phallus on Śivarātri, you have obtained the highest position.

Thus addressed by Vīrabhadra, he, laughing a little said: “What meritorious act have I, a sinful, foolish, wicked mountaineer, interested in hunting, done? I am always acting sinfully. How shall I live in heaven? Tell (me) how I have today worshipped the Phallus. I, having a great curiosity, am asking (you). Please tell (it to me).”

Vīrabhadra said:

42-47. O Caṇḍa, Mahādeva, god of gods, called Gaṅgādhara, lord of Umā, is today pleased with you and with your wife. Today you did what was proper for the occasion and worship also. While looking for a boar, O Caṇḍa, you plucked the bilva leaves; they fell on the top of the Phallus at that time. Therefore, O lord, you are meritorious. On the great (bilva-) tree you certainly kept awake. Due to that keeping awake the lord of the universe was pleased. Under the pretext of watching the boar, O glorious hunter, you observed a fast on the Śivarātri day, though by chance. Due to that fast and keeping awake the magnanimous best god was pleased. The very dignified giver of boons gives all boons to favour you.

48-53. Thus addressed by the intelligent Vīrabhadra, the mountaineer also got into an excellent aeroplane, while the attendants, deities and all beings were watching. At that time large drums, kettle drums and musical instruments sounded. There were the sounds of lutes, flutes, tabors, with dancing and acting. Chief gandharvas sang, and bands of celestial nymphs danced. He, being fanned with chowries, and with various umbrellas (held over his head), was taken with great ceremony near Śiva. Even the mountaineer reached (Śiva) due to a bath at a holy place and worshipping Śiva. Then what to say of those men who in this world offer flowers etc., fruits, sandal,

tāmbūla and sacred grains with faith and devotion to Śiva, the highest soul? They are Rudras. There is no doubt about this.

Mahādeva said:

54-57. Since then that holy place is well-known as Khaḍga-dhāra. O chief goddess, in the Kali age, it will be hidden. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, those who bathe (here) in the month of Māgha or Vaiśākha, and especially on the full-moon day of Kārtika, are released. Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Bharadvāja and Gautama come here to bathe and to see god (Śiva) the Trident-holder. The Phallus remained there in the (first) three ages. O Pārvatī, it does not remain (there) in the Kali age. At that time the sage Viśvāmitra had cursed me.

Pārvatī said:

58. I certainly desire to hear from you, O lord of gods, how that curse was pronounced upon you by the sage.

Mahādeva said:

59-72. O goddess, on one occasion the great ascetic Viśvāmitra came to this very wonderful sacred place, Khaḍgadhāra. Having bathed in the Sābhramatī, he paid me visit. Worshipping (me) in various ways he always remained there. O beautiful lady, there was at that time a very wicked hunter of a sinful form. He put flesh on (the Phallus of) Śiva. Seeing that flesh (there) again, Viśvāmitra then said: "Oh! the sinner has done a wicked deed. The highest soul, Śiva, has not punished him: Therefore, I shall, having determined, certainly curse him." Having thought like this, he then cursed me, O goddess. "In this terrible Kali age you will remain completely hidden." Having thus cursed me, that best sage left. Since then, O goddess, due to the sage's curse, I am hidden. If they especially offer a worship at my place, their sin perishes at that moment only. Those who having fashioned a clay image of me worship it, especially live at this place of (i.e. sacred to) me. In this Kali age it is called Khaḍgadhāreśvara. In Kṛta (age) it was (known as) Mandira; in Tretā (age) it was known as Gaurava. In Dvāpara (age) it was known as Viśva, and Khaḍgeśvara in

Kali (age). O chief goddess, my place lies on the southern side. Knowing this, a wise man, fashioning (my) image there, worships (it) everyday. He would obtain the desired fruit.⁹ The man obtains, on the earth, religious merit, worldly prosperity, sensual pleasures and (ultimately) salvation. O chief goddess, there would come no misery to those who offer incense, light, articles of food, so also sandal etc., to Maheśvara, the lord of the worlds; this is the truth, the (only) truth, O beautiful lady.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

Dugdheśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-4. To the south of Khaḍgadhāra is a highly purifying holy place called Dugdheśvara, which destroys all sins. One who bathes and sees Śiva (called) Dugdheśvara at this holy place, gets instantly relieved of the pain due to sin. Dadhīci practised penance at the auspicious bank of Sābhramatī since it is meritorious as Candrabhāgā has joined Gaṅgā there. Everything like a bath, gifts, muttering (of hymns), worship and penance (done) there, becomes inexhaustible by the power of Dugdhatīrtha.

Pārvatī said:

5. O lord, I desire to hear about the origin of Dugheśvara. O lord of gods, tell (me about) the greatness of Dugdhatīrtha.

Mahādeva said:

6-26. Formerly in the war between gods and demons gods were defeated by demons. Intent on fleeing they came to Dadhīci's hermitage. Having abandoned their weapons there only, the gods went to the ten directions. Then having heard the uproar of the demons, Dadhīci Bhārgava, after having submerged the weapons in water, drank them. After (some) time the gods, eager to take the missiles, (came there) with Bṛhas-

pati. In the hermitage serpents sported with mongooses with pleasure. Seeing many such wonders in that hermitage, all the gods were very much amazed. At the place where the auspicious Sābhramatī has joined Candrabhāgā, they saw the excellent sage seated on a seat shining with great lustre like the sun, accompanied by fire and by his wife Suvarcā. All the excellent gods saw after salutation the best sage like Brahmā with Sāvitrī. Then the gods led by Bṛhaspati said: "It is already known in the three worlds that you are a donor. We have approached you with a request. All of us are full of fear. Please give us our missiles." The best, very intelligent sage, thus addressed, said to the gods: "O gods, submerging them with a hymn, I drank them (up)." Then the gods said to the brāhmaṇa: "To kill the demons quickly give your bones." The brāhmaṇa said, "(Here) they are given." Speaking like this to them he sent his wife to the hermitage. Then the delighted, very intelligent brāhmaṇa smiled and said to the gods: "O gods, I have drunk them. Take them (back) properly." Saying so, O goddess, the brāhmaṇa, proficient in abstract meditation resorted to it. Then with deceitful words the gods said to the smiling brāhmaṇa: "O brāhmaṇa, how can we get them as long as you are alive?" The brāhmaṇa sage laughed and said: "Wait for a moment. O gods, I myself shall abandon my body today." Speaking like this, O goddess, that brāhmaṇa, proficient in abstract meditation, resorted to it, and instantly went to heaven, whence he does not return even today. Then all the hosts of gods, seeing him dead, thought: 'How shall we cut up (his body)?' Then Indra called Surabhi and said to her: "By my words lick up the body of the best brāhmaṇa." Saying "all right" and honouring his words, she licked it at that moment only. The cow instantly made that body fleshless. Gods took those bones, and fashioned weapons (with them). The missile (made) from his backbone was Brahmaśiras.

27-40. Having fashioned weapons and missiles, the very powerful and brave gods, intent on destroying Vṛtra, quickly went (to him). Then Suvarcā, Dadhīca's wife, who was sent for the accomplishment of the mission of gods, having come (there) saw her dead husband and (his) body cut up. The chaste lady, knowing that entire deed of the gods, was angry. Then Suvarcā,

the very angry wife of the excellent sage, pronounced a curse: “O very wicked gods, you were cursed many times, and (yet) you are greedy. Therefore, may all of you with Indra, be childless from today.” Thus she spoke. That female ascetic thus cursed the gods. Sitting at the root of the āśvattha tree, she stayed on the bank of Sābhramatī. That pregnant chaste lady cut off her belly. From her womb the child of noble Dadhīca came out. That great lord Pippalāda was actually the incarnation of Rudra. The mother Suvarcā laughed, and said (these) important words to the child Pippalāda: “Live near this āśvattha tree, O illustrious one, and be auspicious to all.” Talking just like that to her son, that chaste lady Suvarcā went to her husband through profound meditation. Thus that wife of Dadhīca followed her husband to heaven. Those gods, having fashioned the weapons and missiles, who were very powerful and brave, who were led by Indra, and who were eager (to fight) came to the demons. The desire-yielding cow poured out milk at the place where the brāhmaṇa (Dadhīca) had perished. By the power of the sage the milk became of the form of a Phallus. O goddess, it is known as Dugdheśvara (situated) on the bank of Sābhramatī. Since then the holy place is well-known on the earth by that name. Its greatness is matchless, and destroys sins merely by being heard. Those men too, who devoutly listen to the (greatness of) Dugdheśvara, getting free from sins, go to the great position of Rudra.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYSIX

Candreśvara

Mahādeva said:

1-15. To the east of Dugdheśvara where the river named Candrabhāgā has joined (Sābhramatī), there is a highly purifying holy place. There god Candreśvara, always giving religious merit dwells. He is Śiva who is always all-pervading and who, the great one, gives happiness to people. Those who always

bathe and meditate here, would get the fruit of that due to worshipping Śiva on (the bank of) Sābhramatī. Soma (i.e. the Moon) practised penance here for a long time. Therefore, (the Phallus of) Maheśvara called Candreśvara was installed here. Śukra also practised penance near Candrabhāgā. Therefore, the holy place is superior to (other) holy places on the earth. O chief goddess, the Phallus fashioned by the sages is concealed in Kali(-age). Undoubtedly a golden Phallus is seen there. Those men who, coming here, bathe and drink (water) and worship Śiva, obtain religious merit and worldly prosperity. Those who especially do the act of giving a bull etc. enjoy (in) heaven, and then go to Śiva's abode. O goddess, those men who will everyday come for a bath near Candrabhāgā, should be known as meritorious. Those men who go to the other bank and worship Śiva, Śrī Hara, named Candreśvara who cuts off sins (are meritorious). Those best men who, having come here, especially do the muttering (in honour) of Rudra etc., should be known to be of the form of Śiva. O best goddess, those men who always bathe here, should be known to be Viṣṇu's forms. There is no doubt about this. Those who again offer here a śrāddha with sesamum-piṇḍa, also go to Viṣṇu's position due to the efficacy of the offering of the piṇḍa. Here gifts should be given and a bath should be taken according to the proper rite. Having bathed here men are absolved of (the sins) like killing a brāhmaṇa. Those who especially plant a fig-tree on this bank, go, after death, to Śiva's position (and stay there) as long as the Moon and the Sun (remain there in the sky).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYSEVEN

Pippalādatrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. Near Dugdheśvara there is a charming, highly purifying, holy place, well-known in the world by the name of (i.e. after) Pippalāda. Formerly the sage desiring acquittal from

the debt of his father, the noble Dadhīca, practised penance here, and by the words (i.e. the order) of his mother, he produced a Kṛtyā¹ (i.e. a fearful female deity) resembling the submarine fire. A man having bathed and drunk (water) here, destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Pippalāda, the lord of gods, is concealed on the bank of Sābhramatī. O goddess, by bathing there a man would enjoy salvation. The planting of fig trees should be done properly. Having done this, O great goddess, a man is free from the bondage of his deeds.

Pārvatī said:

6-7. Explain to me why that Kṛtyā was produced. O lord, tell me what that Kṛtyā did formerly. Which son brought her for the acquittance of the debt of his father?

Mahādeva said:

8-11. That excellent sage Dādhīca (i.e. Dadhīca's son) came (here) for (practising) penance. The great-souled sage practised a great (i.e. severe) penance here. A demon named Kolāsura came there to create an obstacle. He certainly caused many obstacles. That was noticed by his (i.e. Pippalāda's) good son, the intelligent Kahoda. O chief goddess, for the destruction (of the demon) he produced the Kṛtyā there. She killed the great demon named Kola. Therefore, O Pārvatī, the holy place is concealed in Kali(-age).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYEIGHT

Nimbārkadevatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-11. Next to Pippalāda is an excellent holy place called Picumandārka on the bank of Sābhramatī, destroying disease

1. Kṛtyā: A female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes.

and bad odour. Formerly in the war with (the demon) Kolāhala, the demons vanquished gods. (Being) subtle, they entered trees with a desire for (saving) their life. There Śambhu remained in the bilva (tree), the immutable Viṣṇu in aśvattha, Indra in śirīṣa, and god Sun in nimba (tree). Thus the gods properly remained like that in the trees. Till the powerful Viṣṇu killed the demon Kolāhala, they remained resorting to the trees. The god that resorted to a particular tree, became one with it. Therefore, one should not destroy it. Thus due to the Sun's taking rest (here), Picumandārka is an excellent holy place which removes a disease after a man takes bath in it, and which is on the bank of Sābhramatī. After going there, if a man would especially worship the Sun, he gets the desired fruit by worshipping (him). Those men who after having gone there, recite the twelve names, are meritorious till they live. There is no doubt about this. An intelligent man who would recite these twelve names, viz. Āditya, Bhāskara, Bhānu, Ravi, Viśvaprakāśaka, Tīkṣṇāṁśu, Mārtaṇḍa, Sūrya and Prabhākara, so also Vibhāvasu, Sahasrākṣa and Pūṣan, obtains, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, wealth, sons and grandsons.

12-14. A brāhmaṇa who, resorting to (i.e. reciting) each name would worship (the Sun) on the earth, would be endowed with wealth and mastery of the Vedas for seven existences. A kṣatriya obtains a kingdom. A vaiśya would get wealth. A śūdra secures devotion. Therefore, a man should recite (this) great hymn. There never was, nor there will be, a holy place superior to Nimbārka; having bathed and drunk (water) here a man would certainly enjoy salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYNINE

Koṭaratīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-13. A little away from it is the excellent Siddhakṣetra, O goddess. Formerly Aniruddha was chosen by Citralekhā for

Uṣā. He was taken to Bāṇāsura's city formerly and he stayed in his (i.e. Bāṇāsura's) house. Checked by nooses and arrows, he then remembered Koṭarākṣī. She is actually the power of Viṣṇu, always engaged in protecting (the devotees). Kṛṣṇa installed (the image of) this goddess here on the bank of the river. Due to the hymn of Aniruddha, returning to Dvārakā, after having vanquished Bāṇāsura in a battle, she actually came near (him). A man having carefully bathed for one year at that holy place, and having seen Koṭarākṣī's face, obtains much wealth. A man bathing at Siddha-tīrtha, and seeing (the goddess) living at Koṭara, is honoured in Rudra's heaven (after being taken) in a vehicle of (i.e. to which) lions (are yoked). O beautiful lady, even by remembering her, he too is freed. Therefore, those men who go here, enjoy salvation. A man, after having gone there, should especially bathe, and should deliberately recite the hymn of Koṭarākṣī, O Pārvatī. Koṭarākṣī has a universal form. She has great divine power. She is superior in strength. She in Tripurā, is the destroyer of Tripura; is Śiva and of the form of Śiva. She is said to be the daughter of Sarasvatī. She is Durgā. She removes misery. She is Bhairavī, Bhairavākṣī, and Lakṣmī, to whom the people (i.e. devotees) of the goddess are dear, O Chief goddess. Thus various names (of her) are mentioned. Those who recite them go near Śiva. O beautiful lady, those wise men who mutter the hymn composed by Aniruddha, get freed from troublesome bondage. This is the truth, and the (only) truth. The holy place fashioned by Koṭara on the earth is best among holy places. Merely on seeing it the heaps of sins (of a man) perish.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTY

Vāmanatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. A holy place superior to this holy place is well-known as Tīrtharāja. Here seven rivers with their water mixed with

sandal flow. A bath here is especially a hundred times superior (i.e. more meritorious) to one at any other holy place. Here, Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the greatest among gods, himself dwells. He who, on the Dvādaśī of the month of Māgha would give a cow made of sesamum, is free from all sins, and would emancipate a hundred (members) of his family. A devout man, who would give here even water mixed with sesamum-seeds to the dead ancestors, has (indeed) offered śrāddha for thousand years. The dead ancestors say this. If a man feeds brāhmaṇas at this holy place with jaggery (and) sweetened milk, then, when one brāhmaṇa is fed, a thousand would be fed (by him).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYONE

Somatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-7. A man (then) should go from there to Somatīrtha which is hidden on the bank of Sābhramatī. Bhava having come out from the nether world, became Kālāgni there. When a man bathes at Somatīrtha and sees Someśvara Śiva, he undoubtedly obtains the fruit of drinking Soma. The man becomes handsome, fortunate, enjoys (pleasures), is proficient in all sciences in this world, and would go to Śiva after death. O beautiful lady, in this matter I shall tell you an old account; listen to it; hearing it one is free from the sins like that of the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Sage Kauṣītaka especially practised a penance. He gave up food, and was very much engaged in eating leaves (only). Then he subsisted on air and was devoted to meditation on the self. Thus for many ages he practised severe penance there. Some time, fortunately (for him) Maheśvara was very much pleased. “O brāhmaṇa, I shall (give) you all that you ask for.”

Kauṣītaka said:

8-11. O lord of gods, let a Phallus spring up here by your grace. Let there certainly be here the god called Someśvara,

Having bathed and eaten here, may a man obtain his desired fruit. If the best men especially mutter hymns of Rudra etc. at this place, they obtain religious virtue and worldly objects. A sonless man gets a son, and a poor man obtains wealth. One desiring a kingdom undoubtedly gets that kingdom. O lord, if you are pleased, give all that to me.

The lord said:

12-17. Then the lord of gods gave everything to the twice-born. Since then the holy place is well-known as Somaliṅga. Those who worship Sadāśiva with sandal or bilva-leaves, obtain happiness due to the birth of a son etc. in the human body (i.e. existence). Similarly, he who, on a Monday, goes to Śiva's temple, always gets his desired objects due to the grace of Somaliṅga. O goddess, having gone there, with whatever desire a man offers a fruit etc. all that desire is surely fulfilled. Those who worship god Śrī Maheśa, Pinākin with karavīra flowers or pārijāta flowers, obtain, O best goddess, the best position of Śiva.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYTWO

Kapotatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-7a. Thence, O goddess, one should go to Kāpotikātīrtha where the water of Sābhramatī flows to the east. That man who always offers a piṇḍa there, after dedicating it to his dead ancestors, and along with wild fruits and flowers on every parvan day, and who offers portions of food to the crows, dogs, etc., would very happily cross over Yama's path. A man having bathed at that sacred place with white mustard seeds on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, should worship the excellent deity Prācīneśvara. He would emancipate himself, his dead ancestors and grandsires. Here a pigeon, having gladly offered himself to a guest, was praised by hosts of gods who had gone to heaven

in aeroplanes. Since then the holy place is known as Kāpota. Having bathed and drunk (water) there, a man removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

Pārvatī said:

7bc. O lord, tell me, how the pigeon offered his body. What was the cause? O lord of gods, I do not know (all this).

Mahādeva said:

8-18. O chief goddess, at this holy place there is a great fig tree. Its innumerable large branches are seen on the ground. Many beings lived there, so also birds. O chief goddess, a pigeon had built his house (i.e. nest) there. The lord of birds, always greatly devoted to Viṣṇu, verily lived along with his family on its branch. O goddess, once on the Dvādaśī day, the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, a hawk came there as a guest, O beautiful lady. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he said: "O pigeon, give me the flesh of your body. Otherwise I shall curse you. To-day on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, I, oppressed with hunger, have come (here). Therefore, O lord give the flesh to me who am afflicted with hunger." O goddess, the pigeon, a great devotee of Viṣṇu, having heard the words of the falcon, offered his body without hesitation. O best goddess, due to the power of the gift this place became a holy place called Kāpotaka, which is a great holy place and is the (most) purifying among the purifying places. O best goddess, a man who, having bathed here and worshipped Śiva, offers desired food to guests, enjoys happiness in this world and goes to the eternal (place) of Viṣṇu. The pigeon, having offered his body to the noble one went to the heaven of Viṣṇu (and will live there) as long as the Moon and the Sun (are there in the sky). Therefore, O goddess, having gone there, a man should always worship a guest. Having worshipped a guest there, he certainly obtains everything.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYTHREE

*Gotīrtha**Mahādeva said:*

1-5. The best holy place among the holy places is the well-known Gotīrtha, destroying great sins and situated near Kāśyapa-pool. There is no doubt that whatever sins, like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, are there, they perish on bathing at Gotīrtha. Cows that had become dark due to some former sin, again became white on having bathed at that sacred place. Having bathed there, a man on offering grass etc. to cows, is free from the debt of Mātṛs by the grace of the cow-mothers. A man who, having gone to and bathed at Gotīrtha, gives a milch cow to chief brāhmaṇas, goes to the position of Brahmā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYFOUR

*Kaśyapatīrtha**Mahādeva said:*

1-9. O chief goddess, here there was another holy place called Kaśyapa, where there was a great pool made by Nāgadeva. The god named Kuśeśvara shines there; so also there is a charming pool fashioned by Kaśyapa. O goddess, a man having bathed there would not go to hell. O great goddess, brāhmaṇas maintaining the holy fire and devoted to the daily recital of the Veda and very learned, live on (the bank of) Kāśyapā. As is Kāśī, so is this city built by sages. Kaśyapa practised severe penance here, and brought Gaṅgā springing from the matted hair of the lord. O goddess, that Gaṅgā is (called) Kāśyapī, destroying great sins, merely seeing which men are freed from a wicked sin. They recommend (here) the gift of a cow, so also the gift of a chariot. Having performed a śrāddha a man should, with effort, give a gift there. A holy place destroying a great sin like Kaśyapa was never there, nor will be there, in the

fearful Kali age. O chief goddess, all deities and sages with their sins vanished, always remain (here) by the grace of the chief of holy places.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYFIVE

Bhūtālaya, Ghaṭeśvara, and Vaidyanātha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. From there a man should go to the holy place Bhūtālaya which is a place removing sin. A fig tree called Bhūtālaya and (the river) Candanā (flowing) towards the east are there. A man who, having bathed at Bhūtālaya observes a fast on the Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, and offers black sesamum, is not born as an evil spirit. He who offers a pitcher of water with sesamum, dedicating it to the dead ancestors, frees them from the state of an evil spirit. The man by uttering whose name a man bathes is freed from the state of an evil spirit. A man should bathe in the pure water at the holy place of Bhūtālaya and should see the fig tree called Bhūtālaya. By the grace of Bhūteśvara he would not have fear from evil spirits.

This is (the description of) Bhuteśvara-tīrtha.

6-8. A holy place superior to this is known as Ghaṭeśvara. Having bathed there and seen him, a man would surely enjoy salvation. There is that great holy place on the (bank of) Sābhramatī, (known as) Ghāṭa. Having seen Mahādeva there, a man is liberated. There is no doubt about it. The man who, having gone there, especially worships the fig tree, secures on the earth desires entertained by his mind.

This is (the description of) Gaṭeśvara-tīrtha.

9-10. Thence a man should devoutly go to the holy place well-known as Vaidyanātha. A man, having bathed at the holy

place and engaged in worshipping Śiva, and gratifying his dead ancestors, would obtain the fruit of all sacrifices. Vijaya, born from the god, and destroying all sins (is there), seeing whom a man always gets his desired objects.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYSIX

Pāṇḍurāryā-tīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-8. A greater holy place than Vaidyanātha, giving all kinds of supernormal powers and best of all holy places, is said to be excellent. Dharma's son, having powerfully taken a tax from Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of demons, commenced the great sacrifice Rājasūya. When the southern quarter was conquered (i.e. regions of the south were conquered), Nakula, Pāṇḍu's son installed with great devotion Pāṇḍurāryā, giving enjoyment and salvation. A man, having bathed in the water of the Sābhramatī and having saluted Pāṇḍurāryā, obtains the eight superhuman (yogic) powers like the one of becoming as small as an atom¹ and great intelligence. No doubt should be raised in this case. If a man with a pure mind salutes Pāṇḍurāryā, it should be regarded by those who know the truth, to be a worship offered for a year. A man, having cast his body near Pāṇḍurāryā at that holy place, reaches the peak of Kailāsa and would be an attendant of Caṇḍeśvara. Formerly, Hanūmat practised there a very difficult penance. Due to the prowess of the holy place, the power to jump over the ocean was produced (in Hanūmat).

1. Aṇimā—One of the eight superhuman powers or siddhis. The eight powers are: (1) Aṇimā—The power of becoming as small as an atom. (2) Laghimā—The power of assuming excessive lightness at will. (3) Prāpti—The power of reaching anything e.g. touching the moon with a finger-tip. (4) Prākāmya—Irresistible will. (5) Mahiman—The power of increasing the size at will. (6) Īśitva—Superiority, greatness. (7) Vaśitva—The power of subduing passions. (8) Kāmavasāyitva—Suppression of desires.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYSEVEN

*Caṇḍeśa, Gaṇatīrtha**Mahādeva said:*

1-2. The holy place superior to this holy place is known as Caṇḍeśa, where god Caṇḍeśa, giving prosperity, dwells perpetually. Having seen him a man is freed from the sin done through ignorance. All the deities coming together erected a city. O great goddess, it is known by the name Caṇḍeśa.

This (is the description of) Caṇḍeśa-tīrtha.

3-8. A holy place superior to this is Gāṇapatya well-known on the earth; it is fashioned near Sābhramatī (bank), O goddess. Having bathed there, O goddess, a man is released; there is no doubt about it. I think all the holy places on the earth including the ocean, abandoned (their places) and came to this very wonderful holy place for the good of the people. A man of a pure heart who has controlled his senses, performing a śrāddha there, obtains the fruit due to all sacrifices. Whatever is offered after dedicating it to the dead ancestors at the Gaṇa-tīrtha, all that is regained quickly by the grace of the Lord of Gaṇas. A man, having bathed at the holy place, should give a bull to a brāhmaṇa; he, going beyond all the worlds, would go to the highest position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYEIGHT

*Vārtraghnīsaṅgamatīrtha**Śrī Mahādeva said:*

1-4. Thence, O great goddess, a man should go where Vārtraghnī has joined Sābhramatī and where Śakra got a contact with that auspicious one. Men with their minds controlled bathe there. A man, bathing there, would obtain that fruit which

is that of ten horse-sacrifices. A man who performs a śrāddha there, (and offers) piṇḍas of powdered sesamum, purifies seven preceding and seven succeeding generations. A man after bathing at the confluence and worshipping Gaṇanāyaka, is not overcome by dangers, and is not abandoned by glory.

Pārvatī said:

5-6. Please tell (me), to commence which mission Indra had come to this world from heaven; so also what is the etymological explanation (of the name of) the river Vārtraghnī. Tell me also about the confluence which continuously makes the city of Indra full of the sound (made) by gods and brāhmaṇas.

Mahādeva said:

7-15. In this world, this question had come in old days. There was a great, righteous, well-known king Yudhiṣṭhira. He asked righteous Bhīṣma who was but knowledge incarnate. I shall tell you what he had said, O goddess. The thrilling war between Vṛtra and Indra took place for ten thousand and ten hundred years. Then, Indra who was defeated, entered into an agreement with Vṛtra and abandoned the proceeding, and sought my shelter, O innocent one. On the auspicious confluence of Vārtraghnī (with Sābhramatī), he pleased Śaṅkara (i.e. me), O goddess. I then appeared to him in the sky. From the ash that fell from my body on the bank of Kāśyapī, a Phallus named Bhasmagātra was fashioned. Brahmā has installed Bhūteśvara, Bhasmagātra. Merely by its sight, (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder would perish. Having performed a śrāddha there (a man) gets freed from all sins in the (various) ages. Then I was very much pleased with the very noble Indra. (I said to him:) "O god, I shall give you all that you desire. By means of this thunderbolt you will quickly kill Vṛtra."

Indra said:

16-20. O best god, in your very presence I shall kill the unconquerable son of Diti, by your grace.

Saying so, Indra went to (i.e. marched against) the demon. At that time drums sounded, especially in the army of gods. Tabors, small drums, kettle-drums, musical instruments (were sounded) in

many ways. All the demons had a great longing for existence. In a moment Indra became powerful. Seeing him intent (on killing Vṛtra) the sages and serpents praised Indra, the lord, with the praise: "Be victorious, be victorious." The form of that Indra going near (Vṛtra), desiring to fight, and being praised by the sages, was quite unbearable.

Mahādeva said:

21-37a. O goddess, hear from me the marks that suddenly appeared in Indra's body in the battle. He was fearful with his mouth blazing; there was great paleness; his body was much trembling; his breath became hot. There was severe horripilation; breathing was heavy. Very fearful meteors fell; and vultures, hawks, herons crying fearfully, came near him, and revolved like a wheel round him. Then that Indra, mounted upon an elephant, came there. Indra, with his hand holding the thunderbolt raised, approached the demon. That lord of gods gave out a superhuman cry. Indra dropped the thunderbolt on the demon Vṛtra who was exerting. The thunderbolt was great, very bright and resembled the destructive fire at the end of the world. Indra knocked down Vṛtra on the shore of the ocean. Then all around there was a great sound; Seeing Vṛtra fearful to all gods killed, a large shower of flowers fell on Indra's head. Then the lord, having killed the fearful lord of demons, being praised and accompanied by gods, entered his capital. Then from Vṛtra's body an excellent lustre came out. It was Brahma-hatyā (i.e. the embodied form of the sin due to a brāhmaṇa's murder), that was very fierce, fearful and scaring the worlds. Her face was terribly deformed, black and tawny. She wore a string of skulls, was very emaciated, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. She was smeared with blood, most sinful, smelling like fish, and very dreadful. O great goddess, O best goddess, having moved out, she having a form like that and fearful, then looked for Indra. Running out, she, on seeing the very lustrous Indra seized him by his neck, and clung to it at that time. Confounded due to the fear caused by that Brahma-hatyā he hid in a lotus-fibre, and remained there for many hosts of years. Seized by her, he became motionless, O goddess.

Indra tried to destroy her. (But), O great goddess, he was not able to destroy her.

37b-42. Due to being seized by her, Indra, reduced to an undesirable form, went to Brahmā, and worshipped him with his head (bent down). Knowing that Indra was seized due to the sin of the murder of an excellent brāhmaṇa (viz. Vṛtra), Brahmā then thought, O best goddess. She, thinking of Brahmā, approached Brahmā and spoke (these) words to him: “O revered god, O you who cut off the pride (of the arrogant), I have approached you. Please tell me what I should do, O god.” “O young lady, release this king of gods. Do what is dear to me. Tell me, what I should do for you today. What desire do you have?”

Hatyā said:

43. O best man, by your words, I shall go away from Indra. O god of gods, salutation to you. Give me an abode. You, desiring the preservation of the worlds, have set this limit.

Mahādeva said:

44-45. Having promised that Hatyā like that, the grandsire thought of a means to remove Indra's sin due to a brāhmaṇa's murder. Then calling Fire, Brahmā spoke (these) words: “O Jātavedas, accept the fourth portion of (the sin due to) a brāhmaṇa's murder.”

Agni (Fire) said:

46. O lord, what is the cause of my release, when this murder of a brāhmaṇa is done? I like to know this properly (from you), O you who are worshipped by the worlds.

Brahmā said:

47-53. Brahmahatyā will just then abandon you, and shall live in that man who, finding you blazing, does not offer into you seeds, herbs, sesamum-seeds, roots, sacred fuel and darbhas. O Havyavāha, let your mental torment go away.

Then Fire accepted it, and the revered grandsire obtained what was dear to him. O noble one, then having called trees,

herbs, grass the grandsire started speaking (words of) this import: Then the trees, herbs, grass somehow said: "All right." They, afflicted like Fire, spoke (these) words to Brahmā: "We being told about Brahmahatyā are naturally killed. Therefore, please do not kill us again. O god, we always suffer fire, cold, rain urged by wind, so also being cut and broken."

Brahmā said:

54. This (Brahmahatyā) will go after the man who will cut or break you without any reason.

Mahādeva said:

55-57. Then the noble, great herbs and grass said, 'Yes', and after worshipping Brahmā also, they went as they had come. O best one, then the grandsire, having called the celestial nymphs, and comforting them with sweet words said (to them): "O you excellent ladies, this Brahmahatyā has come from Vṛtra. Accept her fourth portion as told by me."

The celestial nymphs said:

58. O grandsire, the time of the release of us who, by your order, have decided to take (the fourth portion of Brahmahatyā), should be thought about.

The grandsire said:

59. She will quickly come to the man who copulates with women in their menses. Let your mental torment go away quickly.

Mahādeva said:

60-63. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, the bebies of the celestial nymphs, with their minds delighted, then said, "All right", went to their respective places, and rejoiced. Then the grandsire, the god—the author of the worlds—thought of waters, and they arrived. O goddess, all of them, having come to Brahmā, of unlimited lustre, and having saluted the grandsire, said (these) words: "O god, O you who curb your enemies, O lord of gods, here we have come by your order. So order us what to do."

Brahmā said:

64. This dreadful Brahmahatyā has come to Indra from Vṛtra. Accept the fourth portion of her.

The waters said:

65-66. O lord of the worlds, let it be as you say. You will please think about the time of our release. O lord of gods, you are the highest recourse of the entire world. Which favour from others can there be, that will emancipate us from peril?

Brahmā said:

67-68. She will quickly go to that man and stay in him only, who having a small mind, and with his intellect deluded, will throw phlegm, urine and feces into you. Then you will be liberated. I am telling you this truth.

Mahādeva said:

69-71 Then, O chief goddess, Brahmahatyā left the lord of gods, and went (away). The lord of gods became very much delighted due to the direction of the god (i.e. Brahmā). In the former age, Indra met (i.e. faced) Brahmahatyā. Having practised penance here, and with his mind purified, he went to heaven. Then having performed a horse-sacrifice, he became sinless. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, such is (the importance of) Vārtraghnī at the holy place (on the bank) of Sābhramatī.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYNINE

Varāhatīrtha

Maheśa said:

1-6. Then the divine river after her confluence with Vārtraghnī, has entered with Bhadrā into the ocean, the abode of Varuṇa. The ocean also, having come there with a desire to do what is dear to her, and due to his affection for Sābhramatī,

brought about the pleasing union. Bhadrā who was the friend of Subhadrā formerly, actually taking the form of Śrī, helped her on the way. Their confluence on the northern shore of the ocean is meritorious. A man who, after bathing (there) offers pure water, after saluting Varāha, would obtain Varuṇa's place. Lord Viṣṇu entered the ocean along that path, vanquished all the demons, the enemies of gods, then the god, Yajñavarāha, agitated the ocean, sported there, for a very long time, and came out through Kardamāla.

Pārvatī said:

7. O god, tell me in detail the entry of Yajñavarāha into the Sābhramatī and his exit through Kardamāla.

Mahādeva said:

8-11. I shall tell you about this sport of Viṣṇu (in the incarnation of) Varāha, in the interior of the earth, done formerly. O daughter of the Himālaya Mountain, listen. He who is actually the lord, took up the form of a boar. Having taken up the form for the success of the mission of the gods, the lord of gods, holding the divine earth (on his tusks), came out of the place (called) Kardama. O beautiful lady, a great holy place has come about there. A man who bathes there, enjoys salvation. There is no doubt about this. A man should perform a śrāddha here for the release of his dead ancestors. Freed with them, he goes to the great world giving happiness.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY

Saṅgamatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-5. A holy place superior to this holy place is called Saṅgama. Here that Sābhramatī Gaṅgā has joined the ocean. A man should bathe and give gifts there. Having bathed here,

even those who are great sinners, get salvation. One desiring the good of his kinsmen, should offer a śrāddha there. When a śrāddha is performed here, the man would certainly live in the world of the dead ancestors. At that place where god Sāgara (i.e. the divine Ocean) always joins Gaṅgā, (even) the murderer of a brāhmaṇa is freed. Then what to say of other sinners? When dull-witted men do not know about the holy place there, then a holy place in my name should be fashioned.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYONE

Ādityatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-4. Near the confluence is a good holy place (Sattīrtha) well-known in the world, called Āditya. There was not and there will not be a holy place superior to it. One should visit it, and bathe. Worship should be done with a blue lotus, an arka flower and also with karavīras. Men should always perform a śrāddha and offer gifts there. This Ādityaka-tīrtha is pure and destroys sins. This holy place gives religious merit even to great sinners who visit it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYTWO

Nilakaṇṭha

Mahādeva said:

1-4. A holy place superior to that holy place is well known as Nilakaṇṭha. One desiring salvation should always visit it. By (offering) bilva-leaves, incense, lamps and on seeing Nīlakaṇṭha a man gets the desired object. In a secluded place he

(i.e. the deity) highly devoted to fasting, always dwells. He gives to people whatever they long for. O great goddess, that Kāśyapī is well-known in Kali (age).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYTHREE

Durgāsaṅgamatīrtha

Mahādeva said:

1-6. One should bathe there where that river Sābhramatī has joined Durgā and the ocean, O goddess. (Such men) become free from blemishes in this Kali age. There is no doubt about this. A man should perform a śrāddha at the confluence of Durgā. Having gone there, one should especially feed brāhmaṇas and offer (them) cows, buffaloes. This (river) is blessed, most blessed, pure and destroyer of sins, seeing which, O goddess, a man is freed from sins. This river Sābhramatī should be known as Gaṅgā. O goddess, in the Kali age she especially gives fruits for a long time. Even if there were hundreds of tongues in my mouth I shall not be able to describe her merits.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYFOUR

The Rise of Nṛsimha

Mahādeva said:

1-4. O goddess, listen to a vow difficult to be had in the three worlds, having heard about which men are free from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The becoming visible of the self-manifested one is for the happiness of the devotees. A day or a group of days has become meritorious. O goddess, he, by uttering whose name a man gets eternal salvation, is the highest

soul, and the cause of causes. He is the universal soul; has the form of the universe; the revered one is the lord of all. That Nṛsimha, the noble one, who has held twelve suns, has become manifest with a desire for the good of (his) devotees.

Pārvatī said:

5. O best god, innumerable incarnations are enumerated. O master, O lord of the universe, tell me about the greatest abode called Nṛsimha, by merely knowing which one would obtain a world (full) of happiness.

Mahādeva said:

6-7. Prahlāda, the best among the wise, spoke (these) words to the best one who had killed his father, and who, after killing Hiraṇyakaśipu, was seated comfortably, and on the lap of whom, the god of gods and the lord of world, Prahlāda was seated.

Prahlāda said:

8-9. Salutation to you, O revered Viṣṇu having the wonderful form of Nṛsimha. O greatest god, I am your devotee; and am really asking you. O lord, in me unbroken devotion is produced in many ways. Tell me, O lord, how (i.e. why) I have become dear to you. (Tell me) its cause.

Nṛsimha said:

10-13a. O very wise one, I shall tell it to you. Listen with a concentrated mind, the cause of your devotion and of your being dear (to me). In olden times you were born (as the son) of a brāhmaṇa. You did not study. You, Vasudeva by name, were addicted to prostitutes. Greedy for the company of prostitutes, you enjoyed honey and ghee, and did not do any good deed in that existence. Due to the power of my vow, devotion (for me) in you was produced, O sinless one.

Prahlāda said:

13b-14. O lord of gods, tell me in detail, what was the vow and of whose son? What bad deeds did I, addicted to a prostitute, do? Favouring me, now tell all that (to me).

Nṛsiṃha said:

15-27. Formerly Brahmā observed this excellent (vow) for the sake of creation. Due to the power of my vow he created the mobile and the immobile. God (Śiva) observed this vow for killing Tripura. Due to the power of this vow Tripura was knocked down. Many other ancient deities, sages, and very wise kings practised this excellent vow. Due to the efficacy of this vow all got success. They became dear to me. Having enjoyed many pleasures in heaven, they merged in me. O Prahlāda, enter me: since for (some) mission you had a form separate from my body. Even after hundreds of kalpas, they will not be reborn. A poor man obtains wealth like that of a rich man. One desiring an object will get it; one desiring a kingdom will obtain an excellent kingdom; one desiring a (long) life will get it (as long) as that of Śiva. It makes women free from widowhood; gives sons and prosperity. It brings about wealth, grains, and destroys grief. To those women or men who practise this excellent vow I give happiness, and the fruit of enjoyment and salvation. What is the use of talking much about the fruit of this vow? Neither I nor Śaṅkara is able to tell the fruit of my vow.

Prahlāda said:

O revered one, by your favour I have heard (about) this excellent vow; have heard about the fruit of this vow. Now I desire to hear about the cause of my devotion for you, and the excellent manner of this vow. O lord, in which month and on what day would it take place? O god, please tell it in detail, (tell also about) the manner, having performed in which, one would obtain its fruit.

Nṛsiṃha said:

28-33. O child Prahlāda, listen attentively to the vow. One should observe it on the Caturdaśī of the bright half of Vaiśākha. It should be observed with my manifestation, giving me pleasure. O son, listen to my becoming visible for the happiness of my devotees. For (some) other reason, this pure holy place, destroying sins and known as Maulistāna, came up in the

Western direction. In that holy place (lived) a well-known brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas, Hārīta by name, and highly devoted to knowledge and meditation. O lord, his wife was very meritorious and always of virtuous nature. Her name was Līlāvatī and she was always under the control of her husband. O son, for a long time they practised a severe vow. Surely twenty-one yugas passed (while they were practising penance). Then at that holy place the lord appeared in person before the two.

Nṛsiṃha said:

34-46. O brāhmaṇa, I shall undoubtedly give you whatever you desire.

Then the two said to him: “If a boon is to be given to me, then let a son like you be (born) to me now only. “O son”, I had then said, “I am certainly your son. But as I am eternal, I shall not remain in the womb. I am the Creator of all beings; I am actually the Supreme Spirit, and greater than the great; since I am eternal, I shall not stay in the womb.” Then Hārīta said: “Let it certainly be so.” Since then I have stayed at (this) holy place for my devotee. The best devotee, after coming here, should see me. I shall always destroy his entire suffering. And for this reason to those best men who observe this vow in the proper manner, there is no fear. A man who meditates on and worships him in a child’s form especially along with the two, at night, would become Viṣṇu. He should always worship him, having four arms, large fangs, of the nature of Death, and unassailable, resembling a crore of suns, and unconquerable for a crore of Yamas; (he should always worship him who has a face like that of a lion, and has the body of a man, who is Nṛsiṃha, a divine lion, and of the nature of Death. Knowing this in particular, he would go to my place, and would observe the vow which is very pure, which gives a large mass of wealth, which undoubtedly gives the devotees salvation in the end, and which, being practised gives the fruit of a thousand Dvādaśī (vows). My vow should be observed on a Saturday when the Sun is in conjunction with the Svātī constellation,

when there is the siddhiyoga¹ of Planets and in a division of the day² (a karaṇa) known as Vaṇija. Knowing that this my day destroys crores of Hatyās, is associated with all auspicious conjunctions of stars, destroys sins (he should observe the vow). He who would pass my day (without the vow) is a sinner.

47-61. He who does not observe it goes to hell (and lives there) as long as the Moon and the Sun are (in the sky). When the day of (i.e. sacred to) me has arrived, O child, my devotee, after brushing his teeth and having subdued his senses, should (declare) before me the intention to observe this vow: "Today I shall practise your vow. Make it free from difficulties." He who observes the vow should not talk wicked words etc. Then at mid-day, with the accompaniment of a Vedic hymn, the wise one should bathe in pure water in a river etc., at home or in a natural pond or an auspicious lake. For the appeasement of all sins, he should bathe in the proper manner (after smearing his body) with clay, cowdung and dhâtrī-fruit, so also with sesamum seeds. After putting on two auspicious garments, he should begin the daily rite. Then having smeared his house, he should draw an auspicious octagon. Having placed on it a pitcher with jewels, he should put on it a vessel full of rice. Then having fashioned, according to his (financial) capacity, my golden image along with that of Lakṣmī, he should install them there. Then having bathed them with (the collection of five sweet things called) pañcāmṛta³, he should invite a brāhmaṇa preceptor, not very greedy, and knowing the holy texts; keeping him in front (i.e. in his presence) he should worship the deity. He should erect there a pavilion adorned with bunches of flowers. And with flowers of the season, I should be worshipped in the proper manner. Then I should be worshipped in the sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity, with hymns and restraints. Then I should be especially worshipped with the Purāṇic hymns. He who would then offer sandal with camphor, mixed with thick saffron and flowers of the seasons, so also Tulasī-leaves to Nṛsiṃha, becomes free. There is no

1. Siddhiyoga—A particular auspicious conjunction of Planets.

2. Karaṇa—A division of the day. These Karaṇas are eleven.

3. Pañcāmṛta—A collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

doubt about this. He should offer incense of kṛṣṇa agaru, always dear to Viṣṇu, to the preceptor and to Viṣṇu for accomplishing all his desired objects. A great lamp, destroying the darkness of ignorance should be offered. Then he should wave the great light with the sound of bells. “O lord of Lakṣmī, I am offering you eatables, sugar along with articles of food and meal. Destroy all(my) sins.” This is the hymn for offering of eatables:

62-73. “O Nṛsimha, Acyuta, Deveśa, on this auspicious day of your birth, I, giving up all enjoyments, will observe a fast. O lord, be pleased with that. Keep away (from me) a sinful existence.” With the sounds of songs and musical instruments, he should keep awake during the night. Everyday a Purāṇa containing stories about Śrī Nṛsimha should be read. Then, in the morning after having bathed he should, gratifying me, worship me in the manner told before. With his mind steady, he should make an offering to Viṣṇu before me. Then gifts, to be told hereafter, should be given to worthy brāhmaṇas for winning (i.e. enjoying) both the worlds. The golden (image of) the deity pleases me. He (also) gives a cow, land, sesamum-seeds, gold etc. to a brāhmaṇa. A bed along with a mattress filled with cotton and with seven (kinds of) grains should be given. Other (articles) also should be given to his capacity. He should not indulge in dishonesty with regard to wealth, with the desire for the fruit as mentioned (before). Then he should feed brāhmaṇas, and give them good presents. Even the poor should observe (this vow) according to their capacity. All the castes are entitled to (observing) my vow. It should be especially observed by my devotees highly devoted to me. Then (follows) the hymn containing the prayer: “O lord of gods, emancipate from the painful ocean of the mundane existence those men who are born in my family and also those men who will be born therein. O you lord of the world lying on Śeṣa, give the support of your hand to me who am plunged in the ocean of sins, overcome by diseases and beings moving in water, and who am in a great misery. O lord of gods, by means of this vow, give me enjoyment and salvation.”

74-97. Having thus appealed to the deity, and having dismissed the deity in the proper manner, he should offer all the

presents etc. to the preceptor. Having pleased the brāhmaṇas with presents etc. he should dismiss them. Engaged in meditation upon me, he should eat with his relatives. He who, though poor, certainly fasts (on) the Caturdaśī, certainly gets freed from sin committed during (the previous) seven existences. He who would devoutly listen to (the account of) this vow, would remove the sin (even) of the murder of a brāhmaṇa by merely hearing it. A man who would narrate this pure, great secret, would obtain all his desired objects. That is always the fruit of this vow. He who, according to his capacity, observes this vow at the time called madhyāhna (mid-day) and would, with great devotion, worship Līlāvati along with the sage (Hārīta) and Śrī Nṛsimha also, would obtain eternal salvation. He who, having gone to that holy place, would worship Śrī Nṛsimha, obtains his desired fruit due to the grace of Śrī Nṛsimha. “O Śrī Nṛsimha, O you of a great form, O you unconquerable for a crore of Deaths, O Bhairaveśa, O Hara, O you destroyer of misery, O you of the form of a child, salutation to you. Salutation to Śrī Nṛsimha of the form of a child, and to the child, to the all-pervading, to Sunanda, to him manifesting his own form, of the nature of all beings, to the lord of all, of the nature of the heaven. Salutation to you, O ocean of pity, dwelling in the orb of the Sun, of the form of twenty-four, and of terrible fire at the time of the deluge, to Nṛsimha, fully of the form of the world. That god Nṛsimha, conqueror of Virabhadra, held the very much heated orbs of twelve Suns on his forehead.” There is especially very auspicious and charming Sindhu river. O beautiful lady, near her even now there is a city, always known as Maulistāna, and fashioned by gods. There is the residence of the noble Hārīta. Līlāvati also certainly stays there only. There would be an echo near the river Sindhu. But when Kali age has arrived, many sinful mleccas certainly live there. If a man loudly utters the word ‘Nṛsimha, Nṛsimha’, like the word ‘Nṛsimha’ which, great and wonderful, came up at the time of the birth of Nṛsimha, then, O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, a similar echo is produced. Those men—a killer of a brāhmaṇa, one who has stolen gold, a drunkard, or one who has violated one’s preceptor’s bed (i.e. his wife)—after having gone to Sindhu, and bathed in her (water), are

undoubtedly liberated by the grace of Śrī Nṛsimha. Those men who stay there for ten nights, should be known to be of meritorious acts. (These) my words are not false. Those castes, led by brāhmaṇas, that stay there in the Kali age, should be known to be like the mlecchas, cast out of the fold of the Vedas by the best gods. They ate flesh there, and always drank liquor; therefore, they are certainly irreligious and most sinful. O chief goddess, like brāhmaṇas not performing sandhyā, they, outside the fold of the Vedas, live there in the West. Only one sacred place called Nṛsimha, is very extensive, having heard about which a man is undoubtedly free from sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYFIVE

The First Chapter of the Gītā: The Anecdote of Suśarman

Pārvati said:

1-2. O revered one, O you knowing the entire truth, through your grace I have heard various duties about Viṣṇu, which are the causes of complete crossing (of the worldly existence). Now I also desire to hear the greatness of Gītā, having heard which devotion to Viṣṇu enhances. Now tell it, O god, if I am dear to you.

The lord said:

3-4. We worship great Viṣṇu, Acyuta, resembling the hemp-flower, having the lord of birds as his seat, and lying on the bed of Śeṣa. Once Lakṣmī, delighting the three worlds, respectfully asked (Viṣṇu) enemy of Mura, comfortably seated on a charming seat.

Lakṣmī said:

5. O revered one, with what purpose are you sleeping in the Milky Ocean—you, like one who is neutral, having instituted glory in the world is it were? (*obscure*).

The lord said:

6. Hearing these words, proud through knowledge, of Lakṣmī, the destroyer of Mura, with his eyes doubting and smiling, spoke with soft words.

The lord said:

7-13 O you of a beautiful face, I am not sleepy. With my sight turned inside and pursuing the truth, I see my own body of Śiva. O goddess, that which the contemplative saints see within with their sharp intellect, which produces a continuous mass of joy and which is without a second, is the immutable light, of the nature of the self, and unharmed, resorting to which the world subsists, and which is experienced by me, and without which there is no element in the world, mobile or immobile, and having secured which, Dvaipāyana (i.e. Vyāsa) produced the holy text of the Gītā; after having thought in many ways the very intelligent one churned the holy texts of the Vedas. O chief goddess, having resorted to it, a great joy, I, with my mind delighted, appear to be sleepy in the Milky Ocean.

Having heard these limited delightful words of the enemy of Mura, Lakṣmī, with her rolling eyes full of joy, was amazed.

Lakṣmī said:

14-20. O Hṛṣīkeśa, you alone are always to be meditated upon by the self-controlled ones. Therefore, I have a great curiosity to hear from you about that which is greater than you. O Acyuta, tell me if there is someone different from you who are the lord, the creator and the destroyer of the worlds.

The lord said:

O goddess, this my body is illusory and not real, and is augmented with the mass of the acts of creation, maintenance and withdrawal. O dear one, the nature of the soul is different from this. It is without duality and unity. It is free from existence and non-existence; and without beginning or end. It is pure consciousness, has acquired lustre, is beautiful due to great joy, is the form of lord, can be known only through the oneness of the soul, and is told in the Gītā.

Hearing these words of him of an unlimited lustre, she having doubt due to contradictory statement said: "If you are highest joy, and not known through speech and mind, then how does Gītā make you known. Remove this doubt of me."

The lord (Śiva) said:

21-26. Having heard the proper words of Lakṣmī, the lord told her the Gītā, the view leading one to the self, along with an old account. "O greatest goddess, I am the soul (looked at) in two ways as higher and lower. The higher is a (mere) witness, qualityless, partless and auspicious. The lower one, I am Pañcavaktra; it also remains in two forms. I, Maheśvara, the soul, am to be explained through the difference in words and meanings, as, through the words of the Gītā, my strong bond, of the nature of the objects in the mundane existence, is completely cut off; since (my two forms) Pañcavaktra and Maheśvara, are dependent on its study." (*obscure*). Hearing these words of him, of the great ocean of the essence of Gītā, those afraid of the mundane existence know it through the difference between this and that. Lakṣmī asked this to him. He told her the entire greatness along with its account, remaining in major and minor parts. (*obscure*).

The lord (Viṣṇu) said:

27-31. O you beautiful lady, I shall tell you about my firm existence in the Gītā. The five faces are the five chapters in order. The (next) ten chapters are the arms; one is the belly, and the (remaining) two are the lotus-like feet. Thus the eighteen chapters are the divine forms of words. It, destroying great sins, should be known through knowledge only. Therefore, he, the very intelligent one, who studies a chapter, or half of it, or a verse or half a verse is liberated like Suśarman.

Lakṣmī said:

O lord, who was he named Suśarman? What caste did he belong to? How was his nature? Whence was he liberated? Due to which cause did his liberation take place?

The lord said:

32-47a. There was a wicked (man) named Suśarman, who was the limit of sinners (i.e. the worst sinner). He was born in the family of brāhmaṇas, who did cruel deeds, and had not realised the self. He did not meditate (upon the god), did not mutter (hymns), did not perform a sacrifice, did not honour his guests; but due to his possessing strength he indulged in sensual objects only. He was always engaged in husbandry, subsisted on leaves, loved liquor, ate flesh; for a very long time he passed his time like this. Desiring to fetch leaves, he moved into a sage's orchard. The dull-witted one was bitten there by a deadly serpent. Having died, and having gone to many hells, he came (i.e. was born) again and was born as a bull. A lame man bartered him for his subsistence. With a great difficulty, he, carrying him (i.e. the lame man) on his back, passed seven or eight autumns. He was maimed, his eyes rolled, and vomited foam continuously. He neither lived nor died due to his own acts. Some time the lame man made him revolve speedily. He suddenly fell on the ground and fainted. As this world is attracted by curiosity, in the crowd (around him) a meritorious man gave his religious merit to him. Some others also, remembering their own deeds, gave (him their religious merit). There was (in the crowd) a courtesan also, leading the course of the worldly life; and not knowing her religious merit, she gave (him) some religious merit. By the servants of Death he was taken to the city of the dead. He was released due to his being meritorious as a result of the religious merit given by the courtesan. Again he came to the earth and was born in the house of noble persons—brāhmaṇas. He remembered his (former) existence; after a long time he, desiring to know religious merit removing his ignorance, approached the courtesan, and proclaimed himself; he asked her. She told (him): "This parrot, living in the cage daily tells me. My heart was purified due to that, and I divided my religious merit." The parrot, asked by the two, started narrating an account that had formerly taken place, after remembering his former existence also.

The parrot said:

47b-55. Formerly I was a learned man, deluded by the pride of my learning. Due to my hatred for loveliness I was jealous even of virtuous persons. After (some) time, having departed from life, I then reached abhorred worlds. Then, I who very much censured (my) good preceptor, was born in the stock of a parrot. In the summer season, I, the wicked one, was also separated from my parents. In the summer, in which the roads were heated, I was brought by best sages and was dropped in a cage in the hermitage, the resort of the great. Hearing from the sons of the sages revising with great care the first chapter of the Gītā, I repeatedly recited it. In the meanwhile, a fowler indulging in stealing, snatched and sold me.

Thus the account was told.

The lord said:

This chapter was enunciated before. Due to that he dispelled his sin. With his heart purified by that the best bird was released. Thus talking to one another, and telling its greatness, they, the wise ones, constantly muttering it, obtained salvation in the house. Therefore, for him who recites or listens to the first chapter, or would remember or study it, the ocean of the mundane existence is not difficult to cross.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYSIX

The Second Chapter of the Gītā

The lord said:

1-17. The excellent account of the first chapter has been narrated. O Lakṣmī, also listen to the importance of the other chapters. In the southern direction, in the city called Purandara, (a city) of the teachers of sacred texts, there lived a rich man, well-known as Devaśarman. He honoured guests; he was a learned person; he was proficient in the Vedas and (other)

sacred texts; he offered hosts of sacrifices and was always dear to the ascetics. Offering oblations into fire, he pleased the gods for a long time. The religious-minded one did not obtain conclusive peace. Desiring beatitude, he everyday waited upon ascetics with truthful intentions, with not a few rites. When he was doing like this, and when a long time had elapsed, some Muktakarman formerly appeared on the earth. He had direct knowledge (of the supreme spirit); had no desire; had fixed his gaze on the tip of his nose; his mind was tranquil; he meditated on the highest Brahman; and was full of joy. The learned one, having held (i.e. touched) his feet with an humble mind, offered him reception due to a guest in the proper manner. Bowing to the ascetic, pleased with his pure disposition, he asked him about his final beatitude. The sage told him about a teacher, a goatherd, named Mitravat, (living) in the city named Saupura. He, having saluted his feet, went to the prosperous Saupura and saw a large forest in the region to its north. It was charming with the fragrance of many flowers tossed by the wind. It had filled the quarters with the sound of the humming of the intoxicated bees. In that forest on the bank of a river, he saw Mitravat with his eyes fixed and seated on a stone-slab. He was surrounded by animals which, though mutually hostile, had given up their natural hostility, in the garden, resplendent with slow breezes. He was as it were sprinkling nectar on the earth, with (his mind) full of pity and charming with the delight of destiny, when the herds of deer were peaceful. He, excited and with his mind pleased, and with his head slightly bent, politely approached him too and honoured him. Then the learned one, with his mind concentrated, remained by the side of Mitravat. He, being composed, asked him whose time of meditation was over.

Devaśarman said:

18. I desire to know myself. So, regarding this desire, please teach me the means that has secured success.

The lord said:

19a. Having thought for a while, that Mitravat also spoke like this:

Mitravat said:

19b-38. O learned one, know an old account being narrated by me. On the bank of Godāvarī, there was a city named Pratiṣṭhāna. There was (a man) Durdama by name (born) in the family of the learned. There was king Vikrama, being served (by people); everyday he accepted gifts, and (thus) fed his belly. Binding him with the noose of Death, Death took him to Yama's abode. Having experienced torments in all hells, he was born in a family of brāhmaṇas of a bad character. He was attended by learning (obtained) in the previous birth. He married a haughty girl from a mean family. In course of time, she abandoned childhood and entered youth. Her breasts were stout, buttocks fine, eyes perturbed with passion; she did not put up with her husband of a bad character; and loved other men as husbands. Desiring to earn her livelihood, she went out of the city. For a long time she was sexually united with a lustful man born as a cāṇḍāla. As a result of union with him she conceived, and a daughter was born. She was his wife only due to a former sinful attachment. The same, (getting) old, was born as a female imp. Due to bad company and attachment to bad women she became wicked-minded. Having an ardent desire for tasting blood she ate a diseased fowler. She roamed in the fearful forest, and was outcast by people, on seeing her. Having reached the world of the dead, the fowler became a tiger, due to the efficacy of the killing, after having stayed in fierce hells. She too, of a wicked mind, died in course of time. Having gone to dreadful hells, she was born as a female goat in my house. O learned one, I, not noticing a fearful tiger, as it were devouring everything, looked after her and others. Seeing him to have come, I, afraid of death, left the flock of the female goats, and ran (away) due to fear. The tiger, remembering former hostility came near. The female goat quickly went near him having plough-like fangs. She giving up her fear and abandoning her hostility, stood there unrestrained. The tiger too, free from hatred, was quiet. Seeing him like that, she started speaking: "O tiger, lift me up carefully and eat me as desired by you. You are not having this intention. How did you give up your hostile intention?" Hearing these words the tiger, free from

hatred, then spoke these words: "At this place my hatred has gone (away); my hunger and thirst have passed (away). Therefore, I do not long for you who have stood by me."

39-55. Thus addressed, she spoke again: "How did I become fearless? What do you know to be the cause of this? If (you know), please tell (it) to me". The tiger, thus addressed (by her), again spoke to the female goat: "I do not know it". Then they moved out to ask the great one who had gone ahead. The two having come to me, asked me who was much amazed. With the two I asked the lord of monkeys. The monkey, O brāhmaṇa, (on being) asked by me, respectfully said to him these words: "O goatherd, listen; about this I shall tell (you) an old account. See, this great abode was formerly in a forest. Here Druhiṇa had installed Śiva's Phallus. An intelligent (person), Sukarman by name, practising penance, worshipped Śiva honoured by gods after having brought wild flowers. Having bathed (the Phallus) with the river-water, he lived there just by that deed (of worshipping Śiva). After a long time a guest came to him. Having fetched fruits, he offered them to him. Being pleased with that hospitality, he said to Sukarman: "What is the root of the act, enjoying the fruit of which you are staying here? Why do you just desire to live in the way of servile imitation?" He, thus addressed by the sage who was mostly pleased, spoke in reply clear words, most beneficial to himself: "O learned one, I really know the fruit of this act. Śambhu is served merely for the desire of enjoyment. The fruit—the result—of this service of Śiva is that you will favour me, knowing my desire." Having heard these true and pleasant words of him, the ascetic, being pleased, wrote the second chapter of the Gītā on the stone-slab and ordered the brāhmaṇa to recite and study it quickly: "Your desire will easily bear fruit everywhere." The intelligent one, speaking like this, disappeared (even) when he was watching. He, being amazed, constantly remained (reciting the Gītā) by his order. Then, after a long time, wherever the devout one, of a pleased mind, went, the penance grove became quiet. There was no antagonism, no hunger, no thirst, no fear due to the penance of him, muttering the second chapter.

Mitravat said:

56-62. Thus addressed by him, and having heard a great story, I, allowed by the pleased one, went with the female goat and the tiger. Having gone to the stone-slab I saw the chapter that is written (there). One should recite it. By its revision only, he reached the excellent, concluding limit of penance. O good one, therefore, you should everyday recite that chapter. Due to that your salvation will not be a remote occurrence.

Devaśarman was (thus) advised by Mitravat himself. Bowing down and honouring him, he went to the city of Purandara. Having met there in a temple certain wise man, he told him this account, and then recited this chapter. Taught by him, the pure-minded one carefully recited the second chapter and obtained the blameless, highest position. I have thus told you the account of the second chapter. Now listen, O Indirā, I shall tell you the importance of the third chapter.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYSEVEN

The Story of Jaḍa: The Importance of the Third Chapter

The lord said:

1-11. A brāhmaṇa, named Jaḍa, of the family of Kauśika (living) in Janasthāna, abandoned the acts proper for his caste, and fixed his mind on living as a merchant. He was addicted to others' wives; he played with dice; he drank liquor; he was always engrossed in hunting. Thus he passed his time. When his wealth was exhausted, he started stealing. He seized the wealth of those who desired to perform sacrifices. For trading he went away and having secured musk, kṛṣṇāgaru (sandal), and chowries bright like the moonlight, brought them from (a place) at a distance of five or six yojanas. The next day he, having crossed a great distance, was overpowered by robbers when the sun was setting and darkness was spreading, and was quickly killed by them. Due to his loss of religious merit he

was born as a very fierce goblin. He was thirsty; he was oppressed by hunger; he licked the corners of his mouth; his hair was raised; he had big shanks; his mighty belly had sunk into his back. His body was one in which only bones were left. He very much turned his eyes wickedly. In the meanwhile, his son who was religious-minded and conversant with Vedas, very much guarded (piety) and desiring to see him, went (to look for him). Everyday he sought for news from the travellers, but did not get (any). Then, a man, his companion, arrived. Having learnt the account from him, he very much lamented for his father.

12-21a. Then the wise one, having thought, desiring to perform the obsequies, set out, with necessary materials, to go to Vārāṇasī. Having passed seven or eight nights on the way, he began offering the sandhyā prayer at the root of the tree where his father was killed. There he muttered the third chapter of the Gītā. Then a terrible sound was heard in the middle of the sky. He then saw his fierce father falling from the sky. With his mind overcome with wonder and fear, he saw before him in the sky, (his father) full of great lustre. With a concentrated mind he saw in the sky a divine aeroplane which was full of a crore of small bells and which had pervaded the quarters with its lustre. There he saw his father who had got into it and who was surrounded by divine damsels, who was being praised by sages and who had put on a yellow garment. Seeing him, he bowed down, and he (the father) blessed him. Then he asked him this account, and he too told it to him: "O son, due to the religious merit of my body, you, muttering (the third chapter of Gītā) near (me) have fortunately released me from the (effects of) acts, difficult to be abandoned. Then now desist from muttering, since that for which you did (the muttering after going) to Vārāṇasī, has come to you."

The lord said:

21b. Thus addressed, he said to his father, of a blazing lustre:

The son said:

22a. Advise me about my well-being. What else should I do?

The lord said:

22b-26a. Then the father said to the son: “O innocent one, do this. My brother has done the same act as I have done. He has gone to a terrible hell. Please release him (from there). My desire is: You should release others in my family who have gone to hell.” Thus addressed, the son, with the palms of his hands joined, said: “Tell me, by (doing) which act I shall release them all.” The father who was thus addressed, said to his son:

The father said:

26b-47. O son do that, by (doing) which I was liberated. Do that and give the religious merit springing from it. Then, they, giving up (i.e. free from) pangs like me, will soon go to that highest position of Viṣṇu.

The son, who was advised, said: “O father, if you like my words, I shall release all those denizens of hell.” “Let it be so; may happiness come to you. A great dear thing has come up.” Having thus directed his son, the father went to the highest position of Viṣṇu. He too, having returned from him, and having gone to Janasthāna, spent his time in the abode of the beautiful city of Śauri. For years he did what his father had told him. He gave the religious merit which he had got, and liberated the denizens of hell. In the meanwhile the servants of Viṣṇu, freeing the denizens of hell, going to the place of torture came there. He honoured them in various ways with acts of hospitality. Asked about their welfare, they spoke about complete happiness. Having thus honoured them, the wise lord of the world of dead ancestors asked them the reason of their arrival, and they told it to him: “O lord Yama, know that Śauri (i.e. Viṣṇu), lying on the bed of Śeṣa, has sent us to you to direct you. Through our mouth (i.e. through us) the god asks about your well-being. He directs (you) to release all the beings in hell.” Having heard the order of Viṣṇu of unlimited lustre with his head bent down, having honoured it, he thought about something in his mind. Seeing all of them released and proud, he, followed by all of them, then went to Viṣṇu’s abode. By an excellent vehicle he went where the Milky Ocean was.

Near it he saw the lord of the world, whose lustre was like many crores of suns that had risen, who was dark-blue like a blue lotus, whose lustre was mixed with that of the rays of the jewels on the hood of the serpent (Śeṣa) that was his bed, who was being seen with his mind full of joy and pleased, who was repeatedly and affectionately seen by Lakṣmī with glances full of devotion, who was served by meditating saints around him with the pupils of their eyes steady due to meditation, who was being praised by Indra in order to vanquish his antagonists, who, the heap of virtues, was being sung by words embodied, issued from the mouth of Brahman at the end of (the utterance of) the Vedic words, who was pleased and also neutral, who saw himself simultaneously with the mobile and the immobile in all beings in all stocks having their merit collected, who delighted himself with glances full of lustre, who had a body, all-pervading, and brightened by the lustre of the serpent (i.e. Śeṣa), who was dark-blue like the petal of a blue lotus or like the sky seen in the moonlight. Seeing him, he extolled him with many prayers.

Yama said:

48-60. O creator of all, salutation to (you) whose mind is pure, from whose mouths the Vedas were emitted, who are of a universal form, who are the creator. O you dreadful one due to the force of your strength, salutation to (you) Viṣṇu who destroyed the pride of the lord of demons; salutation to the excellence in preservation(?), and to the prop of the universe. Salutation to (you) who conquered the multitude of sins of all living beings, from whose eye on the forehead, that is slightly opened, lustre has sprung up. You are the lord, the soul of all the worlds and the great god. Therefore, having sent forth all devotees of Viṣṇu, you pity them. You pervade the entire world nourished by Māyā but you are not overcome by it by qualities born of it. Though you are within them, you are not overcome by the two (i.e. Māyā and its qualities). With your mind controlled, you rest within yourself in spite of your eyes turning to the objects of senses and moving towards the fruit. As you are limitless, your greatness also has no end. In this case silence alone is proper for me. How can you be the object of words?

Having praised him like this, he with the palms of his hands folded, said these words: "These vicious beings were fastened by me in pursuance of my duty. O lord of the world, order if I have to do some other piece of work." Thus respectfully addressed by him, Viṣṇu spoke, as if sprinkling (him) with nectar, with a voice deep like (the thundering of) the clouds: "I, acting as is proper for the occasion, emancipate people from sins. Having entrusted the responsibility to you, I am not sorry for the embodied beings. So do your duty. Go home." (Thus) spoke the lord. And speaking like this, the god vanished. He too came to his city. He too, having emancipated all those kinsmen of him living in various hells, himself went to Viṣṇu's heaven by an excellent vehicle.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYEIGHT

The Fourth Chapter : The Story of Two Girls

The lord said:

1. Now I shall tell (you) the greatness of the fourth (chapter) also. Listen (to it), due to which the two girls, giving up their condition as badari trees, went to heaven.

Lakṣmī said:

2-3. How did the two girls, giving up their state of being the badari trees, go to heaven? O god, who were they formerly? How did they attain prominence? I desire to hear this. O lord, please tell it. Hearing this great story I am not satisfied.

The lord said:

4-22. On the bank of the Bhāgīrathī there was a city (named) Vārāṇasī. A saint named Bharata lived there in the temple of Viśveśvara. Always absorbed in the soul, he muttered the fourth chapter carefully. Due to that study, the good one was not overcome by couples (of opposite qualities). Some

time, he, sporting, went out of the city. The ascetic saw gods who were nearby. Using one as a pillow and resting on the other with his foot, he took rest at the root of the two badari trees from which fruits fell. When the ascetic went from there, the couple of the badari trees became dry, leafless and branchless within five or six days. The two (trees) then were born somewhere in the house of brāhmaṇas. The pair, growing for seven years, (while) sporting saw an ascetic who had come from distant regions. Seizing his feet, they spoke words that were true and pleasant. "O sage, due to your favour only we two were liberated. Abandoning our condition as badari trees, we have obtained human birth." The sage, thus addressed by them, having forgotten (what he had done) replied: "O girls, when, and for what reason, were you liberated by me? I do not know the cause of your being reduced to the condition of badari (trees). (Please) tell it." The two girls told him the cause of their being the badari trees, and also of their liberation from that condition, difficult to give up. "On the bank of Godāvārī there is a holy place giving religious merit to men. It is known as Chinnapāpa and had reached great excellence. There (a man) named Satyatapas practised a very severe penance. In the severe summer he remained in the midst of blazing fires. In the rainy season his hair was continuously sprinkled with showers; in winter he remained in water having his body horripilated. The restrained one, always pure and practising penance in (every) season, deriving great joy, fixed his mind on the (highest) soul only. He bore great love for trees always bearing fruit and having thick shadows, and for beings free from jealousy. Even Brahmā himself everyday enquiring of him who was endowed with wisdom while aiming at the fruit of the penance, remained by his side. Due to lack of fear, that penance of him expressed in meditation upon Brahman who everyday approached him, increased. Then Indra, thinking that he was almost unseated from his prosperous position, and being afraid, put in a hundred obstacles. Calling us two, equal (to each other) from among the celestial nymphs, he ordered:

23-37. 'Create an obstacle in the penance practised by this one who, displacing me from my position, desires to enjoy (my) kingdom.' Having received this message, we two went from the

presence of Indra to Godāvarī where the sage stayed. Along with slender-bodied women, sweet and indistinct music was commenced there with deep-sounding tabors and sweet-sounding lutes. We had large buttocks, stout and large breasts, lotus-like smiling faces, and a little curly hair, shoulders on which jewelled rings were seen, eyes bright like lotuses. Our waists were slim, we had round thighs, our steps were even. Following tunes, rhythm and time, we danced; we showed our full gait conforming to the emotion. When we two danced the circle of the quarters (i.e. all the quarters) roared after first mildly starting and then increasing (the sound). Then due to the speed of the movement of our bodies there was a fragrant and very cold breeze. With the ends of our upper garments slightly blown, we manifested our breasts. Our excessive movement intensified (the passion of) love. It produced anger in the sage whose mind was unchanged. Then throwing water with his hand, he angrily cursed us: 'On the bank of Gaṅgā turn into badari-trees.' (We), being polite (said to him): 'Due to our being dependent, we acted badly. Pardon us for that behaviour.' (Thus) the sage was later propitiated. Then he, of a pious mind, brought about (our) freedom from the curse. The sage (said): 'It would last till the arrival of Bharata. You will be born among the mortals, and will have the recollection of former existences; on his having come near you, and on his remembering the fourth chapter (of the Gītā), you shall have acquittal.' We salute you, not only because you freed us from the curse but also from this dreadful worldly existence."

The lord said:

38. The sage thus addressed and honoured by them was pleased, and went as he had come. The two girls would always recite the fourth chapter.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYNINE

*The Fifth Chapter: The Story of Piṅgala**The lord said:*

1-17a. O goddess, I shall now narrate in brief the importance of the fifth chapter, respected by the world. O dear one, listen attentively. There was a brāhmaṇa named Piṅgala, born in the city of Purukutsa in the Bhadra country. He was born in a pure family of brāhmaṇas, expounders of the Vedas. Having abandoned (the study of) holy texts proper for his family and the Vedas, he took to instrumental music, song, dance etc. and played upon a tabor etc. Having exerted himself in (mastering) singing, dancing and instrumental music, he obtained great fame and entered the king's house. (Thus) formerly he stayed with the king. He approached others' wives and enjoyed them with an undivided mind. Then he, puffed up with pride and unrestrained, always told him in private the weak points of others. His wife was Aruṇā by name, who was born in a mean family. She moving with a lover and looking for (paramours), took him to be a hindrance, and in her house at night she killed him by cutting off his head and buried him in the ground. Deprived of his life, he went to Yama's abode. Having lived in invincible hells, he was born as a vulture in a solitary forest. She too, casting her body due to fistula of the pudendum went to dreadful hells, and was born as a female parrot in that forest. The vulture remembering his former enmity, tore her wandering here and there with a desire to take grains, with his sharp talons. Then the vulture ran after the female parrot falling into a human skull, and he too was killed by bird-catchers. His wife (i.e. the female parrot) died there in the water in the human skull. The very cruel vulture having gone there, got drowned into that only. The two, taken by Yama's servants, went to the world of the manes. The two, entertaining fear, remembered the wicked deeds formerly done by them. Then Yama noticed their censurable deeds, and suddenly also noticed their great auspicious deed in bathing in it (i.e. in the human skull) and dying. Then he permitted the two to go to their

desired world; though their minds were unassailable, they were amazed at remembering their own sins.

17b-24. Approaching and bowing they said to Yama: “We have collected censurable sins before. (Then) what is the cause for our (going to the) desired worlds? (Please) tell it to us.” Thus addressed by them, Yama then spoke these words to them: “On the bank of Gaṅgā there lived an excellent brāhmaṇa Baṭu by name. He was alone, without the feeling of mineness, tranquil, free from attachment and jealousy. He always repeated the fifth chapter of the Gītā. With his soul purified due to that religious merit, he, though a sinner, realised the eternal Brahman on hearing it after he cast his body. His soul, whose body was purified by the Gītā, was purified. Having reached that water in his skull, you two became pure. Therefore, you go to the worlds desired by you who are purified by the fifth chapter of the Gītā.” Thus advised by him, the impartial one, they got into a divine car and went to the position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY

The Sixth Chapter: The Story of Raikya

The lord said:

1-20. O you of an excellent face, I shall tell you the importance of the sixth chapter, hearing which men have salvation on hand. On the bank of Godāvarī there is a great city Pratiṣṭhāna where, O you of smiling eyes, I, named Pippaleśa, dwell. There swans remove the fatigue of the self-controlled ones with cold sprays from the cavities in their wings on the bank of Godāvarī. The Godāvarī-water made fragrant with the pollen from the cups of throbbing lotuses is praiseworthy as it makes people free from old age. Fie upon the nectar of the lord of herbs (i.e. the Moon), destroying sins! There the best sages touch the faces of the Mahārāṣṭra women bathing (in Godāvarī), misunderstanding them to be fully bloomed lotuses. There the sporting Mahārāṣṭra beauties snatch (by surpassing) the humming of the

bees the ascetics' minds also. There the Moon everyday wanes on seeing the face of a woman sporting on the top of a very high mansion. The sloping roof of a very high mansion is touched by sages and gandharvas with rays of great gems unsteady due to breezes (blowing) over dūrvā and sandal(?). In it the horses of the Sun's chariot when he is going, are free from fatigue due to the breezes from the banners that are tossed. In it the Malaya mountain appears to be left with stones, when the hosts of merchants collected innumerable (pieces of) sandal wood. In it even pearls are seen to be accumulated everywhere like the bunches of the laughter of the city-deity. There lived a king named Jñānaśruti. When he, of a strong lustre, lifted the earth like a gem, even Śeṣa, resembling the Sun in radiance, was (just) a snake in general (*obscure*). The desire-yielding trees were as it were darkened through shame on seeing his matchless generosity (manifested) by the continual smoke of the sacrifices. Gods greedy of eating the sacrificial oblations did not at all leave the city of Pratiṣṭhāna. Clouds, constantly well-nourished by the streams of water used for gifts and the moonlight of his valour and the smoke of sacrifices offered by him, showered in time. Calamities did not find even the smallest place anywhere. Right courses prevailed when he ruled the earth. He everyday looked upon wells, tanks and lakes as the treasures remaining in the heart of the earth. His palace shone with white banners, like the Himālaya mountain with the multitude of the ripples of Gaṅgā. The residents of heaven (i.e. the gods) pleased with his gifts, austerities, sacrifices, protection of his subjects, came (there) to give him a boon.

21-39. Then, tossing their masses of wings, divine female and male swans, white like lotus-stalks, went out along the path in the atmosphere. Two or three of them, led by Bhadrāśva, going quickly, and talking to one another, speedily moved ahead. All of them said together to them moving ahead speedily: "Why do you go speedily? Why do you remain ahead? Along this difficult path we should go together. Do you not see very clearly before you a mass of lustre, shining brightly of king Jñānaśruti, of a virtuous form? Hearing these words of those that lagged behind the swans that were ahead laughed and contemptuously uttered (these) words loudly: "Is the lustre of this

king Jñānaśruti more severe than the dreadful lustre of Raikya, the teacher of the Vedas?" King Jñānaśruti, comfortably seated on the top of his very lofty mansion, heard these words of the swans. Then, he, full of amazement, called his charioteer, and the noble one ordered him: "Bring Raikya". The charioteer, Maha by name, having understood (these) words of the king containing nectar, manifesting joy, went out to the city Vārāṇasī, giving salvation, where god Viśveśvara, the lord of the world and the preceptor dwells. Then to the holy place called Gayā where god Gadādhara, of blooming eyes, lives to emancipate all people. Then near Śiva. Having moved many times to all holy places he went to (the holy place) Kedāra destroying sins, seeing which (even) once mortals undoubtedly are released. Enjoying desired pleasures they are freed from great sins. Then he went to the Gauḍa country where Puruṣottama dwells, by just seeing whom men go to heaven. From there he went to the city of Dvārāvati, giving salvation, where Kṛṣṇa, dear to Rukmiṇī, lived. A mortal, having bathed at the holy place of Gomatī and having seen the five Kṛṣṇas (there), obtains salvation after having enjoyed pleasures as desired. Then the wise one having reached the sea and seen Somanātha, the god giving enjoyments and salvation, proceeded further. He reached the city of Avantikā giving pleasures and salvation, where Mahākāla Śaṅkara dwells happily sporting with Umā. Then having reached Oṃkāra, giving happiness and granting enjoyment and salvation on the bank of Narmadā, he quickly set out from there.

40-52. Then he travelled to the city named Aśvamedhakara where Lakṣmī's lord Viṣṇu, holder of Śārṅga, actually lives. Then he reached in Viṣṇugayā a tank called Loṇāra, having bathed where and drunk (water of which) a man is released from bondage. Then he went to (a city) named Kolhāpura in Rudragayā, where revered Lakṣmī, giving (i.e. causing) devotion, dwells. A man having bathed in Pañcanadī and seen Lakṣmī, enjoys pleasures as desired, and also obtains devotion. Then having visited the city named Amalagiri, and having seen Somanātha who dwells after mounting on (i.e. on the top of) Nandikeśvara, who is auspicious, has four hands, and is ready to give gifts, he would undoubtedly have salvation. Then he saw, on the bank of

Tuṅgabhadrā, Harihara, whose arms fall on the globe of the earth in every yuga. All men seeing the charming Harihara-body, enjoy pleasures according to their desire and are freed from bondage. Having remained in heaven for a hundred kalpas and being free from the bondage of the worldly existence, they see the mighty lord of the worlds, seeing whom men never see hell. Having stayed in heaven for a hundred kalpas and being free from the desire for worldly existence, they obtain salvation. No doubt should be raised about this. Then a man should reach Śrīśaila resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas, where Girijā's lover (i.e. Śiva) called Mallinātha (lives) to draw out all people from the ocean of worldly existence. Having lived in heaven for a hundred kalpas and being free from the bondage of worldly existence, they obtain salvation. No doubt should be raised about this.

53-67. Then he reached Śrīśaila resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas, where Girijā's lover named Mallinātha (lives) to draw out all people from the ocean of this worldly existence and at every opportune time shows his own lustre. Afflictions and tortures in hell of those men who see or even remember him, keep away. There is no doubt that men free from the bondage of the mundane existence enjoy happiness in heaven and obtain salvation. Here Rāma with his younger brother and accompanied by Sītā (dwells). Having bathed and drunk (water) there a man is certainly free from hell. Men having enjoyed happiness in heaven for crores of kalpas, men freed from the path of worldly existence undoubtedly go to salvation. Then returning from there, he came, seeing on the bank of Bhīmarathī the two-armed god Viṭṭhala, giving enjoyments and salvation, (to the place) where the source of Godāvarī, the great Brahmagiri, is situated. By reaching Gautamālaya where the three-eyed Śiva dwells and after bathing and drinking (water) there where there is river Godāvarī between Aruṇa and Varuṇa, (sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa perishes. Men, seeing Brahmagiri, rich in many holy places, obtain salvation only (after) being freed from the agony of the worldly existence. Then the charioteer, delighted by seeing holy places on both the banks of Gautamī, went to Mathurā, destroyer of sins. There gods and men worship the self-born god. It is the first great place of the lord, which gives

salvation. It is the birth-place of the lord of the three worlds, and is well-known to the Vedas and holy texts. It is resorted to by many hosts of gods and of brāhmaṇa sages. It is charming due to the bank of Kālindī; has the form and lustre of the crescent moon; being full of the residence of all holy places it is delightfully beautiful. It is known as Govardhanagiri, Dviṣadvana, and is covered by auspicious trees and creepers. It is very holy. It has the essence of the holy texts resting (there).

68-86. Then to the north he saw the city of Kāśmīra, after seeing on all sides the holy place Kururkṣetra, foremost in piety, where the lines of houses white like conches and touching the sky, have become as it were the fringes of the distinct laughter of Śiva. It is covered with golden pitchers of the garlands of devotion and grace which are as it were golden lotuses fallen from the divine river due to wind. There the banners of blue straps like rings of moss on the tops of mansions appear like the strings of pearls of the divine river. There, resorting to Kāśmīra, Sarasvatī always lives. Otherwise, how does she simultaneously write the (entire) Vedic literature? These swans that are dull due to intoxication, that have lotus-stalks in their beaks and that are the vehicles of Sarasvatī, resting there for a long time, are moving. There the swans sent by Brahmā to know a special art, shone like stars and went on all sides. The land-growing lotuses, pleasing to the touch by hand, are seen (to be used) by the enemy of the demons for the bed of the beautiful lady. There due to the statements (*upanyāsaiḥ*?) of the brāhmaṇas distinct hearing was not possible. Even a dumb man, fresh in talk, had a mass of joyous words (*obscure*). There the sky pervaded by the smoke of sacrifices, though washed by clouds, did not give up its darkness. There the place of the nectar dropped due to the great lustre of the sacrifices was seen to be distinguished by its mark. There boys resorting to the vicinity of the preceptor recite all arts by themselves due to the practice right from their birth. There the 'hum' sound of the bracelets of the brāhmaṇa wives and the humming of the wandering bees got confused. There the breeze touching again and again the cheeks of the brāhmaṇa wives, blows gently as it were through the fear of a curse. There, this god Śiva called Māṇikyeśvara, lives to give boons to men day by day. Maṇikeśa, having conquered kings,

worshipped and honoured him. Since then he took the name Māṇikyeśvara, as he was well worshipped with many majestic rubies by the Kāśmīra-king, desirous of conquest of the world. The charioteer saw at his door Raikya seated on a cart and enjoying shade and scratching his limbs. Having recognised him by the respective marks told by the king, the charioteer quickly bowed down to him and after having bowed down spoke to him.

The charioteer said:

87-98. O brāhmaṇa, in which (family are you born)? What is your name? You are constantly self-willed. Why are you resting here? What do you desire to do?

Hearing these words of him, he, full of great joy, remembered the charioteer, and said: "My desires are fulfilled. But there must be (something) as you, offering great adoration to me, are (trying to) know my mood." Taking (i.e. understanding) respectfully the intention of Raikya remaining in his mind, the charioteer slowly set out to the place where the king was. Then the charioteer with his arms folded and delighted to see his master, bowed down, and told the king the account as it took place. Then hearing his words, the king with his eyes smiling (i.e. blooming) with wonder, had a strong desire to honour Raikya. Taking a cart to which a pair of female mules was yoked, a necklace, silken garments and a thousand cows, he went to the Kāśmīra country where the meditating saint lived. Offering those (articles) to him, the king fell (prostrate) like a staff on the ground after bending with great devotion. Raikya was angry with the king. (He said:) "O bad king, O śūdra, do you not know my conduct? Take (back) this cart; lift it to which female mules are yoked; so also (take back) the garments, pearl-necklaces and the milch cows." The king, thus ordered, was afraid of Raikya. Then the king, afraid of a curse, devoutly seized the pair of his lotus-like feet, and himself said, "O brāhmaṇa, favour me."

The king said:

99. O revered one, wherefrom is this very wonderful greatness of you? Being pleased, O illustrious one, tell me accurately.

Raikya said:

100-104. O king, everyday I mutter the sixth chapter of the Gītā. Therefore, I have a heap of lustre, difficult to be borne even by gods.

Having carefully learnt from Raikya the sixth chapter of the Gītā, the wise king Jñānaśruti then suddenly became free. Raikya too, muttering near Māṇikyeśvara the sixth chapter giving salvation, obtained happiness. Gods also, who had come there, after having disguised themselves as swans for (getting) gifts, were amazed, and went out at their free will. There is no doubt that a man who constantly mutters this chapter only goes to Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYONE

The Seventh Chapter: The Story of Śaṅkukarṇa

The lord said:

1-20. I shall tell you the greatness of the seventh chapter, having heard which the ears are filled with a flood of nectar. There was a city Pāṭaliputra by name, difficult of access, having high town-gates. A brāhmaṇa Śaṅkukarṇa Dayārṇava by name lived in it. Resorting to the profession of a vaiśya he earned much wealth. He did not gratify manes, did not worship gods. Intent on earning wealth, he fed kings. Once for auspiciousness, the fourth marriage started in another house along with his sons and kinsmen(?). On a night fit for religious acts a serpent having come from somewhere bit the forearm of him who was asleep. He who was just bitten, could not be cured with gems, spells or herbs, and in a few moments died. Covering his body with nimba leaves and stalks and putting it on a large bough of a tree the sons came home. Then after a long time he was born as a serpent. With his mind fixed on the desires (of the former birth), he remembered his former birth. He had thought: 'Having deceived these sons, I shall cover (i.e. bury) this wealth, a crore in amount, where my (other) wealth is placed.' Then, full

of great faith, the sons of the brāhmaṇa made an offering to Nārāyaṇa. Once, the father, troubled by the birth as a serpent, came in the dream of his sons, and told them his intention. Then they, greatly deluded by amazement got up in the morning, and being unrestrained, told each other the account. One of them, due to his love for his father, desired to emancipate him. The other son through greed for the wealth, desired to kill the serpent. The other (i.e. the third) son, with his mind fascinated by the affection for his father, (thought:) 'Maybe he is (turned) into a serpent'. Thinking like this, he simply lamented. But the middle son, deceiving his two brothers, got up under some pretext and went to his own house. Then he gently called his virtuous wife. With a spade in his hand he went where his father (turned into) a serpent was. He who was not told about (the place of) the wealth, decided accurately about it through (certain) marks. Through greed, he came to that place to strike (down) the anthill. He made his wife take out the earth, and he himself dug the ground. From the anthill that was being dug, a very fierce serpent came out. Then the serpent with mouthfuls of poison and hissing, told him (these) words:

The serpent said:

21. Who are you? Why have you come (here)? Why are you digging the hole? O, fool, who has sent you? Tell that to me.

The son said:

22. I am your son, named Śiva. I have a strong desire to take gold. Being very much amazed by the dream I had at night, I have come (here).

Śiva said:*

23. Having heard these words of the son, censured by the world, the serpent, laughing loudly, started speaking clearly:

The serpent said:

24. If you are (my) son, quickly free me who am born as a serpent for (the preservation of) the deposit of the former birth, from bondage.

*I.e. Lord Śiva.

The son said:

25. O father, tell me how you can be freed, since leaving the entire world, I have come (here) at night.

The father said:

26-34. O son, except the seventh chapter of the Gītā, which is full of nectar, and which is the cause of the removal of the old age, death and agony of a living being, the holy places, gifts, austerities, sacrifices are not at all capable of releasing me. O son, feed devoutly a brāhmaṇa studying the seventh chapter on the day of a śrāddha offered to me. Due to that I shall be undoubtedly released. O son, also feed other brāhmaṇas proficient in the Vedic learning according to your capacity and with great devotion.

Having heard these words of the father turned into a serpent, all the sons did as he had told (them, and even) more than that. Then that wealthy Śaṅkukarṇa, having cast off the serpentine body, divided (the wealth) among his sons, and obtained a divine body. All the sons, of a good behaviour, were delighted at the wealth which their father gave after dividing it and which amounted a crore. They, of pious minds, constructed wells, tanks, lakes, performed sacrifices to please the god, so also opened free boardings. Then, muttering the seventh chapter, they with their eyes fixed on final bliss, obtained release, knowing the eighth one (also) the most desired one.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYTWO

The Eighth Chapter: Bhāvaśarman's Story

Śiva said:

1-6. O Pārvatī, listen. I shall tell you the greatness of the eighth chapter, by merely listening to which you will get great joy. A city named Āmardaka is well-known in the southern

country. There was a brāhmaṇa named Bhāvaśarman, the husband of a courtesan. He, very fierce, ate flesh, drank liquor, stole the wealth of the good, dallied with others' wives, had a strong desire for hunting, carried out his strong desire. Drinking the nectar-like juice of tālī-fruit up to his throat (i.e. excessively), he was very much troubled by indigestion. The sinful one died (in due course) of time, and became a great tāla tree. A couple turned into brāhmaṇa-ghosts, lived there resorting to its shadow, dense and very cold.

The goddess said:

7. Tell me, O god, what was their caste? What was their nature? What was their profession? Due to what deed were they turned into brāhmaṇa-ghosts?

Śiva said:

8-17. There was a brāhmaṇa, Kuśivala by name, who knew the essential nature of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, who was proficient in all holy texts, and whose conduct was good. His wife, named Kumati, was of a wicked mind. He along with his wife, was very greedy and accepted great gifts like a buffalo, a Kālapuruṣa(?), horses etc., day after day; (but) he did not give (even) a chowrie to brāhmaṇas. As time passed, the two evil spirits, of the form of brāhmaṇa-ghosts, with their bodies oppressed by hunger and thirst, roamed over this earth. They then rested after having come to the root of the palm tree. "How will this great agony of ours go away? When will there be freedom from this stock of brāhmaṇa-ghosts?" Thus asked by the brāhmaṇa female, the brāhmaṇa (male) spoke (to her): "How can we be free from this calamity without instruction in the knowledge of the supreme spirit, metaphysical consideration, and the knowledge of the manner in which a deed is done."

The wife said:

O best man, what is that Brahman; what is metaphysics? What is an act?*

Listen to the wonder that took place, when his wife spoke

*Cp. BG VIII. 1a: किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।

this much. That tree listening to half a verse from the eighth chapter gave up its form of the palm-tree and became an excellent brāhmaṇa. With his mind suddenly shaken by knowledge, he was free from the garb of sins. The couple became free due to that greatness (of the Gītā).

18-25. When these words luckily went out of his mouth, then from the atmosphere an aeroplane appeared, which had small bells tinkling, which was auspicious, which was adorned with faces resembling the orb of the moon, of celestial damsels, which was crowded with bees hovering round the lotuses in the form of the faces of the celestial nymphs, which was adorned with chowries white like the foam on the shore of the Milky Ocean being churned, and charming like the ripples of Gaṅgā, lovely with the singing gandharvas, and with hundreds of young divine damsels dancing. The couple got into the divine aeroplane and went to heaven. The entire occurrence of this place was amazing. Then the wise one wrote this half verse carefully. He went to the city named Vārāṇasī, giving salvation, seeking to propitiate Viṣṇu, god of gods. The generous-minded one started to practise a great penance there. In the meanwhile, (Lakṣmī) the daughter of the Milky Ocean, after joining her hands, asked Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, and the god of gods: "How is it that you are wakeful after having abandoned sleep? Tell me".

The lord said:

26-28. An intelligent brāhmaṇa named Bhāvaśarman, full of a flood of devotion, is seriously practising penance on the bank of Gaṅgā at Kāśī. With his senses controlled, he is muttering half the verse from the eighth chapter of the Gītā. O goddess, due to that penance I am very much pleased. Thinking for a long time desiring to give a fruit like (i.e. suitable to) his penance, I am now wakeful (like this).

Pārvatī said:

29. O lord, if Viṣṇu, though pleased, became thoughtful, what fruit did Bhāvaśarman, the devotee of Viṣṇu, get?

Śrī Mahādeva said:

30-32. Then that best brāhmaṇa, Bhāvaśarman, having received the grace of (Viṣṇu) the enemy of Mura, got endless happiness. Those born in his family who had formerly experienced torture, also obtained the (highest) position due to his acts. O you fawn-eyed one, I have told a little about the greatness of the eighth chapter. It should be always noted.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYTHREE

The Ninth Chapter: A Goat's Story

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-8. Hereafter I shall carefully explain (this importance of) the ninth chapter. Being steady (i.e. attentive) listen to it, O daughter of the Himālaya Mountain. On the bank of Narmadā, there was a city named Māhiṣmatī. There lived an auspicious brāhmaṇa named Mādhava, who knew the true nature of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, who every time loved the guests. The pure-minded one, having earned much money by means of his learning only, some time commenced to perform a great sacrifice. He brought a goat, for killing him at the sacrifice after worshipping his body. He (the goat), laughing loudly, uttered (these) words: "What is the use of these many sacrifices, though performed in the proper manner, (but) having perishable fruits, and causing birth, old age and death? O brāhmaṇa, see my condition like this." Men staying in the pavilion, were amazed at hearing these words of the goat, that greatly excited curiosity. Then the brāhmaṇa, with his eyes motionless, saluting him devoutly and with the palms of his hands joined, respectfully asked the goat:

The brāhmaṇa said:

9. Which caste do you belong to? What is your nature? What is your mode of life? Tell (me that). Due to what act (of yours) you obtained the birth as a goat?

The goat said:

10-24. Formerly I was (born) in a very pure family of brāhmaṇas. I was proficient in the Vedic lore and offered hosts of sacrifices. Once my wife, modest with devotion to Caṇḍikā, asked for a goat from me for appeasing the disease of (our) son. Then when the goat was being killed in the pavilion of Caṇḍikā, the goat's mother, expounder of the Vedas, cursed me: "O mean brāhmaṇa, O you who are performing a sacrifice that is not approved by the holy texts, since you are killing my innocent son, you will get the stock of (i.e. will be born as) a goat." Then, O best brāhmaṇa, I, after dying after (some) time, was born as a goat, after having crossed (i.e. gone through) torment and torture of many kinds of existences. Even though I had gone to the stock of (i.e. was born as) a beast, I had (retained) the recollection of (former) births.

The brāhmaṇa said:

My mind is curious, is intent on hearing about your birth due to curiosity. Tell all (about) that to all these brāhmaṇas.

The goat said:

Some time I was (born as) a monkey. Children saw me dancing in every courtyard due to instruction given to me by a juggler. Seeing the generous sons, and my wife also, I became averse to any act and gave up the going round in dancing. Then the juggler, with his eyes red due to anger, severely beat me with round sticks, difficult to bear. Then I bleeding continuously, fainted. Smelling at food and water, I died. Then I became a dog wandering in every house. I, eating food that was abandoned and that was left after eating, filled my belly on the way. Sometime I entered the kitchen of my own house. Being hungry, I started eating the boiled rice placed in a plate. I smelt the ground, looked into the ten directions slowly and through fear. Being afraid of the sound of people, I licked my side. Then my sons came and saw me at some time. And my old wife beat me with clubs etc. Then, I, with my waist broken and discharging much blood fled.

25-33. Overcome with swoon, I somehow went out of the house. In course of time my limbs were stinking with pus and

full of insects. Then I obtained the state of (i.e. was born as) a horse. O learned man, I became a horse in the house of a distiller and died in course of time. Some time he brought me, with my teeth falling due to old age, in a square crowded with people, for sale. My wife intent on going on a pilgrimage to Dvārakā, trying to buy me for a small price, bought me and tied me, the old one, with a rope, and mounting on me along with her two or three sons, started going. Slowly I got plunged into deep mud on the bank of a lake. There I, with my neck turned, and falling into the mud, was again and again being beaten by (my) sons having clubs and stones in their hands. Being repeatedly raised I died. Then having decided that I was dead, the sons who gave up their exertion, wailed, and having surrounded their helpless mother, they went home. Then having died there I went to the stock of (i.e. was born as) a goat. I passed through many stocks, low and high, giving torment and agony.

The brāhmaṇa said:

34. O great goat, what is the use of this collection of miseries everyday? (Tell me) properly and uprightly, by what I would have endless happiness.

The goat said:

35-48. I shall, O brāhmaṇa, tell another wonder comfortably to you who are asking me, if you have curiosity. There was a city named Kurukṣetra, giving salvation. There lived king Candraśarman of the solar dynasty. At the time of the solar eclipse he, endowed with great faith, started giving gift of Kālapuruṣa. Having called a brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, he went with his priest to bathe with auspicious holy water. Then Kālapuruṣa, laughing, said: "O brāhmaṇa, at the time of the solar eclipse, at this holy place called Kurukṣetra, others do not accept anything. How do you desire to receive a gift? Knowing that all this certainly causes sin, how do you proceed to do it with a mind blinded by greed of wealth?" Having heard these words of him, causing wonder to the world the brāhmaṇa said: "What is the use of this fear of

great gift? I do know the means properly to cross the unfathomable ocean of the sin due to a great gift like this.” Then the king, having bathed, having put on two garments, being pure, pleased in mind, having put on white flowers and having anointed his body, having held the hand of the priest, being served by persons proper for the occasion, came (there). The king, having come there, gave the brāhmaṇa, Kālapuruṣa, according to the proper rite. Having pierced the heart of the Kālapuruṣa, a sinful cāṇḍāla, with red eyes, of a cruel appearance went out. So also, at the joy due to interest in censuring others, a female cāṇḍālikā, viz. Censure, came to the side of the brāhmaṇa whose death was brought near.

49-60. This couple of the cāṇḍālas of ruddy eyes, going out, forcibly moved into the body of the brāhmaṇa. While the king was looking on, the brāhmaṇa stood muttering the ninth chapter of the Gītā in his mind, trembling a little and remaining silent like the ocean with Viṣṇu sleeping inside trembling due to the movements of the wind. Then the cāṇḍāla-couple that was near the brāhmaṇa, was troubled by Viṣṇu’s (attendants) appearing due to (the recitation of) the letters of the Gītā, and with its efforts rendered futile, and (deciding to) flee, went away. The king who actually noticed the happening like this, with his eyes smiling (i.e. dilated) due to wonder, asked the brāhmaṇa: “How—by muttering what hymn, or remembering what god—did you go over this calamity? Who was that man? Who was that woman? How did they approach (you)? How were they appeased? O brāhmaṇa tell it to me.”

The brāhmaṇa said:

I know the couple: Strong sin had assumed the form of the (male) cāṇḍāla. Censure took the form of the female cāṇḍāla. I remembered the series of the verses of the ninth chapter of the Gītā. O king, know that all this is its virtue. O king, everyday I mutter the ninth chapter of the Gītā. Due to that the calamities caused by my accepting bad gifts were overcome by me. The king learnt the ninth chapter from the brāhmaṇa. Both obtained highest joy.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYFOUR

*The Tenth Chapter : A Swan's Story**The goddess said:*

1-5a. O you omniscient one, the life of all, the lord of all, the master of speech, O Śiva, I am lucky since you, respectable and visible, have explained this auspicious grandeur of the ninth chapter, the honey, full of many wonderful and sweet accounts. O lord of gods, I, hearing it, was not content. O Śiva, my desire to hear it is not dulled. (On the contrary) it increases. My life is listening to the Gītā, O you ocean of greatness. Even in that (Gītā) the sages declare the tenth chapter to be the principal. Tell me an account relating to that great chapter.

Śiva said:

5b-17. O beautiful one, listen to this ladder to the inaccessible heaven difficult to get. It is, as it were, the limit of grandeurs, highly purifying account. In the city of Kāśī, there was a brāhmaṇa devoted to pious fame. His mind was tranquil, free from mischief, cruelty and violence. With his senses controlled, he was always engaged in bliss. He was known as Dhīradhī, and was devoted to me like Nandin. He had crossed the ocean of the Vedas, and was proficient in the meaning of all holy texts. Once while he, subservient (i.e. given) to meditation, with his mind plunged in (the thought of) the internal soul, having the eyes of (i.e. perceiving) the Supreme Spirit, was going, I, through affection, ran, and gave support to his hand, causing wonder. The absent-minded one, having sipped water, having fixed his eyes full of great joy on the tip of his nose, remained, with his senses as it were sleepy. When he, of long (broad) eyes, slept for a while, without fear, at night, using as a pillow the large threshold of the door, O broad-eyed one, Bhṛṅgīrīṭi, saluting my lotus-like feet, asked me: "Due to which rite has he secured your sight? What (kind of) penance has this noble one practised, what oblations has he made, what (hymns) has he muttered, that the god supports his hand at every step? Why is he not able to go out of this city? If, by chance, he crosses the boundary of Kāśī, he does not see even these people that are by his

side. I wish to know the cause of this—(I wish to hear) the words of my master. If I deserve to be favoured then tell me what is proper.” Hearing this question of Bhṛṅgiriṭi, I said:

18-26. Once I was in the Punnāga forest which was near Kailāsa, the forest which was full of the hosts of the beautiful divine women making sounds, in which the quarters were joyful with the multitudes of the cooings of the cuckoos, which was full of the notes of (birds) like the eagle and the cātaka, which was bristling with the drops shining on the rotating, wooden machine for raising water, which was full of the bulbs of the plantain trees (growing) on the sides of the drains, which was full of musk-deer, which was stupefied with the sounds of kin-naras, which was at places resorted to by deer with the outer corners of their eyes dull due to rumination, which was full of parrots, where the swans showed their cleverness among them, which was stirred by the thick wind, with joyful sounds, in which the bees were intoxicated by the rum exuding from the Mādhavī flowers, which was full of the fragrance of the clusters of blooming trivalī flowers, in which the bees were slow due to the intoxication caused by the fragrance of blooming bakula flowers, in which the region of the earth was washed with the nectar oozing from the moon. Having sat on a seat I remained there for a while. The wind, by way of the churning sticks in the form of terrific branches breaking due to friction, blew under the pretext of a trembling mountain. Then there was a great sound which resounded at the sides of the valley.

27-38. Then from the cave of the sky a bird descended. He was like the autumnal cloud, and was as it were the mass of collyrium. He was as it were the mass of darkness, or a mountain with its wings cut off. Having rested on the earth, the bird saluted me. Having brought a fresh flower, he put it at my feet. Then the bird uttered (my) praise with distinct words: “Victory to you, O god, O Brahman, O joy, O ocean of nectar, O lord of the world, O billow of the continuous contact with good feelings, O you having infinite bodies, O you who are free from the three kinds of dirt due to your thought full of the feeling of uniqueness, O you who have conquered your senses, O you who are dependent, O you, whose body can be secured (only) by means of concentration, O you free from adjuncts,

O you who are free, O formless one, O pure one, O limitless one, O you free from egotism, O you having no obstruction, O you qualityless one, O you protector of those who have submitted themselves to you, O you with skilful lotus-like feet, O you of a terrible garland, O you great tiger, O you who burnt Cupid with flames, O you who pierced the lord of demons with an axe, O you great lord, O you who wiped the sindūra on the forehead of the wife of Tripura, O you who applied excellent saffron to the lotus-like breasts of Kātyāyanī, salutation to (you), who are away from proofs, to (you) of the form of great intellect, to (you) the lord of life, to (you) of the form of the three worlds. I salute your lotus-like feet which are touched by the excellent meditating saints and which are wonderful in going to the other end of the unlimited ocean of the worldly existence. Even the lord of speech (i.e. Bṛhaspati) is not able to praise you. Even (Śeṣa), the lord of serpents, does not have the skill in describing you, O great god; then what to say of me, a bird, with a small intelligence?"

39-54a. Having heard this praise made by the bird, I said to him: "O bird, who are you, wherefrom do you come? Your body is like that of a swan, and your colour is like that of a crow. Tell me for what purpose you have come here." The bird, the best among speakers, thus asked by me, with his neck slightly bent in respect spoke with a soft voice: "O lord of gods, O Dhūrjāṭī, know me to be Brahmā's swan. (Know) due to which this blackness has recently come up, O lord. O you omniscient one, listen to what is said (in reply to) what is asked by you. When I came to the earth from the Mānasa lake, I landed into a danger. Near the Saurāṣṭra city, I, having taken mouthfuls of lotus-stalks, white like the young crescent moon, from a lake where the lotuses were blooming, resorted to my strength and quickly went into the sky. Then from the sky I suddenly fell on the ground. Then with my mind covered with swoon, with my senses fully weakened, with my body trembling, I, being touched by cool breezes, regained consciousness. I did not ascertain the cause of my fall. 'Oh, what has this come? How had I a fall today due to which I have this blackness on my body, white like perfect camphor?' Thus when I, full of wonder, thought (to myself), I heard, from the lotus, words like these: 'O swan, get

up; I shall tell you the cause of your fall and blackness.' Then I got up and came to the middle of the lake. I saw a charming lotus-plant, having five lotuses. I commenced asking (it) the cause of (my) blackness and fall. Then I saw, in the sky, six myriad men who were dark like clouds, who had covered themselves with gold-coloured garments, who had four arms (each), the weapons (of each) of whom were a mace, a conch, a disc and a lotus, who were variegated with crowns, necklaces, armlets and ear-rings. Having saluted and gone round, keeping it to my right, the lotus-plant, I asked her everything beginning with my fall''.

The lotus plant said:

54b-63a. O swan, you moved in the sky passing over me. Due to that sin you have fallen on the ground. O best bird, due to that only blackness is seen on your body. Sixty thousand bees, smelling the fragrance, produced by the middle lotus that was talking on seeing you falling with its mind full of compassion, went to heaven. Those whom you saw having a lustre like that of a blue lotus, were the sons of a sage in the seventh existence that has passed. On the bank of this very lake, they practised a very severe penance. Sometime, a beautiful lady, having breasts like clusters of campaka-flowers, with the outer corners of her eyes unsteady and charming due to wavy hair, with the brightness of her smile being kissed by the moonlight released from the pearl of her nose, having put the lute between her breasts, sang in the forest. Hearing the sound of her who was singing, the brāhmaṇas, like deer, went to her, and saw her simultaneously. They said to one another: "I saw her (first), she is mine." Then a pugilistic encounter took place among the brothers. With their chests pounded with one another's fists, they died.

63b-82. Having enjoyed various fearful hells, they became cranes on the earth. Then they killed wild beasts and were burnt by wild fire. Then being born as cāṇḍālas they killed travellers on the way. Having drunk poisonous water in the forest, they went to Yama's abode. One by one they got the stock of an ass, a camel, a monkey, and a cat. Then they be-

came bees, and are (now) in the lake. Today having smelt my fragrance they have gone to the position of Viṣṇu. O best bird, listen, I shall tell you (that) by which there is grandeur in me. In the third birth that has passed (from this birth), I was a daughter of a brāhmaṇa named Sarojavadana. I was devoted only to fidelity, and was engaged in serving the elders. Once, while I was teaching a sārīkā, there was a delay. My husband, who got angry, cursed me: “O sinful one, be a sārīkā.” After death I got sārīkāhood (i.e. was born as a sārīkā), (but) due to the propitiousness of my fidelity, a girl in the sages’ house nourished me. It is well-known that the tenth chapter (of the Gītā) is power(-ful). The brāhmaṇa recited it in the morning; I listened to it removing sin. O bird, after (some) time, I cast the body of the sārīkā, and became, due to the greatness of the tenth chapter, a celestial nymph in heaven. I was known as Padmavati; and was the dear friend of Lakṣmī. Once when I was going in an aeroplane through the sky, I saw this charming lake containing spotless lotuses. After descending, when I started sporting in its water, Durvāsas came (there) and saw me without clothes. Then I myself took up this form of a lotus plant. I have five lotuses, two lotuses with my two feet (turned into them), two lotuses with my hands (turned into them) and the fifth lotus with my face (turned into that). The lord of sages looked at me with eyes blazing with anger. “O sinful one, with this form only stay for a hundred years.” Giving a curse like this, he vanished in a moment. Due to the greatness of the tenth chapter my (power of) speech has not vanished. By just going over me, you fell on the ground. O best bird, today, when you remain (by me) my curse will cease. Listen to the best chapter recited by me; by just hearing which you will be free from the curse today only.

Saying like this, she recited the tenth chapter in a soft voice. Having heard it, and having taken the lotus given by her, I offered it, the best lotus of the lotus plant, to you.

Speaking like this, he cast his body. It was wonderful.

Bhrṅgiriṭi said:

83-99. Who was he in his former birth? How did he be-

come Brahmā's swan? With what intention did he cast his body in front of you?

Hearing these words of Bhṛṅgiriṭi, I said to him: "He was born in the former birth in a brāhmaṇa's house. He was well known as Sutapas, was a celibate and had his senses controlled. Living in his preceptor's house, he studied the Vedas everyday. He devoutly and properly served his preceptor. (Once) he while asleep touched, with his foot, his preceptor who was asleep. Due to that sin he obtained the state of a lower animal even in heaven. Then the brāhmaṇa was born among the swans of the Lotus-born (Brahmā). In this existence, when I was watching, the tenth chapter of the Gītā was narrated before him. Having heard it, the bird obtained excellent knowledge. Due to the grandeur of the tenth chapter he was born in a brāhmaṇa family. Due to practice from birth, from the lotus-like face of him even when a child the tenth chapter of the Gītā always flashes. As a result of its meaning he always sees the god holding a conch, a disc, living in all beings. He on whomsoever and whenever, he casts his affectionate glance, is released even though he is a drunkard or killer of a brāhmaṇa. Knowing that I, of the form of the Supreme Soul, brought the brāhmaṇa to this city which is naturally a holy place giving salvation. Salvation is (just) on the palm of people living here. Therefore, due to his seeing (them) no other special effect is produced. I do not allow his knowledge very difficult to get, which he formerly obtained due to the greatness of the tenth chapter, to go out of him. So also this sage obtained salvation while living. Therefore, I give him my hand when he moves and walks along the road. O Bhṛṅgiriṭi, such is the great importance of the tenth chapter.

Thus I have told the same account destroying sins as was told before (i.e. to) Bhṛṅgiriṭi. A man or a woman, whosoever (he or she may be) would obtain the fruit of all the stages of human life by merely listening to it.

THE
PADMA-PURĀṆA

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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA: SECTION VI: UTTARAKHANḌA (CONTINUED)

185. The Greatness of the Eleventh Chapter: Sunanda's Story	2943
186. The Greatness of the Twelfth Chapter : Siddha- samādhī's Story	2950
187. The Thirteenth Chapter : Durācārā's Story	2954
188. The Fourteenth Chapter : Story of a Bitch and a Hare	2957
189. The Fifteenth Chapter: The Story of King Narasimha	2960
190. The Sixteenth Chapter : Khaḍgabāhu's Story	2963
191. The Seventeenth Chapter : Duḥśāsana's Story	2965
192. The Eighteenth Chapter: A Brāhmaṇa Be- comes Indra	2967
193. The Greatness of the Bhāgavata	2971
194. Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the Destroyer of All Miseries	2976
195. The Rule of Reciting and Listening to the Bhāgavata for a Week	2981
196. Dhundhulī's Story	2987
197. The Seven-day Bhāgavata Recitation	2994
198. Procedure to be Followed during the Saptāha	3001
199. The Glory of Yamunā	3010
200. The Episode of a Bhilla and a Lion	3014
201. Śarabha's Story	3021
202. The Story of King Dilīpa	3028
203. Dilīpa Obtains a Son by Propitiating Nandīnī	3033

204. The Story of a Merchant Śarabha and a Demon Vikaṭa	3038
205. The Efficacy of Nigamabodha	3047
206. A Woman Should Never Desert Her Husband	3051
207. The Story of Vimala	3055
208. The Greatness of Dvārakā	3060
209. The Story of Brāhmaṇa Mukunda	3065
210. Mukunda Goes to Heaven	3069
211. Caṇḍaka's Fate	3074
212. The Efficacy of Kośalā	3078
213. A Śrāddha at Madhuvana is More Meritorious	3082
214. The Greatness of Madhuvana	3087
215. Budha Infuriated and Appeased	3095
216. The Greatness of Badarikāśrama	3099
217. The Greatness of Haridvāra	3106
218. The Greatness of Puṣkara: Puṇḍarīka's Story	3109
219. The Greatness of Puṣkara: Puṇḍarīka Attains Absorption into Viṣṇu	3113
220. The Greatness of Prayāga: Mohini's Story	3116
221. The Greatness of Prayāga: Hemāṅgī and Vīravarmaṇ Go to Vaiṣṇava	3120
222. Kāśī, Gokarna, Śivakāñcī, Tīrthasaptaka and Bhīmakūṇḍa	3123
223. Gem of a Formula	3129
224. Bearing the Marks of a Disc etc. Essential for a Brāhmaṇa	3135
225. The Efficacy of Ūrdhvapuṇḍra	3140
226. The Meaning of the Mantra (Formula)	3144
227. The Description of the Vibhūti of Tripāḍ	3150
228. Description of the Highest Heaven etc.	3156
229. A Description of Viṣṇu's Vyūhas	3163
230. The Fish Incarnation of Viṣṇu	3174
231. Durvāsas Cures Indra	3176
232. The Rise of Goddess Lakṣmī	3180
233. Ekādaśī as a Day of Fast	3184
234. How to Observe the Vow of Dvādaśī	3186
235. The Birth of Heretics	3189
236. Characterization of Various Texts and Doctrines as Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa	3193

Contents

237. The Boar Incarnation of Viṣṇu	3195
238. The Emergence of Nṛsiṃha	3198
239. The Rise of Bali and Kaśyapa's Penance	3208
240. Viṣṇu Incarnates as Vāmana	3211
241. Paraśurāma's Story	3215
242. The Story of Rāma	3221
243. Rāma's Consecration	3244
244. Rāma Goes to Heaven	3247
245. The Brave Deeds of Kṛṣṇa	3254

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYFIVE

*The Greatness of the Eleventh Chapter: Sunanda's Story**The goddess said:*

1-2. O god, this history is a great means of accomplishing the good. O merciful one, my desire is further aroused on hearing it. O Virūpākṣa, O the first (i.e. greatest) one among speakers, explain to me the importance of the eleventh chapter (of the Gītā) supported by a story.

The lord said:

3-17. O dear one, listen to a story resting on the description of the Gītā. Even the greatness of the chapter (called) Viśvarūpa (-darśana) is purifying. O you of large eyes, (the greatness of) the chapter cannot be told. There are thousands of stories. One of them will be told by me. On the bank of the river Pragītā there was a city known as Meghaṅkara. It had a heavily laid foundation, lofty ramparts and gates. It had big (sacrificial) halls of hermitages adorned with golden pillars. Rich, happy, calm, well-behaved men with their senses controlled and speedy in their actions lived there. It was charming with the places where four roads met. It was adorned with markets and quadrangulars where gold in the jewelled pillars was shining. In it the sweet and indistinct sound of the multitude of (moving) banners and jingling bells was (heard). The atmosphere was shaken with the loud noise of Vedic recitation. The vast sky was full of the loud sounds of musical instruments. It won battles with the breezes due to flags and foliage (*obscure*). It appeared splendid with the jingling sounds of the anklets of women on the royal path and at the excellent gates, and with (sounds of) lutes, flutes, songs and the neighings of excellent horses. It constantly appeared to be equal to the cities of the regents of the quarters. There the lord of the world, Śārṅgapāṇi, shone. He was the embodiment of the highest Brahman, and the life of the sight of the world. His great form was worshipped by the lotus-eyes of Lakṣmī (*obscure*). His body was that of Trivikrama; he was dark like a cloud. His lustre was mild; he had Śrīvatsa (mark) on his chest; and was adorned with lotuses and garland of wood-

flowers. He was having (i.e. had put on) many ornaments and was, as it were, the ocean full of jewels. His lustre was like that of a cloud with the flashing of the streak of lightning. On his (?) crown dwelt the highest soul Śārṅgapāṇi himself. On seeing him a living being is freed from the bondage of the worldly existence. In that city there was a great holy place called Mekhalā. By bathing there men always obtained the position of Viṣṇu. Having seen Narasiṃha, the lord of the world, the ocean of pity there, a man is free from a terrible sin committed during seven existences.

18-27. A man who sees the lord of gaṇas at Mekhalā always overcomes dangers, even though they are difficult to be overcome. In that Meghaṅkara (city) there lived an excellent brāhmaṇa who practised celibacy and self-control, who was free from the feeling of mineness and from egotism. He was well-known as Sunanda, and was proficient in the Vedas and in (other) holy texts. He had subjugated the group of his senses; he was highly devoted to Vāsudeva. O dear one, by the side of god Śārṅgin he recited this eleventh chapter (of the Gītā called) Manifestation of the Cosmic Form. The ascetic obtained knowledge of Brahman due to the power of the chapter. The meditating saint, enjoying liberation (even) while alive, desiring to reach a steady condition, always remained in profound intellectual meditation, praiseworthy due to the mass of great joy. Once that great meditating saint set out on a pilgrimage to Godāvarī when Jupiter was in the Zodiacal sign Leo. Having, on the first day, come to the excellent holy place Viraja, and having begun with the centre among the holy places, he bathed again and again, and saw Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), the prop of the world. Having worshipped her, the great divine power, giving the fruit of all desires and then bathing at Tārātīrtha, then at the confluence of Kapilā, he visited the eight holy places. Then having offered oblations to the dead ancestors, having bowed to the lord of Kumārī, Śiva, he came to Kapilādvāra.

28-40. Having bathed there, and washed off the sins of former existences, having worshipped, saluted and heard (about) god Viṣṇu and having lived there for that night, he went with the brāhmaṇas from it in the morning. In the forest Narasiṃha there is at the holy place a well sacred to Rāma. Narasiṃha wor-

shipped by Prahlāda himself dwells there. Having seen that lord of gods, having devoutly worshipped him, and having passed the day there, he went to the city of Ambikā. Ambikā, showering grace on her devotees, dwells there. She fulfils all the desires of men. Having devoutly worshipped Ambikā with flowers and unguents, with various hymns, and salutations also, the brāhmaṇa then reached the city called Kaṇṭhasthāna in olden times. There the great power, Mahālakṣmī, of great lustre, dwells. Having seen her, having the orb of the brightness of nectar and the sun, the river of the nectar from lotuses cutting off the torment of the worldly existence, and served by royal swans of the lotuses of the hearts of best meditating saints, full of the sound produced without beating, and of the form having no second, having worshipped with a devout heart that revered Mahālakṣmī, giving desired objects, the lord of sages reached along with the brāhmaṇas, the city called Vivāhamaṇḍapa. In every house in the city he asked for taking shelter. The brāhmaṇa could not get lodging in any house. The head of the village showed to him a big temple to stay in. The brāhmaṇa entering it with his companions stayed there. Then when it was bright morning he saw from his place of lodging his body, where by chance all travellers were produced. When he was going, the village-head saw him coming (to him).

41-50a. The village-head said to him: "You are by all means a long-lived one. You are (the best) among the lucky, and (most) auspicious among the auspicious also. O child, you have some extraordinary power. Where have your companions gone? How did they get out of that house? See that, O best sage, I shall tell you. But I do not see here any other ascetic comparable to you. Do you know a great spell? Which science do you practise? Due to the kindness of which god have you this uncommon power? O best brāhmaṇa, then please stay in this village. O revered one, I shall render you every service." Speaking like this, he made the best sage stay in the village. He devoutly served him day and night. When seven or eight days passed, he came (to him). Having come to him in the morning, he, much grieved, wept before him. "The devout son of me who am luckless to-day, was eaten at night by a demon having bright fangs." When the protector (of the village) said like this, the restrained one

asked him: "Where is the demon? Tell me how your son was devoured."

The village-head said:

50b-59. In the city there is a terrible demon eating human beings. Everyday he comes and eats men frequenting the city. All the citizens formerly requested him: "O demon, protect us all. We shall arrange for your food. O demon, eat those travellers who sleep (here) at night." For protecting his life, he devoured the travellers that were ushered into this house by the village-head. You had slept in this house accompanied by other unlucky persons. They were eaten by him, and you were abandoned, O best brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, you know your own power. Today a friend of my son has come. I, being ignorant, (i.e. unknowingly) put that dear (friend) of my son in the (same) house along with other travellers. Hearing that he was put into it, my son went to bring him at night. He too was eaten by the demon. I who was afflicted, said to the demon in the morning: "O wicked-minded one, at night you ate my son also. O demon, tell me if there is a means by which my son gone down into your belly will be revived."

The demon said:

60-63a. Through ignorance I devoured your son that has gone into (my belly). This your son was eaten by me through ignorance along with the travellers. Brahmā has also laid down (the way) in which he who has entered my belly, will be revived. By the power of the brāhmaṇa who constantly recites the eleventh chapter, I shall get salvation and the dead will be revived.

The village-head said:

63b-73. "How does the eleventh chapter have such wonderful power?" O brāhmaṇa, thus asked by me, the demon said: "Formerly some vulture going along the aerial path dropped from its beak a piece of bone somewhere in the water. Someone, best among the wise, having come to that lake, and taking it to be a great holy place, had offered oblations to the dead ancestors. All people said to him: 'Tell (us) how this is a holy place'. The restrained one muttered the eleventh chapter thrice a day.

The brāhmaṇa who had observed silence, was killed by thieves on the way. A piece of his bone fell from the vulture's beak into water. Due to that this has become a divine holy place destroying sins. Then all those men bathed there in that lake. Due to their being free from sins, they obtained the highest position. Owing to the power of the eleventh chapter, I too will get salvation, and the travellers will again come back to life. The brāhmaṇa spat out by me, will stay here only. If he constantly muttered the eleventh chapter, and if that best brāhmaṇa throws on me the water that is consecrated by the hymn of the eleventh chapter, then, undoubtedly I shall be free from the curse." Thus told by him, I have come to you.

The brāhmaṇa said:

74-89a. O protector (of the village), tell (me) due to what sin he had become a demon, eating men in the house at night.

The village-head said:

Formerly in this village there was a brāhmaṇa farmer. Once he was busy with the protection of the paddy-field. Not far from him, a great vulture devoured a traveller. An ascetic at a distance took pity on him to free him. Just then the bird ate up the traveller and went by the aerial path. Then the ascetic, through anger, said to the farmer: "O you wicked-minded, harsh-hearted, cruel ploughman, fie upon you who are selfish, averse to protecting others, and of an accursed life. One who though capable, ignores men being struck by thieves, wild boars, serpents, enemies, poisoned water, vultures, demons, evil spirits, goblins etc., would obtain the fruit of their murder. He who being capable, does not free a brāhmaṇa seized by thieves etc. goes to a horrible hell, and is again born as a wolf. He who (seeing one) being killed (or) harassed by a vulture or a tiger in a forest, says 'Leave (him), leave (him)', goes to the highest position. Those also who are killed while (protecting) cows by tigers, hunters or wicked kings, go to Viṣṇu's position, difficult to be obtained even by meditating saints. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices are not worth even a sixteenth part of the protection of one seeking shelter. Even a meritorious person, by ignoring a helpless and a fright-

ened person, is roasted in the Kumbhīpāka (hell) after (some) time. Since you were unkind, as you on seeing the traveller (being) eaten by the wicked vulture, did not ward off (the vulture) though you were capable of warding it off, you will be (born as) a demon." Having heard this curse of the sage, the ploughman, with his body trembling, saluted the brāhmaṇa and said (these) piteous words: "With my eyes cast on protecting the field here, I did not notice this man being killed by the vulture. Therefore, please favour me who am helpless."

The brāhmaṇa said:

89b-91. When the water consecrated by him who knows the eleventh chapter (of the Gītā) and mutters it everyday, falls on your head, then you will be free from the curse.

Speaking like this the ascetic left, and the ploughman became a demon. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, come on; consecrate him with (the recitation of) that chapter. Drop with your (own) hand the holy water on his head.

Mahādeva said:

92-108b. Having heard this request of him, the sage, full of pity, saying 'All right' went with the head of the village near the demon. The brāhmaṇa, the meditating saint, dropped on his head the water consecrated with (the recitation of) the eleventh chapter (called) Viśvarūpa (-darśana). By the power of the chapter of the Gītā, he obtained freedom from the curse. Abandoning the body of the demon he became one having four arms. Those men, the travellers who were ejected, were in thousands. They became four-armed ones holding conches, discs and maces. They got into aeroplanes. At that time he said to the demon: "O demon, which is my son. Show him (to me)." Thus addressed by the village-head, the demon of divine intellect said: "Know your son to be four-armed like these and having dark lustre like the tamāla tree and having a crown of rubies, and adorned with divine, jewelled ear-rings, with great shoulders charming due to a necklace, and adorned with a golden armlet, having lotus-like eyes, affectionate, and holding a lotus in his hand, having got into a divine aeroplane, and having obtained godhead." Hearing

these words of him, and seeing his son like that, he started taking him home. Then the son laughed (and said): “O protector (of the village), for how many times have you become my son? Formerly I was your son, (but) now I am a god. Due to the brāhmaṇa’s favour I shall go to Viṣṇu’s abode. See this demon also has secured a four-armed body. Due to the greatness of the eleventh (chapter) he will go to heaven with (these) people. Learn the chapter from this brāhmaṇa and constantly mutter it. There is no doubt that you will obtain the same position. Therefore, O father, the company of the good is always difficult to be had by men. That too has come up for you today. Accomplish your desired object. What is the use of wealth, enjoyment, gifts, sacrifices, penance, acts of pious liberality? Final bliss is obtained by the recital of the (chapter called) Viśvarūpa(-darśana). By hearing the chapter (men see) that form of Viṣṇu which is the highest, which came out of the mouth of Kṛṣṇa, the Brahman, the mass of complete joy, which—the nectar of salvation—was spoken by him to his friend Arjuna on Kurukṣetra, which removes maladies, diseases and fears of men afraid of the mundane existence, which destroys the misery of many existences. I do not see any other (hymn) like that. Remember it.”

Śiva said:

108c-110. Speaking like this, he went to Viṣṇu’s highest position with them. The village-head learnt that chapter from the brāhmaṇa. Due to its greatness both of them went to Viṣṇu’s position. Thus I have told you the account of the eleventh chapter, by merely hearing which great sins perish.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYSIX

*The Greatness of the Twelfth Chapter : Siddhasamādhī's Story**Mahādeva said:*

1-11. In the southern country there is a city named Kolhā-pura. O good one, it is the abode of pleasures, and the source of accomplishment of superhuman powers for the good ones. It is a great seat of the Parāśakti (Supreme Power), and is resorted to by all gods. It is well-known in the Purāṇas as giving enjoyments and salvation. There are crores of holy places there, and crores of phalluses of Śiva. There is Rudragayā. It is large and well-known in the world. The ramparts are like high mountains, and the banners on the gates are shining. On the top of the palace there is a high golden banner. The city is adorned with a row of high mansions and topmost of the houses resembling the moon. The quarters were made fragrant with the smoke of the incense coming out of the holes of windows. It has a great shadow due to the moving banners. It is endowed with temples. It is inhabited by clever, handsome, affectionate, rich, pure men, of good conduct and having many ornaments. Women live there, whose eyes are like those of deer, whose faces resemble the moon, whose hair is curly, who resemble the blooming campaka, whose breasts are stout and high, who are adorned with deep navels and three folds (on their bellies), whose hips are large, whose pairs of shanks are charming, whose feet are excellent, whose girdles are making sounds, whose jewelled anklets are jingling, whose lotus-like hands have bracelets that are tinkling, and the rays from whose nails are flashing, and that fascinate even sages. The city is endowed with all objects, and full of all enjoyments. It possesses all auspicious things, and has Mahālakṣmī (living in it).

12-33. There came some young, fair man of charming eyes. His neck was conch-like; his shoulders were broad; his chest was large; his arms were long. He was endowed with all (good) marks; was fair and handsome in all limbs. Entering the city he saw the beauty in all the high mansions. His mind was eager to see Mahālakṣmī, the chief goddess. He bathed in Maṇikuṇḍa and offered oblations to his dead ancestors. Having seen Mahā-

lakṣmī, Mahāmāyā, he devoutly praised her. "The mother of the world, the protector, having infinite pity, brings about by her glance the existence and protection of the world. Lord Brahmā ordered by that Power creates (the world). Viṣṇu depending upon that Power, maintains the world. Śiva being entered by that Power destroys everything. I worship that great Power, mighty due to her creating, maintaining and destroying (the world). O you whose lotus-like feet are meditated upon by meditating ascetics, O Kamalā, O you having a lotus as your abode, You grasp all our innate properties within the range of the senses. You alone are the mass of thoughts. You make the mind fit for that. You are of the form of desires, knowledge and acts. You are of the form of the highest consciousness. You desire no fruit; you are spotless; you are eternal; you are formless; you are unstained. You are constant; you are free from agony; you are independent; you are free from disease. Who is capable of describing your greatness like this? I salute you, moving in the twelve (months) after disclosing the collection of the six (seasons). You are of the nature of anāhata śabda* (sound produced without beating); you are of the nature of nāda*, bindu* and kalā*. O mother, you are the river of the nectar oozing from the full moon. O affectionate one, you nourish children like Sanaka etc. who are naked. You are auspicious, consciousness attached to (the states of) waking, dream and deep sleep. You are in the fourth state; you are in the combination of pity and courteous language. To all living beings the entire wealth of Brahman is given by you who are beyond the fourth state after having withdrawn the group of all the reals. By you who are indeterminate, identity with bimba (?) is granted to the yogins. I salute the Parā, Paśyantī, Madhyamā and Vaikhari (the four kinds of vāc—speech) also. O goddess, for the proper protection of the world you take up (various) forms. You are Brāhmī, Vaiṣṇavī, Māheśī, O mother. O Vārāhī, you are Mahālakṣmī, Nārasimhī and Aindrikā. You are Kaumārī, Caṇḍikā, Lakṣmī, the purifier of everything; you are Sāvitrī, the mother of the world, Śaśinī and Rohiṇī. You are Svāhā, Svadhā; you are the divine nectar. You are Durgā; you are adorned

*These terms are highly technical in Tantra.

with a mass of clubs and staff-like arms. O you with your eyes reeling due to drinking blood dropping from the body of Raktabija (a demon), O you having the strong pair of arms taken out from the neck of an intoxicated he-buffalo, O you who put in great valour in tearing the great demon called Śumbha, O you having unlimited acts, O you mother of the three worlds, I salute you. O you wish-fulfilling tree to your devotees, O you goddess, favour me." Thus praised by him goddess Mahālakṣmī then took up her own form and spoke to that man.

Śrī Lakṣmī said:

34a. O prince, I am pleased, ask for an excellent boon.

The prince said:

34b-40a. My father, a king, while performing a great horse-sacrifice, was unfortunately overcome by a disease and died. Having dried his body with heated oil, I have kept it. The sacrifice continued as before. The horse that had wandered over the earth, (was tied) to a post. Someone at night cut off the bond and took him somewhere. When (my) men after not finding him, came back, I, addressing all priests, have sought your refuge. O goddess, if you are pleased, then may my horse of the sacrifice be seen, so that the sacrifice will be completed and my father, the king, will be free from debt. O mother of the world, O you who love those who seek your refuge, do like that.

The goddess said:

40b-42. A brāhmaṇa, known as Siddhasamādhi, is at my door. By my order he will accomplish all your work.

Thus addressed by Śrī Mahālakṣmī, the prince then came to the place where the sage Siddhasamādhi was. Having saluted his lotus-like feet, he stood there with his palms joined.

43-60. Then the brāhmaṇa said to him: "You are sent by Ambā. See, I shall accomplish all that is desired by you." Speaking like this, the māntrika (knower of spells) drew (to his presence) all gods. The son of the king then saw the gods having joined their palms and with their bodies trembling. Then the best brāhmaṇa spoke to all the gods: "This prince's horse

meant for a sacrifice was snatched and taken away at night by the lord of gods. O gods, bring (back) his horse, do not delay.” Having heard the sage’s words, the gods gave him (back) the horse. He allowed the gods (to go). Having seen the gods drawn (by him), and having received the lost horse, the king’s son bowed to the sage, and said to him: “O best sage, this your power is a wonder. You have done a marvel by drawing on the gods in a moment. Having drawn the horse give me (back) my horse meant for the sacrifice. There is nothing else which is difficult to be done even by gods. You alone, and none else, will be capable of doing it. O brāhmaṇa, listen. My father was king Bṛhadratha. He commenced a horse-sacrifice, but died through (bad) luck. Even now his body lies, dried with heated oil. O best one, please bring him back to life again.” “We shall go there where (the body of) your father is, and where your sacrificial hall is.” Having come (there) along with that Siddhasamādhī, he consecrated water and threw it on the head of the dead body. Then the king got (back) consciousness, and saw (the people there). The king asked him: “O Dharma (i.e. pious one), who are you?” Then the prince told everything to the king. The king saluted the brāhmaṇa who had given (back) his life again. He said: “Due to which religious merit have you this uncommon power by means of which you gave (back) my life and called the gods, and also by means of which (power) you rescued the sacrifice? Tell (me) that”. Being thus addressed, the brāhmaṇa spoke in soft words. “I carefully mutter the twelfth chapter of the Gītā. Due to that (I have) this power by means of which you (re-)gained life.”

61-62. Hearing these words the king learnt the excellent twelfth chapter from that brāhmaṇa sage along with brāhmaṇas. Due to the greatness of that chapter all of them obtained good position. Other living beings also, after having recited it, obtained great salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYSEVEN

The Thirteenth Chapter: Durācārā's Story

The goddess said:

1. You told me the greatness of the twelfth chapter. Tell me the very beautiful greatness of the thirteenth chapter.

The lord said:

2-22. O Pārvatī, listen to the greatness—a treasure—of the thirteenth chapter, by merely hearing which you will get great joy. In the southern country there is the great river Tūṅga-bhadrā. On her bank is a charming city named Harihara, where, O goddess, revered god Harihara himself dwells. By seeing him (a man) gets great happiness. In that city lived a brāhmaṇa named Hari Dikṣita. He was engrossed in penance and sacred study. He was learned and had mastered the Vedas. His wife was Durācārā (literally 'of bad conduct') both in name and deeds. She who used abusive language, never slept with her husband. She, wandering wantonly, did not remain in her house even for a moment. At the door of the brāhmaṇa she drank liquor (filling her belly up) to her throat (i.e. too much). She repeatedly threatened her husband's relatives. Always intoxicated, she constantly dallied with her paramours. Sometime seeing the city full of citizens here and there, she herself made a rendezvous in a forest. The clever one, proud of her youth, passed a long time there only dallying with her paramours. When she was (thus) living in the city wantonly, the spring season, the friend of Cupid, set in. It was full of foliage from roots (of trees); it had brought back to life Cupid by means of the cooings of the cuckoos in the fifth note (of the Indian gamut) due to the mango tree liable to change(?). It had tossed the forest-trees with breezes coming from the Malaya (mountain) carrying the fragrance of campaka flowers and blowing very gently. It was beautified all around by sound due to hummings of the swarms of bees breaking their fast with the fragrant spirituous liquor of the blooming jasmine flowers. It was smiling with the pleasing, charming, fragrant lakes. It was manifested by lakes with hosts of swans collected (there). In it the earth was

beautified with trees having dense foliage and having (under them) young ones of deer seated comfortably in their dense shade. In that spring season that lady going to meet her lover (*Abhisārikā*), being delighted, saw, at night the moonlight, giving joy to the world. It had thin drops of nectar dropping from the ends of the beaks of the moving cakoras. It was full of springs of nectar oozing from the melting moon-stone. In it the mass of hail was clustering together in the expanding middle parts of the flowers; the billows of the mass of water that were flashing, embraced the sky. It was a knife cutting the throats of unchaste women of the great lion of Cupid. It was clever in tearing off the mass of dense darkness. It was full of snow (or coolness) for others like the Himālaya mountain that had whitened Satī. It gave joy to the young people, due to the closing of withered lotuses. It was the witness to the piteous wailings of the female cakravākas. It had brightened the atmosphere with pure rays like a row of pearls.

23-33. When the moonlight became profuse and filled the ten quarters, the lustful woman became blind with passion, and she, amusing herself in the high mansion, not seeing her paramours on the way at night, and breaking the bolt of (the door of) the house, went out of the city, to the place of appointment. She, with her mind deluded by passion of love, looking for one of her lovers, did not see any (lover) in any bower or under any tree. At every step she heard the gentle words of her lover. Then she playfully went to that place where there was a destructive sound. Having heard the notes of the cakravākas, she, misunderstanding them for the words of her lover, again and again moved to all lakes. Through error (that it was) her lover, she awakened the flocks of deer asleep at the root of a tree, saying, with encouragement, 'I have come'. Taking a branchless trunk for the lord of her life she embraced it, and kissed a blooming lotus mistaking it for his face. Everywhere her exertion was futile. She did not see her lover. Swooning, she lamented in the grove with various words. 'O you of a charming fortune, O you treasure of fortune and handsomeness, O you having a face like the full moon, O you having eyes like lotuses, O dear one, O you full of virtues, O you who are a celestial tree where fulness relaxes, if, through anger, you are remaining somewhere in dis-

guise, I propitiate you, O dear one, even by offering my dear life.' Thus through separation (from her lover) she lamented in all directions.

34-49. Having heard her words, a tiger, who was asleep, awoke. He growled, and angrily looked in every direction along the path. Striking the ground with his nails and roaring in the sky-cavern, he speedily raised his tail suspended from the back. The tiger jumped and went where the abhisārikā was. She too, mistaking him, who was coming (to her), for her lord (i.e. paramour) went with her mind full of love to stand by him. Then blinded by the cruel sport of his nails, she gave up the idea of his being her lover on hearing his loud roar. Even though the woman was (reduced to a condition) like that, she quickly gave up her wrong notion (and said): "O tiger, for what purpose have you come here to kill me? Tell me all this for which you wish to kill me." Hearing these words of her, the tiger of violent strides, for a moment left the food (in the form) of her, laughed and said: "In the southern country there is a river named Malāpahā. On her bank is a city called Muniparṇā. There Maheśvara Pañcaliṅga actually dwells. In that city, I, being the son of a brāhmaṇa, lived. I acted as a priest for those not entitled to performing a sacrifice. On the bank of the river I ate (food) at a śrāddha performed for one definite individual. With a desire for (obtaining) wealth, I always sold the fruit of the recital of the Veda. Through greed I condemned other mendicants with bad words. I always accepted wealth not fit to be given and that was not given. Through the desire to seize the opportunity, I deceived all people. Then after some time I became old. I had wrinkles (on my body), grey hair, and being blind, stumbled and fell. My teeth had fallen, (but) again I was absorbed in accepting gifts. Through greed of getting wealth, I, wandering on the parvan days, and with darbhas in my hands, went near a holy place. Then I, with my limbs having become loose, went to the house of a brāhmaṇa to ask for food, but in the middle (i.e. while on my way) I was bitten on my leg by a dog. Fainting I fell on the ground in a moment. Then losing my life, I went to the stock of a tiger.

50-61. Remembering my former sin I live in this forest. I do not eat religious sages and good men and chaste women. But

I devour sinners, wicked ones, and unchaste women. Therefore, I shall really eat you, O unchaste woman." Saying so, he, cutting her limbs into pieces with his cruel nails, devoured her who had resorted to a sinful body. Yama's servants took her to Yama's city, and there by Yama's order quickly dropped her many times into the fierce yellow pools full of feces, urine and blood for crores of kalpas; and again and again bringing her from there, they put her into Raurava hell for a period of hundreds of periods of Manu. Even after dragging her from there, they threw her, fully helpless, weeping, with her hair loose, limbs broken, into fire. Thus, having experienced the fierce torment in the hell, wholly sinful, she was again born on the earth in the stock of cāṇḍāla. Then, in the cāṇḍāla-house also, she growing day by day, was as before due to (the effect of) her former deeds. Then after some time she went to her house, where, goddess Jṃbhakā of Śiva, the goddess of the city, was. There she saw a pure brāhmaṇa, Vāsudeva by name, constantly reciting the thirteenth chapter of the Gītā. Then merely on hearing it, she was free from the body of cāṇḍāla, and getting a divine body, she went to heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYEIGHT

The Fourteenth Chapter: Story of a Bitch and a Hare

The lord said:

1-9. O Bhavānī, for freedom from the worldly existence, I shall hereafter narrate (the importance of) the fourteenth chapter of the Gītā. O you of a pleasing smile, listen to it. On the earth there is a large region of Kāśmīra; it is the charming capital of goddess Sarasvatī. After staying there the goddess of speech goes to Brahmā's world after mounting her swan. There the quarter attains importance after serving Sarasvatī's lotus-like feet with saffron sent by Sāvitrī and rising from the folds of the wings of the swan. Due to having no interruption the langu-

age of gods is in a moment got by men who speak Sanskrit. In the morning the orbs of the moon and of the sun have a tawny tinge due to saffron rising from the courtyard of the house. There was king Śauryavarman, a heap of lustre, who had cut off the circle of his enemies with volleys of bright arrows that were ready. In Siṃhaladvīpa there was a king, brave like a lion, named Vikramavetāla, also a treasure of arts. Gradually they increased the friendship of each other by means of heaps (of) excellent (presents) produced in their respective countries.

10-17. Once, king Vikramavetāla saw a perfect pair of bitches sent with love by Śauryavarman. He sent to his friend Śauryavarman intoxicated excellent elephants, horses, jewelled ornaments and chowries. Once, the king, eager for hunting having got into a palanquin, being fanned by charming chowries, taking the pair of the bitches tied with golden chain, and with a collection of musical instruments and small drums went with the princes to a forest. A hare was taken as a prey for the wager. There was a great noise made by the princes. Then the king laying a high-priced wager with a prince of his age sported with eagerness. Then the king, having taken down the bitch from the palanquin, set her after the hare, running fast. The prince, of great arms, also released his object of love. Having loudly repeated the panegyric or laudatory poem he stopped the bitch.

18-28. While all the kings were witnessing, the pair of the bitches was running with a speed that could not be perceived and was jumping. Due to great exertion the hare fell into a great ditch. Though fallen the hare could not be overpowered by the bitch. Then the hare, slowly getting up, vomiting foam, was angrily overpowered and seized by the king's bitch. Then the hare who somehow jumped and was going, tumbled and was seized at the neck by the king's bitch. In the din of the people, talking 'We have won' the hare got out of the mouth of the bitch that was frightened. Then the hare, having blood (on his body) that was dropping and that was caused by the line of the wounds (made) by the teeth (of the bitch), hid in a place rustling (with leaves etc.) and remained (there). He who, being just seen by the king's bitch, smelling that part of the land with great anger, was frightened, and went (from there to a distance)

of just a cubit, to a place where the wind coming from the camphor and plantain trees and the bottom of the tiger's caves and kissing the cheeks of the Cola-ladies, blew. There the deer, with their eyes partially closed due to the pollen from the cups of the ketakī flowers that had opened up, confidently resorted to the shade. There the monkeys also, satisfied with the ripe mangoes, fell down along with the coconuts. There even lions played with the young elephants; serpents entered fearlessly into the peacocks' tails.

29-36. There in a hermitage a brāhmaṇa named Vatsa, who had curbed his senses and was tranquil, lived, constantly muttering the fourteenth chapter. (The hare) going here, with his life just sustained and repeatedly panting, fell into the mud caused by the water (poured) by his disciple while washing his lotus-like feet. The hare, having crossed the mundane existence just due to the contact with that mud, got into a divine aeroplane and went to heaven. Then that bitch also, with her body besmeared with a few drops of mud and free from hunger and thirst, abandoned her canine form, got into a celestial aeroplane charming with divine ladies and adorned with gandharvas, went to heaven. Then his intelligent disciple named Svakan-dhara, amazed after thinking about the cause of the enmity in the former existence, laughed. The king, an ocean of modesty alone, with his eyes smiling, also saluted him with great devotion and asked him, "O brāhmaṇa, tell me the story, how the two ignorant ones, the bitch and the young hare, that had resorted to a mean stock, went to heaven."

The disciple said:

37-39. In this forest there is a brāhmaṇa named Vatsa, with his senses curbed. He always mutters the fourteenth chapter. O king, I am his disciple, proficient in every (branch of) knowledge. Everyday I mutter the fourteenth chapter, O king. O king, the hare along with the bitch, rolling in the water (used) for washing my feet, went to heaven.

The king said:

40. O best brāhmaṇa, with what intention did you, thinking carefully that it has some meaning, laugh?

The disciple said:

41-45. There was a great city named Pratyudaka in Mahārāṣṭra. There was a brāhmaṇa named Keśava, a leader of gamblers. His wife was Vilobhanā, a wanton woman. He through anger, and remembering the enmity of the (former) birth, killed her. Then due to the sin of the murder of a woman, the brāhmaṇa was born as a hare, and she due to her birth (full) of deceit, was born as a bitch. They, taking different births, never forgot the enmity practised in the former birth, and each other also.

The king, full of faith, having understood all this, studied the entire Gītā, and got the highest position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYNINE

The Fifteenth Chapter: The Story of King Narasimha

The lord said:

1-11. O you large-eyed one, O you daughter of the Himālaya mountain, I shall tell (you) the importance of the fifteenth chapter of the Gītā. Listen to it. In the Gauḍa country there was a kind king named Narasimha. In the war by the edge of his sword the divine groups were killed. The earth could bear the agony due to the heat of the sun, even in summer, by means of the water of the stream of rut of his intoxicated elephants. Intoxicated elephants, frightened due to being challenged and seeking his refuge, shone like moving mountains. The mountains respectfully echoed the trumpets of the intoxicated elephants of him, the kind protector. It was a wonder how the earth was not reduced to pieces, when it was shattered with the multitudes of (the strokes of) the hoofs of his running horses. When he, a friend of Indra, emancipated the earth, Phaṇīśvara (Śeṣa; Patañjali) again brightened Mahābhāṣya. He had an intelligent soldier named Sarabhabheruṇḍa, who was an abode of weapons, holy texts and arts, and had large round arms. By means of his trea-

sure, horses, brave soldiers, and very inaccessible forts he was equal to the king. Some time the sinful one made up his mind to rule over the kingdom after having forcibly killed the king together with the princes. With a desire to do like this he was determined (to kill the king with the princes). Due to the disease of cholera he died.

12-26. O you of a thin belly, after death the sinful one was born, due to that act, as a bright horse in Sindhu country. A certain vaiśya-son, knowing the facts about horses, bought him at a great price and took him (to his place) with great effort. After his death the king got old in course of time and looked after his kingdom with (the help of) his grandsons. The vaiśya-son came to give the horse to the king. He remained at the king's door waiting to meet him. Though the vaiśya was already known, he was presented (before the king) by the doorkeeper. "Speak why (you have come)." Thus asked by the king, he told (everything) clearly. "Thinking that this horse is a gem of the three worlds, I (bought) this horse of auspicious marks at a price of a million coins." Then looking at the faces of those seated by his side, the king ordered the vaiśya: "Bring the horse here." The great horse made the heads of those knowing the marks of a horse, nod, and exciting the minds of the brave, ejecting his very bright fame earned by many speedy runs across, the entire earth, as it were, in the form of saliva and foam, he actually became comparable to Uccaiṣravas by means of the similarity in virtues (with him). The very bright one bent his neck, as it were, through bashfulness. Constantly being fanned by chowries, white like the moon, he was like Uccaiṣravas, unsteady like the Milky Ocean. Like the beauty of the clouds he had a pair of blue umbrellas, and the beauty of the peak of the Himālaya, with clouds touching it. Repeatedly raising his handsome neck, he was, as it were, turned into fire by the contact with the earth. He tore all the enemies; he brought prosperity in the form of victory with his loud neighing; he declared glory in (all) quarters. He was a very high heap of vitality; was, as it were, the treasure of gaits. He was actually the abode of beauty; he was the ocean of (auspicious) marks.

27-40. The vaiśya brought the horse; and the king saw him. The ministers knowing the (auspicious) marks described him in

various ways. Giving the merchant as much gold as desired and asked for by him, the king, full of extreme joy, quickly took the horse. Then having called the horsegroom, and carefully instructing him the king dismissed the assembly and went into his house after being taken leave of in many ways by (the members of) the assembly. He (took) the king, having the ornaments in the form of rows of scars of wounds made in battle, and resembling sattva (energy?). Once, the king, full of curiosity, having the sport of hunting (in mind), mounted him, and entered a forest. Leaving his soldiers behind, all of whom were running around, the king, being attracted by deer, was oppressed with thirst. Then the king got down from the horse, and looking for water, tied the horse to the branch of a tree, and ascended a rock. He saw half the verse from the fifteenth chapter of the *Gītā* written, and fallen where he looked into a fissure. When the king was reading the line of letters, the horse, hearing it, obtained salvation, and quickly fell. Then having cut off the knot, and dropping the saddle, he, being lifted by the king did not get up, (but) was dead. Then Sarabhabheruṇḍa, talking to the king in a sweet tone, got into a celestial aeroplane, and went to heaven. Then going up the mountain, he saw an excellent hermitage. It was full of the trees of punnāga, plantain, mango and coconut. It had groves of grapes and sugarcane, and trees like nuts, nāgakesara and campaka. It had young elephants and deer playing in it. It had the flocks of peacocks dancing. The king, being free from the desire for worldly existence, saluted the brāhmaṇa who was in the hut, and asked him with great devotion :

41-46. “(Please) tell me, with what purpose the horse went to heaven.” Having heard these words of the king, the brāhmaṇa said: “Due to his sin, he became a horse after a long time. Having heard half a verse from the fifteenth chapter of the *Gītā* written somewhere, when you read it, the horse went to heaven.” Then the king, surrounded by his attendants who had come there, with horripilation due to joy, saluted the brāhmaṇa and left. The king, with his eyes dilating due to joy, read that writing having (half the verse from) the fifteenth (chapter) of the *Gītā* and he, along with the ministers, the counsellors, consecrated his son powerful like a lion, on the throne, and he of a pure mind, obtained salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETY

*The Sixteenth Chapter: Khaḍgabāhu's Story**The lord said:*

1-9. Hereafter I shall narrate the greatness of the sixteenth chapter. Hear it, O fawn-eyed one, O you showering joy and eagerness. In the Gurjara country there was a city by name Saurāṣṭrika. There lived a king Khaḍgabāhu by name. He was, as it were, another moon. The ocean is made fragrant by the string of the fragrance of his flowers and Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī sleeps comfortably in it. The particles of the camphor of his fame shine in the sky, under the pretext of stars, after they were scattered there by the sighs of his enemies. Kings among his enemies who had bathed in the holy place of the edge of his sword, (though) fascinated by the words of divine women, even now turn back from heaven. He had an elephant named Arimardana. He was unrestrained due to rut. He had swarms of bees (hovering round and) humming in the water of the flowing ichor. It shone like mount Añjana with the springs rising, turbid due to being the water in the form of the stream of ichor crossing his large temples. In the interior of the forest the chowries bright like the moonlight shone on his limbs like the rays of the moon falling on them. He looked splendid with his temples shining with the cover of the particles of red lead. He was like a portion of the sky pervaded with the evening clouds.

10-22. Once, at night, he freed himself from the chains and fetters and forcibly broke the iron pillar (to which he was tied) and went out. Angrily ignoring all the hosts of drivers flashing the goads by his side, he broke his abode, though he was being struck in various ways with bamboo sticks to which goads were fixed, and though the drivers frightened him much. Then on hearing this wonder came there the king with those adept in the art of (the marks of) elephants and with princes. Having come (there) the king saw the mighty elephant stupefying the pride of brave heroes and taking away rows of lofty mansions. The citizens, turning away from any other curiosity and through fear guarding their children, looked at the very fierce elephant by keeping themselves at a distance. The paths were made fragrant

by the drops of his rut and blocked by people intent on fleeing. Then a brāhmaṇa, after having bathed and muttering certain verses from the sixteenth chapter of the Gītā, came along the path, though he was prohibited in many ways by the citizens and the drivers of elephants. Not caring for those who were scared of the elephant, he walked on. The elephant covered the people with hissings and crushed them. The brāhmaṇa touched his ichor and went happily. Even when the citizens were watching, there arose a great wonder in the mind of the king which cannot be grasped by words. Then getting down from his horse, saluting the brāhmaṇa, the king asked him:

The king said:

23-24. O brāhmaṇa, today you have done a great, uncommon thing. How did you pass by the elephant resembling Death? Which god do you worship? Which hymn do you mutter, O lord? Which divine power do you possess? Tell it, O brāhmaṇa.

The brāhmaṇa said:

25-34. O king, everyday I mutter a few verses from the sixteenth chapter of the Gītā. All these divine powers are due to that.

Then leaving the elephant, the interesting object of curiosity, the king, taking the brāhmaṇa with him, came home. Having pleased the best brāhmaṇa at an auspicious time with golden coins numbering a lakh, he received from him the Gītā-hymn. The curious king also studied with reverence, a few verses from the sixteenth chapter of the Gītā. Once, with his soldiers, he went out of the city. Clearly not caring for the pleasures of the kingdom, he let loose the intoxicated elephant from his driver. The king offered his life like grass before the elephant. The king, the leader of the daring ones, took him, of large temples and unrestrained due to the line of the rut, and due to his confidence in his ministers came there. The king got away from the elephant as the moon would come out of Rāhu's mouth or a righteous person from the mouth of Death or a good one from that of a wicked one. Having come to the city, the king consecrat-

ed his son (on the throne), and due to the muttering of the sixteenth chapter, obtained the best position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYONE

The Seventeenth Chapter: Duḥśāsana's Story

The lord said:

1-9. I told you the power of the sixteenth chapter. Now listen clearly, O Śiva, to the greatness of the seventeenth chapter. Duḥśāsana was a servant of Khaḍgabāhu's son. He came to seize that elephant and was killed by the elephant. With his mind fixed on that desire, he obtained the stock of the elephant, (but)obtained the highest position on listening to the seventeenth chapter of the Gītā.

The goddess said:

I have heard that Duḥśāsana became an elephant and was released. O auspicious lord, tell me that only in detail.

The lord said:

There was a certain wicked-minded man. He laid a high-priced wager with the feudal princes and then mounted upon an elephant. The fool named Duḥśāsana, having gone a few steps only, (though) warded off by people, uttered audacious words. Then the elephant, hearing them, was blind with fury. With the princes trembling, he, with his steps stumbling, fell down. Then the elephant, unrestrained like death, angrily uprooted something panting and fallen. The mad elephant separating his bones, even though he was already dead, scattered them.

10-17. Then having died in course of time, he obtained the stock of elephant. He passed a long time (like that). The king of Siṃhaladvīpa had a close friendship with king Khaḍgabāhu. Then the honoured elephant was sent by the water-route by Jayadeva to Khaḍgabāhu. That king also took him with joy. Remembering his previous existence, and seeing his kinsmen and

his brothers, he passed a few days with great grief. Not showing (any recognition) he quietly lived in Khadgabāhu's house. He, some time being pleased by the completing of an incomplete stanza (in a contest) (by a poet) gave the poet the elephant as a present. The poet, being afraid of a harm from a disease, sold the temple-elephant to the Mālava king for a hundred (coins). After some time had passed, the elephant suffering from fever due to old age difficult to be enjoyed, was on the point of dying. The elephant did not smell cold water, nor did he take a morsel; he did not sleep comfortably, but shed tears only.

18-27. Then hearing the account told by the elephant-driver, the king came where the elephant suffering from fever, lay. The elephant too, seeing the king, gave up the agony due to the fever, and spoke in a voice causing wonder to the world. "O king, O you who know all sacred texts, O you ocean of the science of politics, O you who have vanquished the host of your enemies, O you to whom Viṣṇu's feet are dear, what is the use of medicines, shoots, and mutterings of hymns? Bring a brāhmaṇa who would mutter the seventeenth chapter of the Gītā. There is no doubt that my disease will end due to that." The king did as was told by the elephant. Then Duṣśāsana gave up his state as an elephant, and got release. When the brāhmaṇa had thrown consecrated water on the excellent one, the king saw that Duṣśāsana, lustrous like Indra, got into a divine aeroplane.

The king said:

Tell me what your caste is, who you are, what your livelihood is. Due to what act did you become an elephant? How did you come here?

Asked by the king, Duṣśāsana who was freed, remaining in the aeroplane, told in definite words his account. Then the lord of Mālava, muttering the seventeenth chapter of the Gītā, was released after a short time.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTWO

*The Eighteenth Chapter: A Brāhmaṇa Becomes Indra**Pārvati said:*

1. O Śiva, you have told me the greatness of the seventeenth chapter. (Now) tell me the importance of the eighteenth chapter.

The lord said:

2-15a. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, listen to the greatness of the eighteenth chapter which is holy, which is the essence of all holy texts, which is the elixir that has come to the ears, which is intent on tearing off the mass of pangs in the worldly existence, which is the great secret of the siddhas, which is capable of uprooting ignorance, which is vitality, which is the best, the highest position of Kaiṭabha's enemy (i.e. Viṣṇu), which is the root of the creeper of discretion, which removes the dirt of passion and anger, which gave repose to the hearts of gods like Indra, which amused the minds of the great meditating saints like Sanaka, which has given a setback to the roars of Yama merely by its being recited, which is the cause of uprooting the roots of one hundred and eight diseases. O you whose gait is like that of an elephant, there is no greater secret than this. It removes the three (kinds of) torments and destroys major sins. As I am eternal among times, as the desire-yielding cow is among the beasts, as Vyāsa is among the best sages, or as he who knows Brahman is among the Vyāsas, as Indra is among gods, as Guru (i.e. Bṛhaspati) is superior to Śukra, as among the liquids nectar is the best and well-known in the world, as Kailāsa is among mountains, and as Indra is among gods, as Puṣkara is among the holy places, as lotus is among flowers, as in the worlds Arundhatī is among the chaste and virtuous wives, as the horse-sacrifice is among the sacrifices, as Paradise is among the gardens, as among all Rudras is my follower Vīrabhadra, as a gift of land is among gifts, as Godāvārī is among rivers, as Harikṣetra is recommended for all religious rites, so is the greatness of the eighteenth chapter excellent in the world. About it, O Pārvatī, listen devoutly to this auspicious

account, so that by merely listening to it a being is free from sins.

15b-28. On the peak of Meru there was a beautiful city (named) Amarāvati. It was formerly fashioned for my amusement by Viśvakarman. It is always full of virtues, and resorted to by crores of gods. There, palaces giving desired objects and built with desire-yielding stones, excel. It (spread) up to the city of Brahmā. It possessed a mass of lustre, and is well-known like the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. There happily sitting under the shade of the desire-yielding tree Śacī enjoyed the song sung by gandharva women. The divine river there turned bloody due to the billows of the blood of the demons whose lives were crushed by gods. There the gods, repeatedly remembering the ancient sweet ambrosia, and being emaciated with hunger, everyday drank the digit of the moon. In it, resembling final beatitude, formerly lived Indra. The prosperous one was accompanied by Śacī, and was waited upon by all gods. When once he was seated comfortably he saw a great man having a thousand eyes, waited upon by Viṣṇu's messengers, coming (to him). Then due to his lustre Indra was overpowered. He quickly fell into the hall from his jewelled throne. When he went away from the throne, Viṣṇu's soldiers tied him with the strap of the sovereignty over the gods. Pulumajā quickly sat on the left lap of that great Indra who was consecrated to the accompaniment of sounds of drums. Then gods along with their wives sang divine songs. The celestial ladies waved lights before him. Then sages gave him blessings with (hymns from) the Vedas. The bands of celestial nymphs like Rambhā danced before him. Gandharvas sang charming songs with auspicious desires.

29-44. Thus they served the new Indra who had not performed a hundred sacrifices. Seeing that old Indra was amazed. "By me (him?) lakes were never fashioned on the path; trees giving rest to travellers were never planted. God Tripurabhairava (i.e. Śiva) was never seen. Goddess Madālasā living in the place of treasure was never worshipped. Śārṅgadhara residing at Meghaṅkara was never seen. A bath was never taken at Viraja. The city of Kāśī was never visited. Narahari himself residing at the divine grove was never seen. Eraṇḍa Viṣṇu Heramba(?) was never contemplated upon. Mother Reṇukā living in the city was never seen. The

goddess living at Dānāpura was never devoutly worshipped. Tryambaka with three phalluses was not devoutly seen at Tripura. Somanātha living at the Śārdūla lake was never seen. Ghuśṛṇeśa living at Revāpura was never seen. Nāganātha, well known in the city of Nāgadanta, was never seen. Great Amṛteśvara residing at Parnagrāma was never seen. Harihara himself living on the bank of Tuṅgabhadra was never seen. Śrīnivāsa residing on Venkaṭādri was not properly seen. Śrīraṅga residing at Kāverī Karkikā was not at all seen. Poor and helpless and wailing people were not released from gaol. Beings were not honoured with (i.e. by giving them) food during a famine. On no night a water-fountain was erected at a place without water. A bath was not taken in Godāvari. Hariṇeśvara was not seen. A bath was not taken in Kṛṣṇaveṇī, when Jupiter was in the Zodiacal sign Libra. Not a piece of land was given. Poets were not at all honoured. A sacrificial session was never performed at the holy places. Sacrifices also were not performed in villages. Water places containing much water were never made on the path. At no place temples of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva were built. Those that were overcome with fear and sought my shelter were never protected. Due to one act of religious merit how such a divine gift was got?"

45-46. Being full of thought like this, Indra, being dejected, hastily went to ask Viṣṇu to the cave in the Milky Ocean. Having entered there that Indra saw Viṣṇu who was asleep. All of a sudden he told him of his being deprived of sovereignty.

Indra said:

47-49. O Viṣṇu, in order to please you I formerly performed a hundred sacrifices. Due to that religious merit I obtained the position of Indra. Now some new person has become Indra in heaven. He has not done religious acts, nor has he performed sacrifices. O Acyuta, how is my throne ascended by him?

Mahādeva said:

50. Having heard the words of him who was speaking like this, Viṣṇu, with his eyes dilating due to smile, spoke sweet words.

The lord said:

51. What is the use of gifts, giving small fruits? What is the use of austerities or sacrifices? Remaining on the earth, he formerly pleased me.

Indra said:

52. O lord, by means of which act, did the brāhmaṇa please you, due to which being pleased you gave him Indra's position?

The lord said:

53-63. He mutters five verses from the eighteenth chapter of the Gītā. Due to that religious merit, the crown gem of all (kinds of) religious merit, he obtained your excellent sovereign empire. Be steady.

Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, Indra, who had (thus) known the means, took the guise of a brāhmaṇa and went to the bank of Godāvarī. There he saw the very auspicious and excellent Kālikāgrāma. There god Kāleśvara, crushing Death, resides. There on the bank of Godāvarī, he saw a very religious, kind brāhmaṇa who had mastered the Vedas, who everyday muttered the eighteenth chapter and whose mind was controlled. Then having rolled at his feet with great joy, he recited the eighteenth chapter taught by him. Then due to that religious merit he secured union with Viṣṇu. And knowing the position of gods like Indra to be small, he abandoned it, and went to Viṣṇu's city. Therefore, only this is a great truth for the sages. I have told you the divine importance of the eighteenth chapter, by just hearing which one is free from all sins. Thus I have told you the importance of the Gītā, which destroys sins, which is meritorious, purifying, which gives (long) life, which leads (one) to heaven, and which is a great means of securing prosperity. O noble one, a man who devoutly listens to it, obtains the fruit of all sacrifices and would obtain absorption into Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTHREE

*The Greatness of the Bhāgavata**Pārvati said:*

1-3. O Mahādeva, O god of gods, O omniscient one, O you giving all (kinds of) wealth, showing great compassion for me, tell me what I ask you. I heard the greatness of the Gītā, containing many wonderful tales. Therefore, an eagerness to listen to the great account of Kṛṣṇa has arisen in me. Among all the Purāṇas, Bhāgavata is the best, in what by every word Kṛṣṇa is sung in various ways by the sages. Now tell me its greatness properly and along with the historical accounts.

The lord said:

4. Śaunaka, adept in tasting the sweetness of the nectar of a story, said to the highly intelligent Sūta seated in the Naimiṣa (forest), after having saluted him:

Śaunaka said:

5-10: Narrate (to us) the account of Śrīmad Bhāgavata which is an elixir, which destroys the darkness of ignorance and the sins of a crore of (past) existences, O Sūta. How does discrimination rich with devotion, knowledge and detachment grow? How do Viṣṇu's devotees remove illusion and delusion? Here in this Kali-age a being has almost attained demonhood. What is the elixir to purify him who is overcome with affliction? Now tell (us) that which is the (highest) felicity of (all) felicities, which is the most purifying of (all) purifying objects, and which is the means to please Kṛṣṇa. A preceptor who is pleased gives (to his disciple) the desire-yielding gem, happiness in the world, the wealth of the position of the lord of gods, and also Vaikuṇṭha, which is extremely difficult to obtain.

Sūta said:

11-21. O best brāhmaṇas, I am pleased with you. (Therefore) I shall tell you that as I have heard it which is better than the best, which destroys the fear of the mundane existence, which increases devotion, which is the cause of pleasing Kṛṣṇa. Listen

attentively when I am telling it. In the Kali-age Kṛṣṇa has told the holy text of Śrīmad Bhāgavata, which brings about the protection of the world which is held in the mouth of the tiger of Death. There is nothing superior to this that would purify the mind. It is obtained by good men by means of religious merit earned in many (previous) existences. Knowing the salvation of king Parīkṣit, the lotus-born one compared the holy texts and the great Purāṇas. Among them Śrīmad Bhāgavata came to be greater on the earth. The talk of Bhāgavata is difficult to be had even by gods. Thinking like this many good, pure sages looked upon Śrīmad Bhāgavata as a form of lord (Viṣṇu). By reciting and listening to it a man goes to Viṣṇu's position. Listening to it for a year gives great happiness. O best brāhmaṇa, devotion to it for a month earns splendour, Listening to it for a week gives salvation at all times. O good one, what is the use of talking too much? The good men should everyday drink the nectar of Śrīmad Bhāgavata which records the sports of Kṛṣṇa. Sanaka and others, full of compassion, formerly told it to Nārada who had (already) heard it from Brahmā. The manner of listening to it for a week (was also told).

Śaunaka said:

22-23. Having obtained excellent knowledge called Śrīmad Bhāgavata from his father, Nārada who knows the facts about the worlds, always roams over the earth. Where did Nārada meet those noble ones from whom the divine sage heard the manner of listening to it for a week?

Sūta said:

24-26. About this I shall tell you an account full of devotion, which formerly kind Śukra told me. Once the sages Sanaka and others saw at (the bank of) Viśālā, Nārada with his mind dejected. The sages, given to thinking about the Supreme Spirit and full of amazement, seeing their brother, the divine sage, thinking (like that) asked him.

Kumāras said:

27. O brāhmaṇa, what are you, very much helpless and afflict-

ed, thinking about? This is not proper for you who are associated with bliss. Tell (us) its cause.

Nārada said:

28-42. Knowing the earth to be the best of all the best, having various kinds of holy places, of an auspicious nature due to these auspicious places, I wandered here and there, at these holy places like Puṣkara, Prayāga, Kāśī, the bank of Godāvarī, Hari-kṣetra, Kurukṣetra, Śrīraṅga, Setubandhana, (but) nowhere did I find happiness, giving delight to my mind. Now the earth is afflicted by Kali, the friend of unrighteousness. On the earth truth, purity, pity, charity exist nowhere. People are selfish, miserable and are false witnesses. They are lethargic, dull-witted, and resort to highly heretical men. Householders attach importance to women; religious students are without (i.e. do not observe) vows. Anchorites are living in cities; those who have renounced the worldly ties are given to enjoyment. Through greed they sell their daughters; they are engaged in agriculture; they have fallen from (good) behaviour; they are hypocrites; they show wanton (behaviour). The hermitages, holy places, rivers, pools are besieged by Yavanas. The temples at other places are destroyed by the wicked. A meditating saint, a siddha or a wise man doing good deeds is not seen. Today fulfilment (of vows) is reduced to ash due to the wild fire in the form of Kali. Communities are everywhere seen to sell food; brāhmaṇas to use an auspicious object as a commodity; and beautiful ladies to use their hair as commodities. Once I reached the auspicious bank of Yamunā. There I saw Vṛndāvana where Viṣṇu had sported. O best sages, listen to the wonder that I saw there. A young lady, with her mind dejected, was seated there. Two old men, breathing and senseless, lay by her side. Weeping before the two, she was nursing and waking them up. I saw her looking into the directions, as it were, looking for her protector. Repeatedly she was fanned and advised by many women. Seeing her from a distance, I approached her through curiosity. Seeing me, the young lady got up and spoke these words:

The young lady said:

43-44a. O good man, stay here for a moment; remove my

anxiety. O good one, the sight of (good) men completely destroys streams of sins. I have had your sight due to my deeds in former existences. Therefore, O you who respect others, please remove my mental agony.

Nārada said:

44b-46. Thus addressed by her, I with my heart affectionate through pity, and full of curiosity, asked the beautiful lady: “O good one, who are you? Who are these two? Who are these lotus-eyed ones? Tell me the entire cause of your grief.” Thus asked by me, that young lady, with her mind afflicted, told me her entire agony (and) the cause of the agony.

The young lady said:

47-52. I am known as ‘Bhakti’ (Devotion). These two are my excellent sons named ‘Jñāna’ (Knowledge) and ‘Vairāgya’ (Detachment). They are hurt due to contact with destiny. These rivers like Gaṅgā have come (here) to serve me. O Nārada, by these I am everyday served with respect. I am not getting any felicity; I am emaciated all round, O sage. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to my former account, due to which I became unhappy and am getting happiness nowhere. I was born in the Draviḍa country and brought up in Karṇāṭa. For a little (time) I lived in Mahārāṣṭra, and became old in Gurjara. There due to contact with heretics, I got my limbs cut. For a long time I have become weak, and become dull along with my sons.

53-66a. O Nārada, through luck I have reached this Vṛndāvana: I have, as it were, again become a beautiful young girl. Here these two sons have their minds greatly afflicted. Now I am unable to go leaving them who are very old. How have I become a young girl? Why have my sons become old? Due to what is this difference among us who were of the same condition? The old mother exerts herself when the sons are young. So I, with my mind full of wonder, am worried. O you who know religious practices, O kind one, O protector of the helpless, tell me truly the cause that might be there.

Thus asked by her, I, having thought for a moment, again spoke to Bhakti who was emaciated for a long time: “O sinless

one, through my wisdom I see all your account. Do not be sad, O wise one; Viṣṇu will make you happy. O child, this is Kali age, fearful and destroying all goodness. Due to it good conduct, the path of Yoga and penance are violated. Sinful men, doing dishonest and bad acts, become deities in this (age), and the good are much afflicted with grief, and the bad are delighted at heart. No strong-minded, or wise man is seen. This earth having the burden of the groups of the wicked is not fit to be touched or seen. This is the order every year; everyday auspiciousness is given up. O beautiful lady, no one will either see you or these your sons. Men, full of great attachment, have abandoned you; (therefore) you have become infirm. Due to your contact with Vṛndāvana you have again become young. This Vṛndāvana where Bhakti has become young, is blessed. These two, for want of receivers, have not become young. It appears that they are asleep here due to a little joy to them.”

Bhakti said:

66b-81. How did king Parīkṣit install this impure Kali? Why did Viṣṇu, given to kindness, ignore impiety? Remove this doubt of me. I am happy with your words.

O brāhmaṇa, having heard her words, I spoke again. “O girl, if you have asked affectionately, then listen. Since the day Viṣṇu, leaving the earth, went to his own place, Kali, obstructor of the truth, has proceeded. A king saw him in his conquest of the world, and he yielded like a helpless person. The seer of His virtues is not killed. This is common to all. In the Kali age an intelligent man gets that fruit by narrating the account of Viṣṇu, which he does not by means of penance, abstract meditation or concentration. Seeing Kali like this, giving substantial fruit from the unsubstantial, Viṣṇu established this for the good of those born in the Kali age. Due to bad actions, now all excellence has gone away from every place. Objects lie on the ground like husk without seeds. The brāhmaṇas have told the Bhāgavata story in every house out of greed for wealth. Therefore, the excellence has gone. Men doing very cruel deeds, atheists, and hypocrites stay at all holy places. So the excellence has gone. With their minds overtaken by passion, anger, great greed, desire they

commence (religious) acts. Therefore, the excellence of the acts has gone. The fruit of abstract meditation has gone because of non-restraint of mind, greed, hypocrisy, resorting to heretics, want of the study of holy texts. The wise dally with their wives like he-buffaloes. They are expert in producing sons and not in accomplishing salvation. Devotion to Viṣṇu is (found) nowhere. All are led by tradition. All are given to censuring gods; all are fond of condemning the good. This is the practice of the age. Who should be blamed? Therefore, remembering the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) you will get happiness." Hearing these words uttered by me, she was amazed. O best brāhmaṇas, having praised me, she spoke again :

Bhakti said:

82-84. O divine sage, you are blessed. Due to my (good) luck you have come (here). The sight of the good gives all prosperity in the world. Now advise me in such a way that I will have a means for my happiness. O brāhmaṇa, in this world there is nothing to be accomplished by you. I salute Brahmā's son, having heard whose one sentence (Prahlāda) the son of Kayādhū (wife of Hiraṇyakaśipu) subdued the Māyā of (Viṣṇu) the unborn one, and due to whose grace Dhruva attained to an undecaying eternal position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFOUR

Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the Destroyer of All Miseries

Sūta said:

1. O kind sages, listen to what was told by Nārada when he was thus requested by that extremely helpless Bhakti.

Nārada said:

2-10. O girl, do not be sad in vain. Having placed your mind in your heart, remember Śrīkṛṣṇa's lotus-like feet. (By that) you will obtain happiness. That Kṛṣṇa who protected Draupadī from

ignominy from the Kauravas, who looked after the beautiful cowherdresses, has not gone anywhere (else). O Bhakti, you are dear to him, (cared for) even more than his own life. Called by you, the lord will come to even mean houses. In the three ages like Satya knowledge and detachment accomplished salvation. In the Kali age Bhakti (devotion) alone brings about absorption into Brahman. Deciding like this he, of the nature of consciousness, of the form of highest bliss and consciousness, delighted in mind, produced you from his own body. With your palms joined you then asked Hari: "What do I do (now)?" Kṛṣṇa then ordered you: "Nourish my devotees." You accepted to do so. Hari was then pleased. He gave you Salvation as your maid, and Knowledge and Detachment as your sons. Remaining in Vaikuṇṭha you always nourished your devotees. To nourish your devotees you resorted to the form of your shadow (i.e. semblance). Salvation, Knowledge and Detachment came here (i.e. to the earth) with you. From the Kṛta (age) to the Dvāpara age, Mukti (salvation) stayed (here).

11-22a. But in the Kali age, she became emaciated, and suffered from the disease due to the heretics. By your order she again went (back) to Vaikuṇṭha. On merely being remembered by you, she quickly comes (to this world). Looking upon these two as your sons, you have protected them by your side. Due to being ignored in the Kali age both these your sons have become dull and old. Yet you give up anxiety. I shall think of a means. O you beautiful lady, there is no (other) age like the Kali age. In it I shall make you known in every house. If by obscuring other practices and putting forward great festivals, I shall not (be able to) promote you, then I am not Hari's servant. Those living beings, even though sinful, who are endowed with you in the Kali age, will, being fearless, go to Hari's abode. Those of pure forms, who are devoted to you, always of the form of love, will not see Yama even in a dream. An evil spirit, a goblin, a demon or an asura is not capable of touching or seeing those whose minds are full of devotion. Hari is not obtained by means of austerities, Vedas, knowledge or (religious) acts. He is obtained by devotion (only). The proof thereof are the cowherdresses. Men of righteous act might have devotion after a thousand existences. In the Kali age devotion alone (excels). By means of

devotion Kṛṣṇa stands before (the devotee). Those who offend Bhakti, perish in the three worlds. Formerly Durvāsas who condemned Bhakti, suffered misery. Enough of virtuous conduct; enough of (visiting) holy places; enough of abstract meditations; enough of sacrifices; enough of narrations of wise tales; Bhakti alone always gives salvation.

22b-30. Thus addressed by me, and having heard her own greatness, she, with her entire body full of joy, again said these words (to me): “O Nārada, you are blessed. You have a steady affection for me. I shall never let go your attention to me. O good one, by you, kind (to me), my suffering is destroyed in a moment. My two sons do not have understanding. Rouse these two.” Hearing those words of her, I, having pity, touching (them) with my hand, proceeded to rouse (them). Bringing my mouth near their ears, I loudly uttered the words: “Jñāna, rise quickly. O Vairāgya, awake.” Though repeatedly being roused by the sounds of the Vedas, by the recitals of the Gītā, they did not somehow get roused. Not seeing (anything) with their eyes, and languidly yawning, both were grey-haired like cranes, and had their bodies mostly dry like wood. The two, emaciated with hunger, having observed (me), again went to sleep. Then I was full of thought: ‘What should I do (now)? Oh, how will their sleep go (away)? Their old age is severe.’

31-42. O best brāhmaṇas, thinking like this, I constantly remembered Govinda. Just then there was heard a divine voice: “O sage, do not be dejected. Your exertion will be fruitful. There is no doubt. For this purpose, O divine sage, do a good deed. Good men, ornaments of the virtuous, will tell you that good deed. When that good deed is done, the sleep and the old age of these two will disappear in a moment. Bhakti (devotion) will spread everywhere.” O brāhmaṇas, even after having distinctly heard this divine voice, I could not make out as to what was told by the voice in a secretive manner. What is that deed due to which the two would be endowed with understanding? Where would be the good ones? How will they tell that good deed to me? Now what should I do (about) what the divine voice told me? Then, O brāhmaṇas, having placed them there, I went out of Vṛndāraṇya, and asked the best brāhmaṇas here and there.

Having heard the entire account and with their minds amazed, they, not understanding the divine voice, did not give a reply. Some said: "It cannot be comprehended". Others said: "It cannot be understood." Others, thinking again and again, kept mum. The triad, though being roused with the sounds of the Vedas, and Vedāntas, and also by repeated recitations of the Gītā, did not rise. 'Oh, (how cruel) is fate! How can other human beings do that which the meditating saint Nārada himself could not understand?' Then being thoughtful I came to Badarivana. I determined to practise penance for that purpose. Just then I saw the best sages, Sanaka and others, bright like a crore of suns. I spoke to those best sages:

43-48. "I saw you due to great luck. Therefore, O noble ones, with your minds pleased, you may (please) tell me the means. You are the greatest among the meditating saints. You are intelligent. You are very learned; you, Kumāras, five years old, are the ancestors of the ancient people. You always live in Vaikuṇṭha; you are always engaged in narrating (the glory of) Viṣṇu. You are intoxicated by the account—the nectar—of (Viṣṇu's) sports. You are devoted to remembering Viṣṇu. Therefore, (old age,) the Daughter of Time does not trouble you. Due just to the knitting of your eye-brows, formerly the two door-keepers of Viṣṇu became demons for three existences, and again came back to their places. (Please) tell the means which is told by the heavenly voice. O kind ones, (please) tell me what should be done and in what way in this matter. The wise ones should well tell (me) how Bhakti, Jñāna and Vairāgya would secure happiness, and how they would attain fame in all the worlds".

Kumāras said:

49-57. O divine sage, do not be anxious. Have delight in your mind. There is a means in this matter, which can be easily had, and which gives happiness to the world. O Nārada, you are blessed. You are the crest-jewel of the detached ones. You are the foremost among those who are fit for Śrīkṛṣṇa's love. You are the best among speakers. O divine sage, it is no wonder for you, engrossed in the means of devotion, to spread devotion properly on the earth. For (securing) divine faculties the sages have designed various means. They could be secured with exertion; and

all of them mostly give heaven as their fruit. The path leading to Vaikuṇṭha is hidden in the worlds. A good man, teaching it, is generally not found. O best sage, that good act which the divine voice indicated to you, is known by the ancients to be jñānayajña (knowledge-sacrifice). We feel that the talk (i.e. the recitation) of Śrīmad Bhāgavata is a knowledge-sacrifice, told by Śuka, and would give happiness to Bhakti, Jñāna and Virāga. All these sins of Kali, afraid of the sound of Śrīmad Bhāgavata, run away like wolves at the roar of lion. Bhakti, along with Jñāna and Vairāgya, producing the feeling of joy in each house, in each person, will sport happily.

Sūta said:

58. Having heard Kumāras' words, revered Nārada, with his mind delighted, looking to their prosperity, spoke again.

Nārada said:

59-62. The triad, covered by Kali's noxious qualities, is not rising (though) roused by sounds of Vedas and Vedāṅgas, and recitations of the Gītā. How (then) will it rise now by the recitation of Bhāgavata? You, whose sight is fruitful should (please) remove this doubt. O you who are affectionate to those who seek your shelter, (please) do not tarry in this matter.

Then Sanaka and others, detached and living in perpetual celibacy, the ancient brāhmaṇas, who had supernatural faculties, respectfully said to Nārada:

Kumāras said:

63-71. The Bhāgavata-account has risen from the quintessence of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Therefore, it appears to be the best, and the rise of fruit is different. As the taste is present in a mango fruit from the bottom to the top, but is different when separated and drunk, and delights all, as ghee present in milk is not thought to be pleasant, but when separated is divine, and increases the joy of gods, as sugar remains pervading the bottom, the middle and the end (i.e. the top) of a sugarcane, and is sweet when separated, so is Bhāgavata-story. The Purāṇa

named Śrīmad Bhāgavata is relish itself; it is manifested for the happiness of Bhakti, Jñāna and Vairāgya to Brahmā, remaining in the lotus born from his navel, by Kṛṣṇa. The four-versed (summary) of it appears to be the entire Brahman. That account was narrated to you by Brahmā. You also narrated it to Vyāsadeva, to destroy torment. By remembering it Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa) instantly became depressed; and in a manner delighting the soul, composed (the work of) the great name. Due to what are you amazed, that you are asking again and again? The holy text of Śrīmad Bhāgavata is capable of attracting Kṛṣṇa.

Sūta said:

72. Having heard these desired words spoken by the foremost ones like Sanaka, the best meditating saints, Nārada devoutly seized their feet, and saluting them by bowing his head, said to them who destroy the misery of the world.

Nārada said:

73-74. Your sight destroys the stream of sins. It gives bliss to those who are afflicted by the wild fire in the form of the misery of the mundane existence, by drinking it when fully sung by Śeṣa's mouth. I have sought your shelter for the manifestation of love. If due to the rise of religious merit earned in many existences a lucky person gets the company of the good, his great darkness of delusion caused by ignorance would perish, and great discrimination springs (in him).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFIVE

The Rule of Reciting and Listening to the Bhāgavata for a Week

Sūta said:

1. Then the divine sage, having asked for leave of the Kumāras, and bending down, showing respect for knowledge-sacrifice, said:

Nārada said:

2-4. With care I shall perform knowledge-sacrifice, highlighted by the narrative of the holy Śuka-text for establishing Bhakti, Jñāna and Virāga. O brāhmaṇas, tell me the place where I should perform the sacrifice. I have chosen you four only as the conductors of the sacrifice. O you proficient in knowledge-sacrifice, for how many days should the Bhāgavata-story be heard? What rite should be performed at that time?

Kumāras said:

5-12. O Nārada, listen. We shall tell you the place, being heard at which the story would destroy the heaps of sins of men, and increase their religious merit. Near Gaṅgādvāra there is a great city called Kāmada. To the north of the divine river there is a bank called Ānanda. It is resorted to by many hosts of sages and deities and siddhas. It is full of many trees and creepers, clean, soft sand. It is charming, is in a lonely region, and is adorned with golden lotuses. In the minds of the beings living near it and having in their minds love for one another, there was no enmity due to the power of this place only. You should carefully perform there knowledge-sacrifice. The story (of Bhāgavata) recited there will give unprecedented delight. Bhakti will come there followed by her two sons remaining on the street of Vṛndāvana and with their bodies worn out due to old age. Bhakti with her sons will become a young lady after drinking the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's glory at the place where there will be recitation of Bhāgavata.

Sūta said:

13-20. Having spoken like this, the Kumāras, along with Nārada, went quickly to Gaṅgādvāra for (performing) the knowledge-sacrifice. O best among Bhārgavas, when they reached the bank of Gaṅgā, there was a great din in the seven worlds like Bhū. The residents of the seven worlds, desirous of (enjoying) the flavour of Bhāgavata came there running, so also the devotees of Viṣṇu like Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Cyavana, Gautama, Medhātithi, Devala, Devarāta, Rāma, Viśvāmitra, Śākala, sons of Mṛkaṇḍa, of Atri, and Pippalāda, masters of abstract meditation, Vyāsa, Parāśara, Śuka and others, the chief among the followers of

Viṣṇu, who were accompanied by their disciples, who knew many holy texts, who were chief among those relishing Kṛṣṇa's account. The Upaniṣads, the Vedas, the hymns, the religious treatises teaching magical formulas for the worship of the deities, the digests, the ten and seven Purāṇas, the six Śāstras (philosophical treatises) also came there. So also rivers like Gaṅgā, lakes like Puṣkara, all holy places, all quarters, forests like Daṇḍaka, mountains like Himālaya, gods, gandharvas, kinnaras, islands, seas, regents of quarters, and residents of the nether world came there.

21-25. Nārada gave an excellent seat at the time of the initiation. All the Kumāras, highly devoted to Kṛṣṇa, who were saluted, sat (there). Devotees of Viṣṇu, those who were very much detached and had renounced the world, celibates, were the chief; they remained at the fore; and Nārada sat before them. On his left were the hosts of sages, on his right were the residents of heaven. O descendant of Bhṛgu, Vedas, Upaniṣads, so also the Holy Places were (seated) elsewhere. Echoing in the ten quarters the shouts of victory, words of salutation and the sound of conches touched the sky. The residents of heaven, being pleased, got into aeroplanes and showered flowers of desire-yielding trees over the assembly.

Sūta said:

26. When those Bhṛgu and others were seated as they deserved, they narrated the importance of Bhāgavata to Nārada.

Kumāras said:

27-48. O Nārada, listen. We shall, according to the rule, tell you the wonderful greatness of the holy text called Śrīmad Bhāgavata. Righteous people should always resort (i.e. listen) to the Bhāgavata-story, by hearing which they become contented. The treatise called Śrīmad Bhāgavata comprises eighteen thousand verses and twelve skandhas (sections), and is (in the form of) a dialogue between Parīkṣit and Śuka. As long as the text of (i.e. narrated by) Śuka does not reach the ears of a man, he, being deluded by ignorance, moves in the circle of the mundane existence. If men purified by devotion have not listened to Bhāgavata, what is the use of their having listened to many holy texts,

Purāṇas, digests and scriptures? The houses of those men, in which the Bhāgavata-story is always (narrated), are of the nature of holy places and destroy sins. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are not worth even a sixteenth part of the Bhāgavata-story. O best sage, sins remain in this body as long as Bhāgavata is not properly listened to by a man. In the meritorious fruit, Gaṅgā, Gayā, Kāśī, or Puṣkara is not equal to the Bhāgavata-story. If you desire the destruction of the mundane existence, then recite everyday with your own mouth a half or a quarter verse from Bhāgavata. Bhāgavata is the origin of the Vedas, the mother of the Vedas, so also of the Puruṣa-sūkta. The triad of the Vedas is Bhāgavata; so also the two formulas—twelve-syllabled and eight-syllabled. The Sun, Prayāga, Time of the form of years, brāhmaṇas maintaining sacred fire, (the desire-yielding cow) Surabhi, the twelfth day (of a month), Tulasī, spring season, Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu)—among these, O best sage, there is actually no difference. O Nārada, the sin of that brāhmaṇa, committed during crores of existences, who would everyday expound Bhāgavata, perishes. To men, the listening to, reciting or thinking about Bhāgavata and waiting upon Tulasī and fire, give salvation and devotion. He who, being full of devotion, free from pride, eating limited (food), with his senses restrained, gives Śrīmad Bhāgavata along with a golden throne on the full-moon day of Bhādrapada to the best brāhmaṇa and listens to it from the beginning would obtain the world where absorption into Kṛṣṇa is had. He who, when his time of death has approached, abandoning fear far away, would devoutly listen to Bhāgavata, obtains salvation. He, the wicked one, who, right from his birth, has not, after properly controlling his mind, drunk (i.e. listened to) the account of Kṛṣṇa, has in vain led his life like a cāṇḍāla or a beast on the earth, and has very much tormented his mother. The life of those men who have not listened to Bhāgavata, have not worshipped the Ancient Man (Viṣṇu), have not offered oblations into the mouths of brāhmaṇas has become fruitless. The sages, the ancient siddhas, say: "Fie upon that man resembling a beast, a burden on the earth, whose mind, wicked due to the contact with the bad, does not take delight in the story of Bhāgavata." The story of Bhāgavata is

quite difficult to be had (i.e. heard) on the earth. It is had by means of the religious merit due to crores of existences.

49-56. Therefore, O treasure of abstract meditation, O good man, the story of Viṣṇu should be heard everyday. O brāhmaṇa, there is really no rule about it (i.e. about listening to it). Since listening to it is believed to be done with truthfulness and celibacy, therefore, in the Kali age there is a special rule about it of the nature of (its being listened to for) seven days. The listening to it is prescribed for seven days on account of the lack of the control of a man's mind, a disease, or shortening of his life, and due to many blemishes of Kali. It is possible to control the mind and follow a prescribed course for seven days (only). Therefore, this rule is formed. That fruit which is had by devoutly listening (to it) everyday from the beginning to the end for seven days is laid down by Śuka. That fruit which is not had by means of penance, abstract meditation or concentration, is easily had by listening to it for seven days. The rule of (reciting or listening to) Bhāgavata for seven days is said to be better than performing a sacrifice, observing a vow, practising penance and meditation, acquiring knowledge and visiting a holy place. When Kṛṣṇa was ready to go to his own place after having left the earth, intelligent Uddhava, knowing it, said (these) words to Govinda:

Uddhava said:

57-63. O revered one, after having accomplished the entire mission of the gods, you now desire to go to your own place, beyond darkness. Therefore, O lord, worry due to fear of separation from you has arisen in me. O lord of gods, remove it. I have sought your refuge. This terrible Kali age has come. In it all people will be wicked. Therefore, O lord, tell (me) what should be done. Whose shelter will this earth, full of burden, seek? O Yadunandana, no other protector like you is seen here. Therefore, O treasure of compassion, showing pity on us, stay here only. O lord, you have manifested (yourself) only for the protection of the good. Even though you are qualityless, formless, and only of the form of the good, consciousness and bliss, your devotees will not remain on the earth in separation from you. There is difficulty in worshipping the qualityless. Therefore, do what is good for us.

Sūta said:

64-68. Having heard these words of Uddhava, Viṣṇu thought for a moment and being full of great compassion, gave him Bhāgavata, after having deposited his own lustre into it, O brāhmaṇa. Having given it to Uddhava, the lord entered his own place. Due to that this image of Viṣṇu in the form of words is here (in the world). By constantly resorting to it the sin of men would perish in a moment. Therefore, listening to it for seven days is said to be the best. O brāhmaṇa, its listeners, speaker or questioner become one with him. Bhāgavata is capable of removing misery, poverty, ill luck and sins, of overcoming passion and anger in the Kali age. Otherwise, how can, Viṣṇu's Māyā, difficult to be overcome even by gods, turn away from men without (the help of) Bhāgavata?

Sūta said:

69-73. Having thus told the greatness of Bhāgavata, they commenced narrating the divine story of Bhāgavata. When (the narration of) Bhāgavata, the essence of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, was commenced by the brāhmaṇas, Bhakti in a moment manifested herself there only. She was full of love, of a charming body, and had held her two sons, full of joy, by her hands; and was uttering the names (like) Śrīkṛṣṇa, Govinda, Hari, Murāri, Nātha (lord). The members of the assembly saw her, the ornament of Bhāgavata and of a very fine dress; and with wonder in their eyes all of them thought: 'How (has she come)? Wherefrom (has she come)? Who is she?' Then the blessed Kumāras said: "Now she has come out from the contents of the story." Having heard words like this, she, along with her sons, politely said to the sons of Brahmā:

Bhakti said:

74. Though perished in the Kali age, you have today nourished me with the elegance of the (Bhāgavata) story. Where shall I sit with these two? Show me a favourite seat.

Sūta said:

75. Having heard these words, Brahmā's sons having thought and properly reflected in their minds, spoke to Bhakti, who

removes the disease in the form of the mundane existence, who gives love alone to those who have devotion for Viṣṇu.

Kumāras said:

76-78. When there are good devotees, having controlled their mind from going astray and having concentrated it on the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, after being devoted to Viṣṇu, these blemishes due to Kali, though powerful in the world, will not be able to see you. Led by Nārada, you alone will bring about the welfare of the world. In the entire world, those poor people in whose heart remains devotion to Viṣṇu alone, are, extremely blessed. Even Viṣṇu, tied by the bond of love, leaves his own world quickly and enters their heart.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSIX

Dhundhult's Story

Sūta said:

1-7. Seeing extra-ordinary devotion in the minds of Viṣṇu's devotees, Viṣṇu left his world, and went to the earth. He was having a garland of wood flowers; was dark like a cloud; had put on yellow garments; was wearing a crown; his group of girdles was dishevelled; his ear-rings in the shape of crocodiles were shining. He was charming due to three folds; was adorned with the beautiful Kaustubha; he was handsome like a crore of Cupids; he was besmeared with (the yellow sandal called) haricandana. He was the image of great joy and consciousness; he was sweet; and had held a flute. He entered the pure hearts of his devotees. Those followers of Viṣṇu, who lived in Vaikuṇṭha and were of tranquil minds, and of concealed forms, came to listen to Viṣṇu's tale. Then there was a shout of victory mixed with the sound of conches, due to which (everything) inauspicious, very fierce due to Kali, perished. Seeing that the people there had forgotten their houses and themselves, Nārada knowing the truth about the Supreme Soul said to the Kumāras:

Nārada said:

8-11a. O best sages, this greatness due to the seven days' (reading of or listening to the Bhāgavata) which I saw is uncommon. Even the fools, the wicked, so also the beasts and birds do reach the position known to be the highest. No other holy text so pure is laid down for the purification of the heart in the world of men. O Kumāras, in the Kali age, the abode of blemishes, it destroys the stream of sins, and brings about blessedness. (Please) tell me who are not purified by the devotional act (of reading of or listening to the Bhāgavata) for seven days, full of the stories (from it). You, the kind ones, have shown a new path for the good of the people.

Kumāras said:

11b-15. Those men who are sinners, very wicked, engaged in doing bad acts, are jealous, burnt by fire in the form of anger, crooked, passionate, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act for seven days. Those who are without truth (i.e. are not truthful), who censure their father and mother, who are full of thirst (i.e. desire), who are out (of the fold) of the (four) stages of human life and castes, who are hypocrites, who are hurtful, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act (of reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) for seven days. Those, who have committed the five terrible sins, who are deceitful, cruel, who are pitiless like goblins, who have fed themselves with others' wealth, who are adulterous, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act extending over seven days. Those wicked ones who violently always commit sins with their body, words or mind, who are mean, ungrateful, impure, wicked-hearted, go to Viṣṇu by means of the devotional act extending over seven days.

Sūta said:

16. Then, when Nārada, honoured by gods, was thus pleased in heart, the Kumāras who were pleased, again said to Nārada:

Kumāras said:

17-31. About this I shall tell you an old historical account, by merely hearing which, destruction of sins takes place. Formerly

in the city called Kohala, full of the practices (proper) for the castes and the stages of human life, and of wealth and grains, (situated) on the bank of Tuṅgabhadṛā, there was the best brāhmaṇa known as Ātmadeva, who was proficient in Vedic learning and rites, and engaged in daily duties. His dear wife was Dhundhulī by name. She was always engaged in her own welfare. She regulated (everything) with her words; she was beautiful, and was born in good family. Generally she talked much as a result of her former acts. She was valiant in domestic duties, cruel, and was quarrelsome. When the couple, having no child, was staying there, they crossed the age of the measure of fifty years. They, being childless, lived unhappily in their house. For the birth of a child they gave wealth etc. (to brāhmaṇas). So also they gave many cows, (pieces of) land, (coins of) gold and garments. (But) due to (the effect of) their former deeds, neither a son nor a daughter was born (to them). And once that best brāhmaṇa Ātmadeva, dejected and unhappy due to not having a child, left his house and went to a forest. With his mind overcome by grief, he, emaciated by hunger, and encompassed by thirst, wandering here and there, luckily reached a lake. That best brāhmaṇa, having drunk water in (i.e. from) that lake, sat after resorting to the shade of a tree, O Nārada. By chance, just then, a siddha, roaming over the earth, came (there); he too, drinking the water in (i.e. from) the lake, came there only. Having seen that tranquil anchorite, the noble-minded Ātmadeva honoured him and touched his feet as of his own preceptor. The two who were seated (there), being of very affectionate minds, asked questions to each other like a preceptor and his disciple in a hermitage. That anchorite, the ocean of pity, seeing him of an afflicted heart and sighing, asked that Ātmadeva, seated before him:

The siddha said:

32-33. O best brāhmaṇa, what great worry is there in your heart causing grief? O you who know religious practices, tell me that, tormenting you.

Hearing those words of that very noble siddha, Ātmadeva then told him the cause of his grief.

Ātmadeva said:

34-37. O sage, what should I tell you about the grief accumulated due to former deeds? My ancestors are drinking tepid water. My ancestors, so also deities, are not at all accepting the offerings made by me. Dejected due to that grief, I have come here to cast my life. Fie upon my life, my house without progeny, my wealth and family! Even the cow protected by me becomes barren. Even the tree planted by me becomes barren. What is the use of the life of me who am luckless and childless?

Kumāras said:

38-39. Speaking like this when he, oppressed by grief, wept loudly before him, great compassion arose in the heart of the sage. The wise one seeing the line of letters on his forehead and understanding it, spoke again in detail to the brāhmaṇa Ātmadeva:

The siddha said:

40-42. O brāhmaṇa, listen. Today I have read your fate. Your having a son is not seen till the seventh existence. Give up your persistence for a child. The course of fate is most powerful. Taking to right knowledge, be happy, O very intelligent one.

Hearing these words of the siddha, the best brāhmaṇa, with his heart fixed on having a child, and being very unhappy spoke to the siddha:

The brāhmaṇa said:

43-50. What would happen with right knowledge? Give me a son even by force. Otherwise, I, filled with grief, will cast my life before you.

Seeing this persistence of the brāhmaṇa, the ascetic said: "Sagara, king of Aṅga, obtained misery. Citraketu became miserable due to wiping out the writing of fate. Therefore, O you who know religious practices, you will not be happy with a son, for fate is very powerful." Saying so, that siddha, honoured by the good, gave a fruit to the best brāhmaṇa, who persisted for a son. "O brāhmaṇa, I have given this fruit to you for obtaining a

son. Give it to your wife. By that a son will undoubtedly be born to you. The wife should, for a year, resort to truthfulness, purity, kindness, charity, eating once a day only. The son would be pure due to that." Speaking like this the meditating saint left, (and) the brāhmaṇa came home. Having given the fruit to his wife, he told her what the siddha had said. Then that cruel Dhundhulī was always eager to have her say.

51-59. She told her friend all that the siddha had said: "If I would eat the fruit given by the siddha, then I would be pregnant. How shall I be able to bear it? I shall have little food, and will not have strength to move or for domestic work. If the foetus would be slanting, then it would be my death. How can I, so delicate, bear the pangs of delivery? When I shall be dull my sister-in-law would take away all my possessions. I am worried. O you of bright smile, what do (i.e. should) I do?" She, O brāhmaṇa, for fear of breaking the friendship, with her face smiling affectionately said: "It is just so." Due to this wrong reasoning she did not eat the fruit at all. When her husband asked her: "Have you eaten the fruit?", she told him, "I have eaten it." Once her sister came to her house of her own accord. She told all that to her (saying): "This is my great anxiety. By being pregnant what shall I do? Tell me what is proper." She said: "I am carrying. After delivery I shall give my foetus (i.e. child) to you. Till that time live happily in your house, as if you are pregnant, concealing (the fact). I shall always nourish the child in your house only. O you of an auspicious face, today give the fruit to the cow to test (the siddha's words)."

60-69. Speaking like this, she went home with a pleased mind. Dhundhulī also did as her sister had told her. She, after having delivered a child, quickly gave it to Dhundhulī. She too told her husband: "The son is comfortably born." Due to a child born to Ātmadeva, people became happy. He gave gifts to best brāhmaṇas, and performed the ceremony at the birth of the child. In his house there was the auspicious sound of songs and musical instruments. Ātmadeva, the very intelligent one, was joyful. Then she said to her husband: "There is no milk in my breasts. How shall I now nourish the child born recently, O lord? My sister also has delivered; but soon her child died. Bring her and keep her in (our) house. She will nourish the child." Hearing the

words of that Dhundhulī, the confused Ātmadeva, the best brāhmaṇa, full of joy, did just like that. The mother significantly named him Dhundhukārī. The boy obtained nourishment from the milk of his mother's sister. After three months had passed, the cow gave birth to a child. He was handsome in all limbs, was divine, spotless and had lustre like gold. Having seen him, the brāhmaṇa was pleased, and himself performed the sacraments. All people that had come with a desire to see him were very much amazed.

70-78a. (They said:) "Due to the rise of great good luck of the brāhmaṇa Ātmadeva a boy, of a divine form, is born of the cow. It is a great wonder." Due to destiny nobody knew the secret. Seeing the boy to have ears like those of a cow, he called him Gokaṇṇa only. After some time both of them attained youth. Gokaṇṇa was learned and wise. Dhundhukārī was very wicked. He was without a bath or purity or rites, ate prohibited food, and was full of anger. He was a thief, hated all people, and kept the company of wicked cāṇḍālas. He forcibly seized the children that were playing and threw them into a well. In the same way, being addicted to prostitutes, he diminished (i.e. squandered) his father's money. Like a helpless person, his poor father wept. "A childless person is happy. A bad son causes grief. Now I have experienced that the siddha's words are true. Where should I go? Where should I stay? Who would remove my misery? I shall cast my life in water or fire; or I would fall from a precipice." To him, his father who was thinking like this and whose face was hung down, the wise Gokaṇṇa came and properly advised him.

Gokaṇṇa said:

78b-84. O father, the mundane existence is worthless; it causes misery and delusion to men. O father, who is a son? What is wealth? Who is whose wife? Who is the husband? The helpless world, tied by delusion, suffers, and not due to any other cause. Indra does not have any happiness; a sovereign emperor has no happiness. O father, only a detached sage, given to seclusion, has happiness. Give up your ignorance, the delusion of the form of progeny, the cause of hell. Being free from the couples (of opposite qualities) and from pride, and giving up everything, go to a forest.

Hearing these words of him, the brāhmaṇa said to Gokaṇṇa:

The brāhmaṇa said:

O good one, tell me in detail what should be done in the forest. O you treasure of pity, emancipate me who am tied down by the chains of delusion, who am wicked and of a mean mind, and who am fallen in the ditch of the worldly existence.

Hearing these words of his father Gokaṇṇa, learned due to knowledge and with his mind pleased, spoke to his helpless, dejected father:

Gokaṇṇa said:

85-86. Quickly give up the feeling of mineness for this (your) body which is a collection of flesh and bones, and for (your) wife, sons etc. Note that this world is momentary. Be a wise man, taking interest in detachment, and be firm in devotion. Always resort to religious practices. Give up the practices of (common) people. Serve good men. Give up desire for pleasures. Quickly give up thinking about the faults and virtues of others, and drink deep the juice of the stories of Viṣṇu.

Kumāras said:

87. Having thus known the experience told by his son, he who was of a firm mind and free from desire, and who had crossed sixty years, abandoned his house; and the magnanimous one, always followed by people dear to Viṣṇu, and living in a forest, obtained Viṣṇu's position.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSEVEN

*The Seven-day Bhāgavata Recitation**Kumāras said:*

1-10a. O Nārada, when the father had thus gone to the forest, the very wicked Dhundhukārin came and threatened his mother. O Nārada, (he said) to his mother: "Tell me where the wealth is. If you do not tell me about the grains, by all means I shall kill you. She, frightened by his words, and with her mind afflicted, fell at night in a well and died. After knowing it people took her out. Gokaṇṇa took out the dead body with the help of brāhmaṇas, her relatives. O sage, the wise one, to whom pleasure and pain were alike, went on a pilgrimage. Dhundhukārin lived in his house, and was surrounded by harlots. Due to his practice of very fierce deeds, he did not know how to feed them. The harlots, desiring ornaments, said to him: "O dear one, all of us have been associated with you, our protector, and have stayed (with you). O you who respect others, here there is no other giver of wealth. Therefore, give us fine garments and bright ornaments. Otherwise, we shall go to another man from (i.e. leaving) you." Hearing these words of them, he thought for a moment, and then he, blind due to desire for sensual enjoyment, and not being aware of death, went out of his house at night, stole from someone's house garments and ornaments, and O Nārada, he, full of joy, gave those to them to please them.

10b-22. Seeing those priceless garments and ornaments, the women thought: 'He has brought these by stealing them'. Deciding like this, they consulted one another. Everyday he commits thefts. The king will arrest him. Having snatched his wealth, he will certainly beat him. Then, why should we not secretly kill him committing thefts, and collecting much wealth go to another place? (Deliberating) like this, those wicked ones were intent on killing him, when asleep, binding him at the neck with very strong cords. When he did not die even after his neck was pressed, they threw many burning charcoals on his face. Being oppressed by the great affliction due to the flames of fire, he died. The almost rash women threw his body in a ditch. O best sage, nobody knew his whereabouts. When asked by people,

they said, "Our lord has gone away. After getting wealth he will come (back) after a long time." Therefore, the best learned men should not trust women. They always hurt the one that trusts them, and go to newer and newer (men). Their words are full of nectar, increasing the interest of the passionate; (but) their heart is like the edge of a razor. Who indeed is dear to women? Then those prostitutes, taking the large wealth, much perturbed by the fear of the king, quickly went to another village. Dhundhukārin, doing bad deeds, became a big evil spirit. Taking up the form of a storm, he everyday ran (away) into the directions away from wicked death. He was troubled by cold and heat, was without food, and thirsty.

23-29. Repeatedly crying loudly "Ha! ha!" he did not get happiness anywhere. Knowing, after some time, that he was dead, Gokaṛṇa performed a śrāddha at Gayā during his pilgrimage. After completing his pilgrimage, he came (back) to his village. The villagers, his kinsmen and relatives honoured him. The brāhmaṇa stayed at home for a few days. Knowing that Gokaṛṇa was asleep in the yard of his house at night, wicked Dhundhukārin showed him his fierce form. For a moment he became an elephant; in a moment he became a camel; in a moment he became a buffalo; in a moment he became fire; in a moment he became a serpent; and a man in a moment. Seeing this inauspiciousness, the intelligent Gokaṛṇa, very much amazed, mustered courage and thought: 'What is this? This is some mean man, reduced to a miserable condition.' Deciding like this to his mind, he, full of pity, said:

Gokaṛṇa said:

30-36. Who are you so fierce, that have come at night to frighten me? Are you an evil spirit or a goblin? Due to what are you reduced to this condition? O glorious one, tell me what I should do for you now, since you, of a fierce form, have approached me at night.

Hearing these words of his brother, that very wicked Dhundhukārin who was reduced to the condition of an evil spirit, and who was very much afflicted, wept. Confused by his condition of an evil spirit, he was not able to speak with

words. Being thirsty, he indicated with signs (that he wanted) to drink water. Then that highly virtuous Gokaṛṇa, esteemed by the good, took water in the hollow of his hands, and raising it, threw it (on him). That water thrown by the noble Gokaṛṇa, his brother, came to satisfy the evil spirit, Dhundhukārin. Then having obtained consciousness due to the water given by his virtuous brother, Gokaṛṇa, he spoke, O Nārada:

The evil spirit said:

37-47a. I am your brother named Dhundhukārin. Due to the fault of my deeds, I have been reduced to the condition of an evil spirit. My mother, terrified by me in many ways, died through grief. Then eager to feed the prostitutes, I, for getting money, committed prohibited acts like stealing, through greed of money. Once they asked me for excellent ornaments. Stealing them from a rich man's house at night, I brought them. Then through greed of wealth, O you who give respect (to others), they forcibly tied me at the neck, and killed me by throwing fire on me. Taking that abundant wealth, all of them, having given up the goodness of heart, ran away from this town through the fear of the king. I was reduced to the condition of an evil spirit. O brother, today being sprinkled by you, the kind one, with water due to (my) religious merit, I regained consciousness. I live on air. Due to my luck, the desired thing has come up. I saw you, my brother, asleep in the yard of your house. Then I suddenly exerted to attack you who did not know me. O good one, now I have been recognised by you. O my brother, O brother of the helpless, O ocean of pity, quickly free me from this condition of an evil spirit. There is no doubt that you are blessed.

Hearing these words of his brother, the wise, very intelligent Gokaṛṇa, with his mind dejected, spoke to his brother Dhundhukārin, who was afflicted:

Gokaṛṇa said:

47b-51. Hearing from the people's mouths that you were dead, I offered you a piṇḍa at Gayā. How have you been reduced to the condition of an evil spirit, O brother? Even one reduced to a miserable condition secures an auspicious course by means

of a piṇḍa offered to him at Gayā. There is no doubt about this. How is it that you did not go to heaven?

Hearing these words of Gokaṇṇa, the noble one, Dhundhukārin who was in front of him and whose mind was afflicted, said: "Even by the śrāddha at Gayā I shall not be liberated. You should think of a means for my emancipation." Hearing these words of him Gokaṇṇa was amazed.

52-57a. He said: "If by means of śrāddhas you are not getting liberation, then your reaching heaven is impossible. O evil spirit, now, being fearless, resort to your own place. After having thought I shall adopt a means for your liberation." Having heard these words, Dhundhukārin went from there to his place, the bibhītaka tree in the cremation ground. Then, O Nārada, the remaining night Gokaṇṇa remained there thinking about his liberation. He did not find a means for that. In the morning that Gokaṇṇa told the account of the night to his relatives and members of his family, so also to brāhmaṇas who knew sacred treatises. When after having pondered over the matter (consulting) sacred treatises, they did not find the means, they eulogized the Sun.

The brāhmaṇas said:

57b-70a. Salutation to you, O Bhāskara, Āditya, Tamohantā (Dispeller of darkness), Gabhastimat (Possesser of rays), Loka-sākṣin (Observer of the world), Jagaddhāman (Resort of the world), to you who are saluted by gods and demons, O Dvādaśātman, Harihayabhāsvan (Shining with bay horses), Lokaprabodhaka (Awakener of the world), you always are the resort of the people of pious nature. You are Brahmā; you are Viṣṇu; you are Śiva—the authors of creation, maintenance and destruction. O lord, except you there is no refuge of the living beings in the world. You are Śarva, of the form of the earth, and Bhava, taking up the form of water. You are of the form of fire; you are Rudra; you are air, taking up a fierce form. You are fearful, having the sky as your body. You are the sacrificer, and the lord of beings. You are Mahādeva, Īśāna, the form of the moon, so also the sun. Eight divine images of you pervading the three worlds are offered oblations by the teachers of the Vedas for accomplishing all desires.

You are the Fish, holding the Vedas. You are the excellent Tortoise, supporting the mountain. You are Varāha, supporting the earth; you hold the three worlds; you are Trivikrama (i.e. Viṣṇu); you are Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) destroying the harmers of brāhmaṇas. You are Rāghava killing those who harm the world. You are Kṛṣṇa removing the burden of the earth. You are Buddha deluding the demons. You are Kalki, the killer of the Mlecchas in every age when piety is declining. You, taking up the form of Brahman, are the creator of gods, demons, men, beasts and birds, of beings moving in the water, of beings of many kinds. O Lord of the host of senses, you are Indra, Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), Varuṇa, Kubera. You live in the form of the regent of a quarter. You are of three forms; you are to be offered oblations three times (a day); you are having three abodes; you are of the nature of three constituents. You, the Sun, separated in three ways, are alone worshipped by people. O lord of the world, you alone cause the lotuses to bloom.

O best sage, when, having spoken like this, the best brāhmaṇas stood (there), (the Sun) moving in the sky spoke distinctly when they were listening:

Śrī Sūrya said:

70b-84. O best brāhmaṇas, since you extolled me for pacifying the major sin of Dhundhulī's son, listen. This Gokaṇṇa, a calf, will emancipate him by means of (the reading of) the Bhāgavata for seven days, due to the religious merit of Ātmadeva. By eulogizing (me) with the hymn composed by you, and describing my glory, a man will obtain a divine vehicle, O brāhmaṇas. A man desiring sons, wealth, piety, salvation, will obtain it surely by reciting the Vāñchācintāmaṇi hymn.

Saying so, god Bhāskara, remaining in the sky, ceased (speaking). The brāhmaṇas, with their minds delighted, said 'Well (done)' to Gokaṇṇa. Then to the assembly of the brāhmaṇas on the auspicious bank of Tūṅgabhadrā, the citizens went to see the very great wonder. Gokaṇṇa, who had known the truth, who was the reciter, was seated on a high seat. Having saluted Nārāyaṇa and others, he commenced (the reading of the Bhāgavata

for) seven days. 'If the holy text, the word of Viṣṇu is truly a holy place, springing from his lotus like feet, then may the son of Dhundhulī obtain heaven.' Mentally resolving like this, he recited (the Purāṇa) called Bhāgavata, beginning with *Janmādyasya yataḥ* and ending with *Dhṛtmahi*. Then the evil spirit, having come there, and looking for a seat here and there, took up the form of air and entered a bamboo having seven knots. O Nārada, while the brāhmaṇas, the foremost among the best brāhmaṇas were listening, the son of Dhundhulī, remaining in the hole of the knot everyday listened (to the Purāṇa). When, O Nārada, on the first day the narration came to an end, one knot of the bamboo bursted. It was a great wonder. On the second and other days also the knots bursted like this. When the seventh (knot) bursted he instantly abandoned his condition of an evil spirit. Being one having a divine form, and being adorned with a garland of Tulasī (leaves), wearing yellow garments, dark like a cloud, and full of ornaments, he shone. Saluting his brother Gokaṇṇa, he, seeing the entire truth, said:

85-95. "O brother, you have kindly freed me from the foulness of an evil spirit. The account of the lord is indeed blessed, which is known to remove the condition of an evil spirit. The (recitation of the Bhāgavata for a) week is also blessed, leading one to Viṣṇu's world. Due to its power, I who was much afflicted, am freed from the condition of an evil spirit. The (recitation of the Bhāgavata for a) week would reduce to ash deliberate, non-deliberate, minor or major sins of speech, mind or act, as fire reduces the fuel to ash. Listen to the holy text of the Bhāgavata in this Bhārata liked even by gods. (Your) position (thereby) would be excellent. The body is said to be an aggregate of sinews, bones, marrow, flesh, blood. It is said to be pure due to relishing the Bhāgavata; and impure otherwise. The body, polluted due to the blemishes of acts, is the recipient of hell. To remove the blemish due to that, it alone is the means. Those (who live) without (reading or listening to) the divine holy text, are born to die only like bubbles in water or gnats among beings. The knot of the heart is broken. All doubts are cut off (i.e. removed). The (effects of his) deeds diminish, when the Bhāgavata is listened to, O brāhmaṇas." When he was speaking like this, an excellent aeroplane came there from Vaikuṇṭha; getting into it, he went to

Viṣṇu's abode. When he went to Viṣṇu's heaven, the minds of all were amazed, and they asked Gokaṛṇa, the best brāhmaṇa :

The brāhmaṇas said:

O glorious one, all of us, that have gathered here, have listened to the Bhāgavata. For what reason has your brother alone gone to Viṣṇu?

Gokaṛṇa said:

96-104. Listen. I shall tell (you) the reason for the good course of my brother, hearing which you will also go to Goloka. For a week (the Bhāgavata) should be heard (by you) intent on (observing) a fast, and with (your) minds concentrated upon Kṛṣṇa. That gives an access to Goloka. O brāhmaṇas, again listen to the Bhāgavata for a week, with concentrated minds. It always gives the nectar in the form of Kṛṣṇa's love.

Hearing these words of that Gokaṛṇa, the best brāhmaṇas settled to listen to the Bhāgavata for a week. O Nārada, with restraint, and with their minds concentrated on Kṛṣṇa, all the brāhmaṇas again listened to the Bhāgavata. At the end (of the narration) of the story, O best sage, lord Kṛṣṇa appeared there. He was lotus-eyed; he held a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. He had put on a crown and ear-rings; he was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He had put on yellow garments; he was dark like a cloud. He was adorned with bracelets and armlets. Seeing him accompanied by the excellent companions like Viṣvaksena, the sages, gathered on the earth, being delighted, saluted him. O sage, at that the shouts of victory and salutation prevailed everywhere. Then, Viṣṇu, delighting the brāhmaṇas made the sound of (i.e. blew) his conch.

105-114. Then, when the brāhmaṇas were looking on, many aeroplanes, with excellent attendants, came there from Vaikuṇṭha. (Viṣṇu) having embraced Gokaṛṇa, gave him similarity of his form. At that moment only, he made other listeners dark like clouds wearing yellow, silken garments and crowns and ear-rings; (made them) charming, and wearing garlands of wood-flowers. There was a great wonder also. By Kṛṣṇa's order all the people up to (i.e. including) the cāṇḍālas got into the aeroplanes and went

to heaven. Kṛṣṇa, dear to the cowherds and the cowherdresses, went, along with Gokarṇa, to Goloka, situated above all (other) worlds. There is the charming Vṛndāvana, covered with a hundred peaks. Outside it shines a very wonderful forest covered with hemp. There are many pavilions, wells like Acchoda and pools. There are desire-yielding cows, resorting to the shades of the celestial trees; the son of Nanda, surrounded by young cowherds, with their minds intent upon sporting, plays there. In the midst of this excellent grove is fixed a great fig tree, brightening the charming rampart, decked with masses of gems and gold according to the desire of the Lord of Vṛndāvana. Then shines Śrī Gokula of a wonderful form, resorted to by cowherdresses and adorned by calves in every direction. In it the bright house resided in by Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) shines, in which house of Nanda, they, the lofty ones, are propitiated by Rādhā. The great fortune of the child of a charming figure, meditated upon by (gods) led by (Śiva) the lord of Umā, with their minds, shines more by means of the rays of the lustre of the worlds. By means of the commencement of the seven-day rite called (Bhāgavata) Saptāha, he (i.e. Gokarṇa), born of a cow, obtained the world impossible to be got by means of subsisting on air, water, leaves, parching up one's body, severe austerities, mutterings and sacrificial rites. He who would read or listen to this holy account, goes to Goloka. Then what to say of (him who would read or listen to) Śrī Bhāgavata!

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYEIGHT

Procedure to be Followed during the Saptāha

Kumāras said:

1-7. Now we shall tell you the manner of listening to the (Bhāgavata recitation during a) week, by which Bhāgavata would accomplish success for those men who have dedicated their minds to Kṛṣṇa. A devout man, after having called an astrologer, and after having honoured him with wealth and garments, should first ask him about the auspicious time. The commence-

ment (of narrating the Bhāgavata) should be made at the auspicious time which he would tell. The months of Śrāvaṇa, Bhādrapada, Āśvina, Kārtika, Mārgaśīrṣa, Jyeṣṭha (and Āṣāḍha) are best for the commencement of the narration; so also the Pūrṇā tithi (i.e. 5th, 10th, 15th lunar days) is auspicious. Tuesdays and Saturdays shall be excluded and the constellations Dhruva and weak ones. The commencement is always recommended on an auspicious conjunction (of planets) and an auspicious lagna (i.e. the moment of the Sun's entrance into a Zodiacal sign). O best sage, when stories from the Purāṇas are (to be read) daily, a wise man should avoid Dvādaśī (the twelfth day) due to the impurity caused to Sūta. For the (reading of) Śrīmad Bhāgavata for a week there is no prohibition. Thus said those who know the past, O divine sage. The wise ones have said that (the reading of) Bhāgavata for a week is a great sacrifice.

8-16. Therefore, invitation should be extended to devotees of Viṣṇu all round: 'There will be a gathering during the week, O best devotees of Viṣṇu. Devotees of Viṣṇu desiring to listen (to the Bhāgavata) should come for it.' For those who come he should carefully make arrangement for their lodging at a holy place, in a grove, or in the village. He should erect a pavilion on the land that is purified. The pavilion should have four pillars with plantain trees, and should have banners in the four directions. A raised seat at its front is recommended for the speaker (i.e. the reader), O sage. The seats of the listeners are to be arranged on both the sides of him. The speaker, the most learned one, should face the north in the gathering. A speaker who knows the meaning and essential nature of the Vedas and holy texts, who is an excellent brāhmaṇa and a devotee of Viṣṇu, who is proficient in (telling) illustrative stories, who is patient, eloquent, free from desire, should be appointed. One removing all doubts should not be appointed. By the side of the speaker there should be another learned wise man. He should remove the doubts of the listeners and should enlighten the ignorant. To avoid any obstacle in (the narration of) the story, he should first worship Gaṇeśa. Then having, in the proper manner, worshipped Durgā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, the Sun and the brāhmaṇas, he should devoutly gratify the deities and the dead ancestors.

17-29. Then the chief listener should worship Viṣṇu repre-

sented in the book. Then having gone round, and having held in the hollow of his hands money, garments and fruits he should, O sage, request Viṣṇu (represented) in the book: "O divine one, you, Kṛṣṇa, have established yourself in this world. O lord, I have resorted to you for freedom from the ocean of the mundane existence. You should by all means make my desire fulfilled without any obstacle. O Keśava, I am your servant." Speaking like this and putting the money before the book, he should also, with his palms folded, salute and request the speaker (i.e. the reader): "O you best brāhmaṇa, of the form of Śuka, O you proficient in all holy texts, remove my ignorance by means of explaining the Bhāgavata." Having thus requested the speaker, he should select five brāhmaṇas for the recitation of the twelve-syllabled formula, O best sage. Having honoured those knowing the rules about singing and instrumental music with money, garments etc., he should at the end of the narration of the story appoint them for the recital (i.e. singing) of the glory of the lord. He who, having given up the anxiety about his wife, wealth, house, sons, listens with a concentrated mind, would obtain the entire fruit. For three watches and a half, beginning from sunrise, it—a sentence or a chapter, should be read and its meaning explained. O Nārada, he should take rest even for a ghaṭikā at mid-day. At the end of the (narration) of the story, the glory of Viṣṇu should be sung. A fast should be observed by the listeners desiring its fruit. A man incapable of doing it, should eat the food fit to be eaten during fast or should a little once (only). The body should be sustained without difficulty with water, or fruit, or milk or ghee only. O Nārada, listen to the rules to be observed by those who take the vow for seven days.

30-44. Those who are not initiated into (worship of) Viṣṇu, are said to have no right for this vow. O best sage, during the week one should observe celibacy, should sleep on the bare ground, and eat from a plate made of leaves everyday. He who is observing the vow, should avoid pulses, honey, oil, others' food, sugarcane juice, food polluted by thought, polluted by act, and stale food, so also onion, garlic, asafoetida, radish and gṛh̥ṇa-jana (a kind of garlic). So also a man observing the vow of (reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) story should not eat lotus

stalks and pumpkin gourd. He should not indulge in sexual pleasure, anger, pride, greed, hypocrisy, and jealousy, so also infatuation, hatred and harm. He who is observing the vow of (reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) story, should avoid censuring Vedas, Viṣṇu's devotees, brāhmaṇas, preceptors, those observing the vow of (serving) a cow, so also women, kings and great men. The wise one who is observing the vow of (reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) should practise truthfulness, purity, kindness, silence, straightforwardness, politeness, and graciousness of mind. A man desiring wealth, desiring a son, desiring victory, or thinking of salvation, should listen to the Bhāgavata. He, having no desire, would obtain Śrī Hari. For its completion, he should fast on the seventh day. He should honour the reader with a cow, land, gold, garments etc. He should cause to give remnants of the food offered to the deity, garlands of Tulasī (leaves) to the listeners. So also with the (help of) those skilled in singing and playing upon musical instruments a festival should be celebrated. The wise one should also listen to the meaning of the Gītā on the next day. Or after every verse with the Gāyatrī hymn, he should make offerings (to Viṣṇu) according to the rules. He should also offer sweetened milk, honey, ghee, sesamum-seeds, rice, barley grains, sugar, priyāla, grapes, dates, lotuses, camphor, sandal, agaru (a kind of sandal), cloves, a thousand leaves of bilva separately. He should recite the (hymn called) Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma for removing obstacles, removing deficiencies and excesses, and for purifying himself. He should devoutly offer sweetened milk to twelve, eighteen or more brāhmaṇas, and (should give them) gold or a cow as a present.

45-52. On this day or the day of Pūrvā Bhādrapadā or Uttarā Bhādrapadā (constellations) he should fashion (the) golden (image of a) lion, should place the Bhāgavata (text) on its back, and writing on it (his name etc.) should give it to the reader. When this is done according to the rule, the Bhāgavata that is listened to would remove all the sins of the listener and would give him good fruit, be the means of religious merit, of the fulfilment of the desire for sensual enjoyments, acquisition of worldly objects and salvation, and would give (i.e. produces) devotion. There is no object in the world that is not secured by this. Therefore, in the world, the Bhāga-

vata is regarded as superior to (other) Purāṇas. The reader is said to be free from eighteen blemishes, and the listener is supposed to be free from thirty-two faults by the wise. The Purāṇa named Śrī Bhāgavata gives men their desired objects. Yet listening to it produces devotion only in a person free from desires. The divine tree called Śrīmad Bhāgavata has starlike shoots; has a good origin; it shines with twelve large boughs (i.e. sections); it grows in the basin of devotion; it has three hundred and thirty-two bright branches (i.e. chapters); it has eighteen thousand leaves (i.e. verses); it gives desired objects; it is easily accessible; and it stands above all. Thus I have told you everything and have done what was desired by you. The youth of Jñāna, Vai-rāgya and Bhakti gives salvation to people.

Sūta said:

53-54. Having spoken like this, the Kumāras, inundated with the nectar (flowing) from Kṛṣṇa's feet, devotees of the lord, and intent on emancipating the helpless, ceased (speaking). Hearing their words, Nārada, dear to the lord, and with his palms joined, said to them in a voice faltering due to love:

Nārada said:

55-62. I am blessed; I am favoured by you highly devoted to compassion, since at the end of the Bhāgavata-saptāha (i.e. reciting or listening to the Bhāgavata for a week), you have presented Viṣṇu near me.

While Nārada, the best devotee of Viṣṇu, was speaking like this, Śuka, the chief among the meditating saints, (while) roaming, came there. His form was that of a youth of sixteen years; he was lotus-eyed; he was Vyāsa's son; he was the moon to the ocean of knowledge; he was content at heart with whatever (given) at the end of (the narration of) the story, and constantly recited Bhāgavata. The members of the assembly, seeing him of a great lustre, got up and gave him an excellent seat. When he comfortably sat on the seat, lotus-eyed Viṣṇu appeared (there). Śiva with Pārvatī and Brahmā with his sons came there to glorify and see him. Gods among whom Indra was the chief, came there in aeroplanes. The sky was covered by

them. Prahlāda did the beating of time with a quick speed; Udhava took the cymbals; the divine sage (Nārada) took the lute; Arjuna, through his skill in tunes, formed the musical modes. Indra played upon the tabor; the Kumāras uttered the loud shouts of victory. Vyāsa's son, of unsurpassed virtues, was a (versatile) speaker and of good sentiments. The triad of Jñāna etc. having new forms, just danced in the middle. Seeing the extraordinary glorification Viṣṇu, with his mind pleased, spoke as follows: "O devotees of Viṣṇu, ask for a boon from me who am very much pleased with the narration of the story." Hearing those words, they who were pleased, and with their heart flowing with love, said:

Kumāras said:

63-67. O Murāri (i.e. O Viṣṇu), you will be instantly pleased with the worship (in the form of reading or listening to the Bhāgavata) continued for a week in the very fierce Kali age by men having a short life and overcome by hundreds of obstacles. From you, the soul of everything and the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe, we, resorting to your lotus-like feet, ask for this boon and not any other (boon).

Saying, "Let it be so", Viṣṇu vanished there only. Nārada with his mind pleased, saluted Kumāras. Then those Sanaka and others, Bhṛṅgu and others and Śuka and others, delighted by drinking the nectar of the story went to their own hermitages. O Śaunaka, since then, Nārada propagated Bhakti along with her two sons over the entire earth.

Śiva said:

68. O dear one, having heard the great story, Śaunaka whose heart was pleased, again asked Sūta who removed all doubts:

Śaunaka said:

69. O you respecting (others), tell me when Śuka told it to the king, when Gokarṇa told it, and Brahmā's sons to the divine sage (Nārada).

Sūta said:

70-72. Śuka commenced (the narration of) the story on the ninth of the bright fortnight of Bhādrapada when the period of three hundred years of Kali after the departure of Śrīkṛṣṇa had passed. Gokaṛṇa told the story on the 9th day of the bright half of Jyeṣṭha (or Āṣāḍha), after two hundred years had passed from the time Parīkṣit had heard it. O brāhmaṇa, now a thousand years of the Kali age have passed from the time of Parīkṣit. (So) conclude the sacrifice.

The lord said:

73-81a. Hearing these words of him, the best sage Śaunaka completed the sacrifice that continued for a thousand years. These Purāṇas: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Kaurma, Matsya, Vāmana, Varāha, Brahmavaivarta, Nāradiya, Bhaviṣyaka, and half of Āgneya were formerly heard by excellent sages like Śaunaka from Sūta Lomahaṛṣaṇa up to the end of the Dvāpara age. When Baladeva came on a pilgrimage to (the forest) called Nai-miṣa Miśrikā, he was called by the best sages. There seeing Sūta seated on an excellent seat, revered (Bala-)Rāma was agitated like the great ocean on a parvan day. O Pārvatī, on the Dvādaśī day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha, at the time of its earlier half, he, Rāma, being stupefied due to what was decided by Kṛṣṇa's Māyā, having darbhas in his hand, struck Lomahaṛṣaṇa. Then all the hosts of the sages did loud wailing, and their hearts were overcome by sorrow and grief, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain. Then they, full of forgiveness, said humbly to Rāma, the lord of the world:

The sages said:

81b-87a. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of great arms, you, the author of the world, have ignorantly committed harm greater than that due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa. This is actually Vyāsa's disciple, an ancient sage, having a great penance (to his credit). We who had invited him, the narrator of the eighteen Purāṇas, gave him an excellent seat at this sacrificial rite. On (hearing) the story of the lord of the world one obtains long life, O you who honour (others). Therefore, you who promoted the bridge of piety, who are capable of curbing and favouring, who

are the lord of the world, have manifested yourself for the protection of the world.

Speaking like this to Baladeva, O dear one, the sages, remembering the force of destiny, suddenly became silent. Then revered Rāma, killer of his enemies, following the path of the world and the Vedas, pleasing those brāhmaṇas, said:

Śrī Rāma said:

87b-89. O brāhmaṇas, may well-being come to you; listen after casting far away your anger. I know what you like and what gives success to your undertaking. Due to my blessing his son will be very wise. He will narrate to you the holy text desired by you. Tell me the work for which you have invited me.

The lord said:

90-100. Hearing these words of the very noble Rāma, they prompted the lord to murder Balvala. Then, having killed Balvala and pleased the pre-eminent sages and saluting them, he went on a pilgrimage after being permitted by them. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, when Rāma left for the pilgrimage, the chief sages like Śaunaka called Laumaharṣaṇi, and after honouring him placed him in his position for the narration of the remaining (part). With their minds delighted, they listened to seven Purāṇas and a half (beginning with) the greatness of the later part of Āgneya up to Bhāgavata. O you beautiful lady, Satyavati's son (Vyāsa) was not mentally pleased after having composed seventeen Purāṇas and Bhārata also. Knowing that his heart was sad, revered Nārada, looking like a god, came to the excellent hermitage of Vyāsa. Seeing him, the son of Vāsavi (i.e. Vyāsa) hospitably received Nārada, offered him a seat, and honoured him with a rite according to the rules. Then Nārada said to him: "Tell me fully the cause of your doubt. What do you, with an afflicted mind, think of?" Thus asked by the sage, (Vyāsa) the son of Parāśara, said: "I really do not know the cause of the disturbance of my mind. You are proficient in knowledge. Understand it (i.e. the cause) and tell it to me." Thus requested by him, Nārada, proficient in the knowledge of the

Supreme Spirit, told him the highest truth obtained by him from Brahmā.

Nārada said:

101-110. O son of Parāśara, hear from me the cause due to which the mind of you, the master and the origin of holy texts, has become miserable. O innocent one, having descended on the earth, you have divided the Vedas into parts. You have also composed the Purāṇas along with the Itihāsa, in which, having observed in course of time the practices of the castes and of those living in the four stages of life, you have told them from the three Vedas. All women, sūdras, the twice-born fraternity, those prone to the company of the good, are entitled to listening to it. Religious practices, as are lasting, have been described in them by you. But you have not at all prominently described therein the greatness of Viṣṇu. O sage, in the Kali age, void of all religious practices and rites, and the reservoir of all blemishes, the sinners have no other course than the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's story. This alone is the merit in this terrible Kali age that men are freed from the bondage of their acts by means of narrating the glory of Kṛṣṇa only. Sacrifices, gifts, penance, rites, knowledge, meditation gave success in (ages) like Kṛta. In the same way, O brāhmaṇa, the narration of (Viṣṇu's) name (leads to success) in Kali. Therefore, for the emancipation of men born in the Kali age, you should relate Śrīmad Bhāgavata, by composing which, O dear one, your mind will be pleased and people will be blessed.

The lord said:

111-121. Having thus ordered Vyāsa of unlimited lustre, he, O dear one, constantly singing the virtues of Viṣṇu, went as he desired. After Nārada had gone, Vyāsa who saw everything, composed this great text, viz. Śrīmad Bhāgavata. Having taught the four Vedas to Paila and others according to the rule, he gave all the Purāṇa-texts to Sūta. That text of the Bhāgavata was heard by the son of Lomahaṛṣana, when it was being told to the king Parīkṣit by Śuka. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, he properly told it to sages like Śaunaka. It is above all Purāṇas

and best among them. Men whose heart is attached to it find interest in nothing else. In their minds, Kṛṣṇa, son of Nanda, shines. O you mother of the chief of (my) attendants, I have told you the entire greatness of Śrī Bhāgavata, which you had asked me to narrate for crossing over the (mundane) world. A man who devoutly listens to or he too who reads with approval the greatness (of Śrī Bhāgavata) along with many historical accounts leading to devotion and salvation, obtains the highest position. Having studied it, a brāhmaṇa would obtain (the knowledge of) the Vedas, a kṣatriya would get victory, a vaiśya (would obtain) wealth, and a śūdra gets the best position by just listening to it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYNINE

The Glory of Yamunā

The sages said:

1. O Sūta tell us the glory of Yamunā in detail—to whom it was spoken, and by whom it was spoken—along with a story.

Sūta said:

2. Once Pāṇḍu's son, desiring to hear auspicious knowledge from Saubhari, went to his place, and having saluted him, asked him like this:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3. O brāhmaṇa, tell me about that holy place which is (the best) among the holy places on the bank of Yamunā, and which is (even) superior to the land of the birth of Viṣṇu.

Saubhari said:

4-8. Once the two pre-eminent sages, Nārada and Parvata, moving in the sky, (while) looking (here and there), saw the very beautiful Khāṇḍava forest. From the sky they descended there and sat on the auspicious bank of Kālindī, and having rested

awhile, entered her water to bathe. King Śibi, son of Uśīnara, hunting in the forest, saw the two, and waiting for them to come out, sat on the bank of the river. The two who after having duly bathed had put on garments, who were saluted by the king with his head (bent down), sat on the bank. Seeing thousands of golden sacrificial posts there, Śibi, free from pride, spoke to Nārada and Parvata :

Śibi said:

9-10. O pre-eminent sages, tell me, whose sacrificial posts these are. Who performed a sacrifice here—(was it) a god or a man? Leaving holy places like Kāśī, which man performed a sacrifice here? What peculiarity, O treasures of knowledge, does it have (in a greater extent) than other holy places?

Nārada said:

11-14. Formerly Hiranyakaśipu, having conquered deities like Indra, secured the kingdom of the three worlds, and entertained great pride. His son was Prahlāda, highly devoted to Nārāyaṇa. The wicked (Hiranyakaśipu), whose auspiciousness had perished, bore a great malice against him. Due to that malice, Viṣṇu, taking up the body of Nṛsimha, instantly killed the lord of demons, and gave the kingdom of heaven to (Indra) the lord of heaven. Having obtained his own position, the lord of gods, remembering the virtues of Viṣṇu, and saluting Bṛhaspati's feet with his head (bent down) said to him:

Indra said:

15-16. O preceptor, Viṣṇu, the supporter of the world, taking up the form of Nṛsimha, gave me the kingdom of deities. I desire to worship him with sacrifices. O Guru, tell me (about) a pure place and also (about) the brāhmaṇas. You, doing good to us, should not delay in this matter.

Bṛhaspati said:

17-19. For you there is the charming and extremely holy Khāṇḍava forest which contains (the trees like) ketakī, aśoka, bakula and (also) bees intoxicated by honey. There is Yamunā, auspicious, holy and purifying the three worlds. On remember-

ing her she gives heaven, and on death Brahmā's position. O lord of gods, if you desire the continuous well-being of your relatives, worship Viṣṇu with many sacrifices on her bank.

Nārada said:

20-27. Having heard Bṛhaspati's words, and quickly getting into a vehicle, Indra came to this forest of him which caused happiness, along with Bṛhaspati and the materials of sacrifice. Having come here, and having seen this forest, he obtained great joy. Prompted by Guru, Indra, choosing the seven sages, the sons of Brahmā, the brāhmaṇas, worshipped the lord of the world with sacrifices. The lord, pleased with him, came, along with Brahmā and Śiva, to Indra's sacrifice, where there was a great festivity. That Indra, of a crooked mind, seeing the triad of gods, quickly got up from his seat, and along with the sages, saluted them. Quickly getting down from their vehicles, they sat near him on seats of excellent gold, and shone like fires on altars. With Śiva and Brahmā who had white and red bodies, Viṣṇu, of a dark complexion, wearing yellow garments, shone like a cloud on two peaks. Indra washed their feet and took that water on his head. Being full of joy, he spoke sweet words:

Indra said:

28-37. O gods, this sacrifice performed by me has become instantly fruitful, since you, difficult to see even by meditating saints are seen (by me). O Viṣṇu, you alone have taken up the three forms. Yet as in a crystal, the appearance of multiplicity in you in respect of qualities is false. As fire concealed in pieces of wood does not manifest itself without friction, in the same way you remaining in the hearts of your devotees (do not manifest yourself) without deep devotion. Devotion to you alone, would be helpful to all beings. By that (devotion) entertained by Prahlāda, gods became happy. O god, we, given to sensual pleasures, have our hearts screened by your Māyā. We, the servants of your feet, do not know your nature correctly. O Brahman, O Mahādeva, since you two also are the preceptors of the world due to his greatness, you are not different from him. Whatever is said with words, thought of by the mind is his Māyā only. So all are away from that pair(?). He who sees this entire visible world to be

unreal, would not think of (sensuous pleasures). O Śiva, those who resort to Viṣṇu's feet, cross the water held by you on your head. O Brahman, may I have, in existence after existence, a great liking for his feet, resembling lotuses. Due to it being agitated by her (Māyā's) glance, the entire world, Mahat etc. springs up. There is none else given to kindness like you who give happiness (even) to your enemies. That which is described as your kindness, that removes the misery of your people is (just) (due to) ignorance, O Nṛhari.

Nārada said:

38-46. Having thus praised Viṣṇu, the lord of gods remained bent before him. He who had applied (i.e. concentrated) his mind with a desire to hear his words, looked great.

The sages, having thus heard the praise of Ramā's lord, done by Indra in the assembly, said: "Well (done), well done." (They said:) "O Indra, (even) the devotion of those who practise severe penance for a hundred years is not like your devotion to Viṣṇu. The Yoga with eight parts, by means of which glory is obtained, is not easy. The refuge of men is renunciation with equanimity of mind and devotion to him. When the dedication of that act which is performed with the wealth earned in pursuance of the duties of one's own caste is made to Viṣṇu, that is devotion, giving happiness. He should not censure other deity, (and) him who salutes (the deity) with Viṣṇu in his mind. He should not ignore Vedic words. Such a devotee is dear to those who everyday listen to the virtues of Viṣṇu, who sing his glory, who remember him, resort to him, worship him, who salute him with servitude, who form friendship with him, who offer him their possessions, who do not desire salvation etc. O Indra, you also devoutly propitiate the lord of the world. Do not desire anything from him. Then you will be blessed."

Nārada said:

47. When Indra was thus advised by the sages, Viṣṇu, the lord, having heard about the devotion that was done to him, that could be resorted to by all, and that would cause the crossing of the three worlds, spoke sweet words to Indra in the assembly.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED

*The Episode of a Bhilla and a Lion**The lord said:*

1-15a. O lord of gods, it is no wonder that these very wise sages respect and honour my devotion, (leading to) my position, since these who teach knowledge to those living in the three worlds, always propagate the Vedic path that has perished. You, though attached to the enjoyments in heaven, have devoutly approached me. What wonder is there, since Bṛhaspati is your preceptor. O best of gods, free from desires, worship me with sacrifices with many gifts. You will quickly reach my position which is near. At every sacrifice present many prasthas (particular measures) of jewels. This place will be called Indra-prastha. O Brahmā, having brought Sarasvatī and Gaṅgā purifying the world, fashion here the best holy place (called) Prayāga. O Śiva, you establish here Kāśī and Śivakāñcī and Gokarṇa. Always live here along with Gaurī. O sons of Brahmā, proficient in metaphysical and worldly knowledge, fashion here seven holy places by means of the power of your abstract meditation. O Guru, you set up the holy place Nigamodbodhaka. Here the knowledge of Vedas would be had even without studying (them). The two highest souls would have the recollection of their former existence. I shall found here very beautiful Dvārakā, where Gomatī has joined the sea. O Indra, I shall also fashion here Kośalā and Madhvaranya, where I shall descend through the bodies of Rāma (i.e. Balarāma) and Kṛṣṇa. I shall also fashion here Badaryāśrama, the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa, where, O chief of gods, I shall always live. With a desire for your good only, I shall found the two excellent holy places, Haridvāra and Puṣkara. I shall found here all the holy places that are in Naimiṣa, on the Kālāñjara mountain and the bank of Sarasvatī.

Nārada said:

15b-26. O Śibi, having heard those auspicious words of Viṣṇu, and having done and seen that, Brahmā, Śiva and others did as was said (by him). That lord of the gods again worshipped

Lakṣmī's lord with many sacrifices in this place full of all holy places. In front of Kṛṣṇa, he gave prasthas of jewels to brāhmaṇas. 'May this Nārāyaṇa, the soul of all, be pleased with me.' Since then this holy place is called Indraprastha. One who dies at this holy place full of all holy places, is not reborn. The brāhmaṇas, having received those prasthas of jewels given by Indra, gave him there, in the assembly, a blessing that would not be fruitless: "O Indra, may Govinda be pleased with this gift of you. May you also have steady devotion for him. O lord, in this land of (sacred) rites formerly you, having a desire, performed a hundred sacrifices. Due to that religious position you obtained a place among the gods. Now you, without any desire, have worshipped Viṣṇu with sacrifices. Falling from your position, you will be (born) as the best brāhmaṇa. There (i.e. in that existence) also, you, worshipping Viṣṇu in accordance with your (caste-)duty, will remember the act like the sacrifice that you did. On remembering that, you, abandoning your house and going to holy places with your father, will come to this Śakra-tirtha. Resorting to the fourth stage of life you will caste your body here. Then you, having a divine body, will get into an aeroplane brought by the attendants and bright like the sun, and will reach the position of Śrī Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu)."

Nārada said:

27-32. Having heard this blessing of the brāhmaṇas and their words indicative of the future, the lord of gods was extremely delighted, O Śibi. Having honoured with (gifts of) wealth etc. Brahmā's sons, the priests at the sacrifice, Indra, honouring Bṛhaspati, went to heaven. O Śibi, Indra, full of devotion for Viṣṇu, having ruled there, with his religious merit exhausted, came down to Hastināpura. There was a brāhmaṇa, Śivaśarman (by name), who had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. His wife was Guṇavati, of a very significant name. To her was born Indra, who served Viṣṇu, at an auspicious time. Astrologers were called. Seeing the auspicious time they said:

The astrologers said:

33-36 O Śivaśarman, this your boy will be dear to Viṣṇu. He will emancipate your family. We are telling the truth and

not a lie. When he will have the body of thirteen years (i.e. when he will be thirteen years old), he, rich with knowledge learnt (i.e. got) by him, will marry. Then having produced a good son he will be an anchorite. The wise one, wandering to holy places, will renounce the world. There is the excellent river in Indra's Khāṇḍavavana. On her bank is Hariprastha. He will die there.

Nārada said:

37-44. Having heard the auspicious words uttered by the astrologers, he then named his son Viṣṇuśarman. Having dismissed them by (giving them) wealth, the intelligent one thought: 'I whose son will be Viṣṇu's devotee, am blessed. This son will accomplish for me the four stages of human life. He will die at the holy place. Who else is lucky like me?' Thinking like this in his mind, Śivaśarman got performed the ceremony to be performed at the birth of a child through the brāhmaṇas on an auspicious day. And when the son completed seven years, the best brāhmaṇa performed, in his eighth year, his thread ceremony in the month of Caitra. O king, after having imparted him education till the twelfth year he united the son with a wife, O Śibi. The intelligent Viṣṇuśarman having produced a son on his wife made up his mind, free from carnal desire, for visiting holy places. Having approached his father, and having saluted both his feet, the very wise Viṣṇuśarman, remembering the sages' words, said:

Viṣṇuśarman said:

45-49. O father, allow me. Having resorted to the third stage of life, causing good company, I (shall) worship Viṣṇu. Wife, house, wealth, children, friends are perishable. A wise man is not attached to them like bubbles on water. By means of Vedic study and progeny I have paid off the two debts (of the sages and forefathers). I, free from desires, (now) desire to offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu. Having given up attachment for the constituents of nature I desire to stay at an excellent holy place, as long as my destiny allows.

Thus address by the son, the very intelligent father, remembering the words of the astrologers, and being desireless for (i.e. disgusted with) the mundane existence, said:

Śivaśarman said:

50-54. This is the time for resorting to the fourth stage of life for me also who am free from egoism. Having abandoned objects of senses like poison, I shall resort to the nectar in the form of Viṣṇu. O son, in this old age, my mind does not find delight in the house like an elephant brought from a forest and tied. Your younger brother Suśarman will support the family left by us two, like knowledge supporting a man forsaken by wealth and family. Your mother, a loyal wife, will (like to) follow me, renouncing the world, as brilliance follows the sun at the end of the day. Therefore, we too, not known by (i.e. without the knowledge of) your mother and thinking of Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet, (shall) go, O dear one.

Nārada said:

55-78a. Thus thinking, the two, desiring salvation, leaving (the members of) the family (that were) asleep, moved out of the house, and went. O Śibi, the two, free from egoism, wandered, and came to the excellent place, Śakraprastha, causing auspiciousness. Viṣṇuśarman who had come here, having seen the sacrificial posts laid by him in his former birth, remembered his contact with Viṣṇu. And the intelligent one said to his father: "Formerly (i.e. in my former birth) I was Indra. With a desire to please Viṣṇu, I performed sacrifices here. Here only, Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, was pleased with me. The brāhmaṇas, the seven sages, were pleased by me with prasthas of jewels. They only gave me devotion to Viṣṇu, salvation and birth. All, Viṣṇu and others, have put up holy places elsewhere. This holy place, Indraprastha, is full of all holy places. The best sages had told that I would die here only. After that I would obtain Viṣṇu's feet. I remember all this. These two, Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī, were brought from his own world by Brahmā; due to their contact this is called Prayāga. This is Kāśī, Śiva's city, in the eastern region of Prayāga. At the distance of four hastas there is an island. A man dead on it is not reborn. At the western region of Kāśī, at a distance of eightyfour hastas, there is Śivakāñcī founded by Śiva and giving salvation to the dead. This holy place called Gokarṇa, is very dear to Śiva. It is established on a portion of land measuring eight hastas. To the west of the chief

holy place is this auspicious Dvārāvati. A man dead within a distance of two hundred and eighty hastas from here gets four arms. Then to the eastern region of this is Kośala, dear to people. It measures seventytwo hastas and its sight is meritorious. This is Madhuvana, O dear one, founded by Viṣṇu himself, which is to the west and which measures forty hastas. O dear one, to the north of this is the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. It stands on a piece of ground measuring fortyfour hastas. This holy place is Haridvāra, situated in the south of it. It is seen on a piece of land measuring one hundred and twenty hastas. This is the holy place Puṣkara, the crest-jewel of holy places. O dear one, it is situated on a piece of ground measuring forty-eight hastas. At a distance of one krośa from Prayāga, in the eastern direction, are seven holy places of the seven sages. This is the group of seven holy places. Near the seven holy places there are many other holy places, in which at every step a dead man becomes one with four arms. At a distance of one krośa from Prayāga, in the western region, is the holy place named Nigamodbodhaka, formerly founded by Guru. The distance between the seven holy places and Nigamodbodhaka is great. O dear one, this is the holy place Indraprastha, formerly founded by deities. It is extended up to a yojana in the east and the west. The great sages have said that four yojanas to the south of Yamunā is the limit of Indraprastha. He who casts his body here in (the confluence of) the three deities, is unborn.”

Nārada said:

78b-79a. O Śibi, hearing these words of his son, the brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman having a doubt, said to his son, truthful of words.

Śivaśarman said:

79b-82. How should I know that formerly you were the lord of gods; you performed sacrifices here; you pleased the brāhmaṇas with (presents of) jewels? O son, do that by which I would have the truth of what is told by you. Wherefrom did you hear about this limit of Indraprastha, since from the time you had understanding you did not leave the house? From me only you have studied the four Vedas with the Aṅgas. How did you have the knowledge of the acts done in the former birth?

Viṣṇuśarman said:

83-85. Formerly the sages had given me a boon causing the recollection of the former existence. This recollection of this holy place is had by me from them only. O father, bathe here in this holy place, viz. Nigamodbodhaka. You will obtain knowledge difficult to obtain, giving you the ability to recollect your former birth. You will recollect even my behaviour in my former existence by touching the water of this holy place. I tell you the truth, O father.

Nārada said:

86-101. When the best brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, after having heard this was ready to bathe in the holy place Nigamodbodhaka for the recollection of his former birth, there came running a bhilla followed by a lion. His limbs were full of great fear; he was panting; he was overcome by fatigue. He was of a harmful nature; he killed (people) on the way; he always robbed merchants. His body was dark. His hair was tawny. He was short. His eyes were like those of a cat. He had a lance in his hand; his figure was fearful. The man existed as it were by sin. Then seeing at a distance after him a lion the father and son quickly climbed a nearby tree, and remained (on it), saying, 'O Kṛṣṇa, free us from this untimely death.' O best king, the bhilla, seeing the lion (pursuing him) faster to seize him, was afraid, and proceeded to climb up the tree. The impetuous lion seized him, climbing (up the tree) at his feet, knocked him down with his back on the ground, and mounted on him. The bhilla too, who was pained and was under (the lion), tore the lion's belly with his lance in such a way that the mass of his entrails, smeared with a stream of blood came out. The lion, with a piteous roar, pounded the bhilla's head, and he died instantly. When the two died, there came down, O king, attendants with a group of two aeroplanes, that were fashioned with crystal stones, that were decorated with multitudes of jewels, that had charming pictures (painted on them), that were adorned with snow-walls, that had windows (decked) with rubies, the bells of which were tinkling, that had charming raised seats, that had cushions, that shone with lofty flags, that had high arches, that looked beautiful due to a hundred doors, that were clear like mirrors due to their

floors resembling new corals, along with (i.e. in which were seated) two attendants whose complexion was like fresh clouds, on whose ears were charming rings, who had in their hands conches, discs, maces and lotuses, who had put on yellow garments, whose eyes resembled fully bloomed lotuses, the anklets round whose feet were making a deep (tinkling) sound, who had rows of bracelets round their forearms, whose chests looked charming due to pearl necklaces, whose faces had curly hair over them, whose couples of eyebrows had cast down the bow of Cupid.

102-111a. The bhilla and the lion, even before life left them, gave up their bodies and remained in a natural state due to the power of this holy place. The attendants of Viṣṇu, bringing the aeroplanes near them, who were having no dress or form, said to them: "O bhilla, best of men, O lion, the lord of beasts, know us to be Viṣṇu's attendants who have come from Vai-kunṭha (or from Viṣṇu). We shall take you to his place. It is true. There are no distresses there. Getting into your respective aeroplane, go quickly. Do not tarry." The bhilla and the lion, got into their respective aeroplanes, and full of amazement, spoke to the attendants of (Viṣṇu), the lord of Lakṣmī: "O best deities, listen to our words. Due to your sight knowledge of the highest truth is produced (in us). In this existence we have not done the slightest good act. By your favour we are having the recollection of our former deeds. We ate flesh; we were engaged in killing animals; our mind and senses were cruel; we were born in sinners' families; we cause fear when looked at. In such a world, we were sinners. Due to what religious merit, we have seen (you)? Due to what religious merit shall we have absorption into Śrī Hari?"

The two attendants said:

111b-117. Indeed due to your dying at this holy place, formerly fashioned by (Bṛhaspati,) the preceptor of gods, you saw us, and (would get) the wonderful absorption (into Viṣṇu). You will soon obtain (i.e. reach) the position of the lord of Lakṣmī. Sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa roar till the time this holy place of Bṛhaspati is not seen. As darkness perishes on sunrise, in the same way sins perish on seeing Nigamodbodhaka.

This holy place, called Indraprastha, purified Indra. Here he worshipped Viṣṇu with sacrifices with many presents. Viṣṇu pleased (by them), gave him a boon. Hear (it): “O Indra, those men, even killers, who cast their bodies at your holy place, full of all holy places, are equal to me.”

Nārada said:

118. Speaking like this, the two best attendants took the two and went to Viṣṇu's place, having gone to which a man does not get drowned in the ocean of the world (i.e. the worldly existence).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ONE

Śarabha's Story

Nārada said:

1-2. The two, the father and the son, got down from the tree, and seeing that even sinners got the position of Viṣṇu, were very much amazed. The best brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, having heard the praise, expressed by the (two) attendants, of the holy place, spoke to Viṣṇuśarman, his son:

Śivaśarman said:

3-6. The bhilla and the lion have easily reached that position which is not easy to be reached by the brāhmaṇas even with penance practised. Observe the greatness of the holy place. It is not possible to praise in appropriate terms this best holy place, due to the power of which those who had committed sins from birth to death have obtained identity of form with Viṣṇu, O son? What a great disparity there is between the divine birth of Brahmā, which is from pure Sattva and difficult to be had even by gods on the one hand, and the Tamas-born lion and bhilla on the other! But this holy place is having a wonderful efficacy. O dear one, a being after having reached the end (of the fruits) of his actions, falls from the position of Brahman. (But) a being

meeting death here (in this holy place), fashioned by (Bṛhaspati) the preceptor of the gods, has no fall from Viṣṇu's position.

Nārada said:

7-16. O king, the best brāhmaṇa, having actually seen the greatness of this holy place of Bṛhaspati, proceeded to bathe there. Having washed his face, teeth, feet and purified his mind, and having put on a garment with five hems, and having tied his tuft of hair, he remembered Viṣṇu, with the recitation of the verse *Aśvagrāntā* . . . He touched the clay on the bank, made a mark (on his forehead) with it, and again got into the water. There, plunging into the water and facing the current, he again got up. Remembering Viṣṇu and Gaṅgā, purifying the people, he again plunged. Again getting up he remembered the seven cities¹ like Ayodhyā; again dedicating his mind to Govinda, he plunged into the water. Having bathed duly he put on garments that were washed; and having come out the best brāhmaṇa put a mark (on his forehead). The restrained one put darbhas into his hands, on his feet and tufted hair. He duly performed the sandhyā (prayer) and offered oblations of three kinds. The honoured one made a respectful offering to the Sun with flowers, and the best brāhmaṇa, putting his folded palms on his head, saluted (the Sun). The best brāhmaṇa offered worship to Viṣṇu whose feet are revered by the world, beginning with an invocation and ending with an offering of eatables. Having performed the rites and seated comfortably, he, remembering fully the acts of his former birth, said to his son like that:

Śivaśarman said:

17-26. O Viṣṇuśarman, O dear one, your words are not false, since due to a bath here I had the recollection of my deeds in the former birth. O glorious one, listen to what I tell you. Formerly I was born in the family of wealthy and religious merchants. My father named Śarabha lived in the city of Kānyakubja. Resorting to the wealth of piety he obtained much

1. Saptapuri—The seven cities that are said to be so sacred that death at any one of them is the giver of eternal happiness. They are: Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā, Kāśī, Kāñci, Avantikā, and Dvārāvati.

wealth by trade. He, with his body seized by old age and his mind afflicted by anxiety, passed a long time, (but) a son was not born to him. The best merchant day and night thought like this: 'My wealth, though collected to a large extent, is in vain without a son. Even a rich person having no son is indebted to his dead ancestors, as a cloud full of water but not showing (it), is to the cātakas. A man conquers the three worlds by means of progeny having piety as the foremost (virtue), as a king conquers an enemy difficult to conquer by means of power¹ of three kinds. Pure progeny pleases parents of good minds as sweet and true words that are spoken please friends and foes. The glory of the father enhances by means of the son's prosperity, as the pure water of the ocean by means of the moon. Therefore, a man should strive with his body or wealth to beget a son. Without him the two (i.e. the body and wealth) of men, having (momentary) life like that (of a flash) of lightning, are useless.'

27-34. When he was thinking like this, the excellent sage, Devala, having suprasensual knowledge, came there to give (him) a boon. Seeing him coming (my) father got up from (his) seat, and giving him a respectful offering and water to wash his feet with, saluted the sage with his head (bent down). Having made him sit on the seat offered with his own hand, my father asked the best sage Devala, of divine appearance: "O best sage, welcome to you. (I hope) there is happiness in your family, and the religious observances like penance and study of the Vedas are free from obstacles. I hope, guests come to your hermitage at the (proper) time. I hope, the trees in your hermitage bear fruits as desired by you. I hope, tigers etc. coming to your hermitage do not entertain hostility towards deer etc. as brothers towards their brothers. Your moving about on the earth gives joy to the householders. How (can it be) otherwise? How can they, engaged in (the affairs in) their houses, have' your sight? O sage, granted that you, having your mind fixed on the dust particles on Viṣṇu's feet have absolutely no desire for anything; but quickly tell me about the purpose of your arrival."

1. Śakti: regal power. It has three parts or constituents: Prabhu-śakti or Prabhāva-śakti (the majesty or pre-eminent position of the king himself); Mantra-śakti (the power of good counsel); Utsāha-śakti (the power of energy).

Śivaśarman said:

35. Thus addressed that sage Devala, honoured by gods, desiring to know the thought in his mind, said to the great trader:

Devala said:

36-41. O best merchant, you have righteously collected much wealth, with which, O you knowing piety, perform obligatory and optional rites. A man gets respect in the king's assembly due to wealth, as a good (i.e. brave) warrior gets success in a battle due to valour. A householder, getting wealth, makes a great advance, as a bull, getting grains ripe in autumn, gets nourishment, O chief merchant. Relatives and other people do not leave the wealthy persons as bees do not abandon a tree with flowers containing honey. Due to want of wealth, the householders are fully reduced to feebleness, as the lakes without water in summer. O chief merchant, that ample wealth is there in your house. Why then, are your limbs feeble? (Please) tell me, if it is not a secret.

The merchant said:

42-45. You are like the fathers specially engaged in instructing (people) in their welfare. What is there to be concealed by men like me, who are (just) like your sons? O best sage, due to your favour I am fully happy. I am unhappy only due to want of a son in my old age. Know that the feebleness of my limbs is due to that, O best sage. I am afraid (of the repayment) of the debt to my dead ancestors, and of falling down (due to the non-repayment). O sage, suggest an expedient by which I shall have a son. For people like you there is nothing that cannot be done on the earth.

Śivaśarman said:

46-47. Having heard these words of the best merchant, Devala, having made his mind steady for a moment, and with his eyes closed, thought. Devala, having suprasensual knowledge, saw the obstacle in my father's having a child, and recollecting (it) said:

Devala said:

48-62. O vaiśya, I shall tell you what beautiful idea this your religious wife formerly had in her mind. 'O Gaurī, O you dear to Śambhu, when I shall be pregnant, I shall please you with foods having the six flavours;¹ (so also) with incense, rows of lights, tāmbūlas, dances, songs coming out of lutes, and smearings of various kinds.' Your wife having promised like this in front of her friends remained devoutly waiting for the time (of pregnancy). This your wife conceived in that month only. Then all her friends of affectionate hearts spoke to her: "O fortunate one, the pregnancy longed for by you, has been bestowed on you. Therefore, do what is promised to the goddess. Otherwise, there would be an obstacle due to the change wrought by her. Goddesses give boons or curses when they are (either) propitiated or angered." Thus addressed by her friends your highly virtuous, loyal wife, full of joy, modestly said to you: "O lord, I desire to worship Gaurī fulfilling all desires, due to whose grace I have had my desired object." O best merchant, hearing these auspicious words of your wife, you took her to be pregnant. Being delighted with great gaiety you instantly ordered your servants to bring the requisites of worship. You then gave her all the things brought by them, so also honey, food, grapes, perfumes, etc. Then she, calling all her friends, said to them: "O friends, taking the collection of materials brought for the worship of Ambikā, you, taking the requisites of worship, go to the temple of Ambikā, and please the goddess with worship laid down by the rules. In our family a pregnant woman does not move out of the house. Therefore, I shall not come. You (please) go to worship her."

63-81. Thus ordered, the friends, taking the materials (of worship), went to the temple of Ambikā, which was the abode of intoxicated bees moving (here and there). It was crowded with groups of mango trees on which flocks of cuckoos were sporting. It was adorned with swans, cranes and geese. There were spotless lotuses. It was surrounded by parrots and (other) birds talking about the virtues of Mahādeva. There were the friends of Umā engaged in sprinkling garlands and creepers. There the ground was purified by light plantings of the steps

1. *Ṣaḍ-rasa*: The six flavours: pungent, sour, sweet, saltish, bitter, and astringent.

of the lord of Umā. There were celestial trees on the boundary of the water bound by crystal stones. It was resounding with (the sound of) the gandharvas that were singing, accompanying the dance of Pārvatī's lord. There the mango tree, campaka trees, koraka trees were slightly tossed by gentle breezes. The bowers of creepers had the echoes of the notes of the dancing peacocks. It was brightened by her sports, and had flashing brightness like that of jewels. Those (friends) whose husbands were alive went there and saluted the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain; and going round her (image) keeping (it) to their right, they said with devotion: "O Jagadambā, salutation to you. Give us happiness, O you who are dear to Śiva. Accept this offering brought for your worship. There is a merchant Śarabha by name. He has a charming wife. She longed for pregnancy. This worship of you is for having had it. Due to your grace, O you dear to Śambhu, she had that foetus (i.e. she became pregnant). We have laid before you this offering to worship you. In her family a pregnant woman does not move out of the house. Therefore, O goddess, she has not come; be pleased and accept this (offering)." O vaiśya, having said like that to her, the friends of your wife offered the offering duly and worshipped her with sandal etc. Not receiving any reply from Gaurī, they returned home. They told their friend that Śiva's beloved was dejected. Hearing these words of them, the vaiśya woman, being uneasy, thought: 'Why was Gaurī not pleased? She knows my devotion for her. She knows the worship I offered to her. How can the internal (thoughts) and external (behaviour) of men be not known to (deities) like her? She also knows the reason for which I did not go there. Why was she not pleased by the offering made by me? I do not see any other reason for her dissatisfaction, except my not having gone to that charming temple. What has gone by cannot be changed. After I am delivered of the foetus, I shall go to her temple for worshipping her. Salutation to that wife of Mahādeva. May she cause happiness.' O vaiśya, speaking like this, your wife remained carrying the foetus.

Śivaśarman said:

82. O Viṣṇuśarman, the father, knowing this former account, asked the very wise, best sage, Devala:

The merchant said:

83-84. O sage, that your daughter-in-law offered the worship as promised. Tell me the cause of Pārvatī's dejection; since she herself knows the reason why she did not go there, and it was also told to her friends. Then why did she become dejected?

Devala said:

85-86. O best merchant, listen, I am telling you the reason for which Pārvatī's disappointment, destroying the foetus, took place. When her friends had returned after worshipping Skanda's mother, Vijayā full of curiosity, said to Pārvatī:

Vijayā said:

87-88. O Girijā, these ladies devoutly made an offering to you. Then, O you of an excellent face, why were you not pleased? To please you they worshipped you with incense, lights and offerings of food. (Instead of being pleased) why are you, on the contrary, disappointed?

Devala said:

89. O merchant, hearing these words of her friend, the goddess, honoured by excellent gods, told her friend Vijayā, the cause of her dejection.

Pārvatī said:

90-96. I know, O friend Vijayā, that the merchant's wife was unable to move out of the house through lack of discrimination for pregnancy (*corrupt reading*). Her friends, prompted by her, came to worship me. (Deities) like me do not accept the worship offered through others' hands. Had her husband come that would have been well. Her foetus neglected by me will fall out (immaturely). O friend, if a lady causes that vow which she herself cannot practise, to be practised by her husband, then the vow of the two does not fail. Or, after having asked (the permission of) her husband, she of a concentrated mind, (could get it practised) by a pre-eminent brāhmaṇa. Since she did not come herself and did not worship me, therefore, I have made her pregnancy void and

fruitless. If again, the couple will come and devoutly worship me then they will have a son.

Devala said:

97-101a. O merchant, that curse was not heard by you, or your wife or the friends, so also the favour granted by her. Due to this ignorance of you two, not knowing the counter-rite giving happiness in this world and the next, a son was not born to you. O merchant, I have told you this reason for your not having a child as formerly Vasiṣṭha had told king Dilīpa. As having heard that the king propitiated Nandinī, in the same way, along with your wife propitiate Gaurī, fulfilling desires. As she, being propitiated by king Dilīpa gave him a son, similarly propitiate Gaurī; she will give you a son.

The merchant said:

101b-103. O sage, who is that king Dilīpa, and who is that Nandinī, having propitiated whom that best king obtained a son? Why did the king, leaving the gods like Śiva, giving the fruits to the three castes, propitiate her only for (obtaining) a son? O sage, tell me all this that I ask you. Hearing it, I, with my wife, shall serve that daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain.

Śivaśarman said:

104. O Viṣṇuśarman, the sage, having heard these words spoken by the polite merchant, my father, commenced telling him Dilīpa's account, very holy in the world.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWO

The Story of King Dilīpa

Devala said:

1-16a. O very wise one, listen to the divine, wonderful account of king Dilīpa, which removes the sin of those who hear it. In Vaivasvata Manu's family was (born) the best king Dilīpa

like Prācīnabarhis in Svāyambhuva Manu's (family). That king, best among the religious, protecting the earth justly, pleased the people with his rich virtues. The queen, the wife of that king, the daughter of the lord of Magadha, named Sudakṣiṇā, was like Śacī to the lord of heaven. Even after a long time had passed, a son was not born to the queen. The sovereign, the lord of Kośala, thus thought in his mind: 'I have held (under my control) the earth adorned with the gems like the ocean, the great Meru mountain etc. There is nothing wanting that should lead to my disgrace. At the proper time I have practised the three objects of human life. I have not opposed it. Yet in the mind of me who am childless, there is no happiness. With sacrifices I have worshipped Viṣṇu; so also the best gods like Indra. Everywhere on the earth I have got fashioned tanks, groves and wells. I have, with devotion, satisfied brāhmaṇas and guests with (presents of) cows, land, gold, garments, and with meals having the six (kinds of) tastes. Having justly uprooted the kings in battles for the maintenance (of piety), I have increased my treasury with great wealth. Those who went astray, who were arrogant, who violated their duties, who were averse to their dead ancestors and deities, and who (therefore) deserved punishment, were punished by me. On the five parvan days, the day sacred to Viṣṇu, to the Sun, on a day on which a rite in honour of the dead ancestors is performed, on the tenth and eleventh days I have not waited upon my wife. I never ignored my wife who had bathed at (the end of her) menstrual period; so also (I approached her) even at other times when requested by her. At that time I had sexual intercourse with her who had a passion for it. Thus I have resorted to religious practices, worldly pursuits and carnal pleasures at the proper time. Due to what defect in my queen am I not having a child? Vasiṣṭha, my preceptor, who knows the past and the future will alone tell me the defect due to which a son is not born to me.'

Devala said:

16b-26a. Thinking like this, the king, deciding to go to his preceptor's hermitage, entrusted Kośala with rich treasures to his ministers. Then having worshipped God, the creator of beings, the couple, desiring a son, proceeded to the preceptor's hermitage on an auspicious day. The couple, seated in a chariot,

having gone over the path, reached after some days the holy hermitage of the preceptor. There the sage received the guests that had come there after the offering made to all deities. It purified the sages in it and the guests also with the rising mass of smoke of the material offered into the fire. It was dull due to the (slow-moving) deer whose bellies were full due to the mass of shoots of dūrvās. In the hall of the hermitage the flock of female deer was entering from all sides. It was full of noise of groups of birds gathering on the trees which they had turned into their abodes. There were tigers and (other) beasts, that had given up their mutual hostility. The sound of the recitation of the Vedas made by great sages engaged there in muttering (hymns) and meditation, had ceased for a while. There the boys were engaged in sports during intermission of study. In it the couple saw Vasiṣṭha performing the rites. He was seated on a holy seat and was steady, and was waited upon by Arundhatī. He (i.e. Dilīpa) saluted the preceptor's feet, and his wife saluted the ladies of (the family of) him. The preceptor gave him a blessing, and Arundhatī gave her one. Preceptor Vasiṣṭha, the greatest among the adorable, honoured the guest with respectful offerings, and asked him like this:

Vasiṣṭha said:

26b-30. O greatest among kings, I hope everything is all right in your kingdom, in your family and with the people following their respective practices. O hero, I hope you have protected the earth righteously. (I hope) your treasury is growing like a righteous thought for good practices. O king, I hope your excellent villagers and citizens are not transgressing their limit like the oceans. I hope due to love, due to moving together and association, the couples in your cities act like Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu. O best king, I hope, the voluntary vows of your subjects are fruitful like the Haricandana¹ tree in heaven.

Devala said:

31-33. Having asked like this, that greatest sage, Vasiṣṭha, pre-eminent among sages, fed the king with eatables procured

1. Haricandana: One of the five trees of Paradise. The five trees are: Mandāra, Pārijātaka, Santāna, Kalpa, and Haricandana.

through the power of his abstract meditation. That old Arundhati, of a generous mind, and full of respect, fed the queen with various dishes of cooked food. The steady sage, having held the hand of the king who was fed and had saluted him and who was seated comfortably, again asked him.

Vasiṣṭha said:

34-46a. O king, what is the use of the kingdom of heaven to that king whose kingdom has the seven constituents,¹ in which the subjects are engaged in their duties, in which kinsmen and relatives are pleased, where the soldiers know the science of weapons and missiles, in which friends are obedient, where the enemies are subdued, where the minds (of men) are devoted to Kṛṣṇa's worship? O lord, the religious kings of the Ikṣvāku family, having produced sons, and having entrusted the kingdom to them, proceed to practise penance. You are young. You have not (as yet) seen the face of your son. Why have you, abandoning your kingdom like that, come here?

The king said:

O brāhmaṇa, with a desire for (going to) heaven, I, having abandoned my kingdom like that, have come to your hermitage to practise penance. O brāhmaṇa, you have told the truth that (kings) born in Ikṣvāku's family, entrusted their kingdom to their sons, and went to the penance-grove. As childhood has passed, so this youth that has come will also pass; and certainly old age will come. There is no doubt that a man meets death after old age. O brāhmaṇa, when I die, to whom will this kingdom, without a son's birth, go? Tell me that, O preceptor. Therefore, I who remain in the kingdom without a child, have no feeling of mineness for it, without it. O you my preceptor, you know the three objects of human life. O you treasure of penance, quickly tell me the defect after seeing it through meditation, due to which a son is not born to me. Having heard it, I shall adopt a remedy against it to obtain a child.

1. Saptāṅga: the seven constituents of a kingdom: king, ministers, friend, treasury, people, forts, and army.

Devala said:

46b-47a. Having heard these words of the king, Vasiṣṭha, seeing through concentration the cause of the obstruction in (the birth of) a child, spoke:

Vasiṣṭha said:

47b-53a. Formerly, O king, you, having waited upon the chief of gods, and remembering this your young wife who had bathed (after her menstrual period) started for your home. O king, on the way of you who, being eager to have a child, were hurriedly going, stood under a divine tree the desire-yielding cow. You produced great anger in her by not saluting and not doing pious acts like saluting the dust of her venerable feet. With great anger she cursed you: "A son will not be born to you till you do not serve my progeny." You desiring a son, and therefore going quickly to give her (your semen after) menstruation, and thinking of that only, did not hear the curse nor did your charioteer hear it due to the noise caused by the axles. With this your young wife propitiate her young granddaughter, the cow Nandinī, along with her calf. She will give you a son.

Devala said:

53b-54. While Vasiṣṭha, the sage, was speaking like this that Nandinī, with her udders having (milk) flowing from them through affection, came there. Seeing her, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, with his heart delighted, saw her, and showing her to the king, again said to him:

Vasiṣṭha said:

55-57. O king, this (cow) of an auspicious name has come just when remembered. Therefore, know that the accomplishment of your object is near. There is no doubt that when you propitiate her by going after her in the forest and your young wife propitiates her in the hermitage, she will, through her favour, give you a son. O best king, O archer, graze her in such a way that no wild ferocious animal would attack her.

Devala said:

58. Then the ascetic (Vasiṣṭha) gave the king who talked

little and to the daughter-in-law a good hut to pass their night in. There the king with his mind controlled along with his wife passed the night, sleeping on the ground covered with grass.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THREE

Dilpa Obtains a Son by Propitiating Nandinī

Devala said:

1-19. Then in the morning, the king taking (with him) the cow Nandinī worshipped by the queen with flowers went to the forest. Like her shadow the king followed the divine (cow). He too ate roots etc. after she had eaten young grass etc. After she had sat in the shade of a tree, he sat there. He drank water after she had drunk. The king thus served the preceptor's desire-yielding cow by (offering her) soft grass, driving away flies and scratching her (body). Purifying the king's body with dust-particles raised by her hoofs, she returned to the hermitage in the evening. Nandinī, as it were, loaded with the great burden of the mission of the king, appeared to be going slowly bent by the great burden. The queen taking to her sandal, sacred rice grains, articles of food, incense etc. went forth to (greet) her near the hermitage in the evening. The queen after duly worshipping and repeatedly saluting her and having gone round her keeping her to her right, stood before her with the palms of her hands joined. She (i.e. the cow) remaining steady accepted that worship devoutly offered by the queen and went to the hermitage with the two. O vaiśya, when Dilpa of a firm vow was thus propitiating her, twentyone days passed. Then, with a desire to know that king's devotion, she, of a fearless heart, entered Himālaya's cave containing young grass. A lion whose arrival was not noticed by the king observing the beauty of the Himālayan peaks, forcibly seized Nandinī. The cow, as it were, afflicted, wailed much with a piteous sound, (thus) producing pity in the heart of the king. Then hearing her wailing, the lord of the world withdrew his eyes from the peaks of Himālaya. The king seeing a

lion of sharp claws (seated) upon the cow with tears flowing on her face, was afflicted. Seeing her seized by the lion, the archer put his right hand (on his back) to take out an arrow from the quiver. The lord of the earth, taking out an arrow from the quiver, fixing the arrow on the string, fully drew the string to kill the lion. When the lion looked towards him, his entire body was paralysed. The king could not discharge the arrow. He, therefore, was amazed. Seeing the king like that, the lion, making him still more amazed, spoke in a human voice.

The lion said:

20-28. O king, I know you to be Dilīpa, born in the solar family. You too know me to be Śiva's attendant called Kumbhodara. O hero, this devadāru (tree) which is within the range of your sight is protected by Pārvatī of an affectionate heart like her (own) son. Once, O great king, the soft bark of this (tree) was very much torn by a wild elephant scratching his temples (against it). Noticing it like that, Pārvatī, full of pity, kept me, turning me into a lion, here, to protect it. And she said to me: "O Kumbhodara, listen. Living here you eat whichever animal would come here." Since then, O best king, I, obeying her order, obeyed by all gods, have been staying in this cave. You should not be amazed at your body being paralysed. On this Himālaya Mountain Śambhu's great Māyā prevails. You cannot strike me like another (ordinary) lion, as the lord (Śiva) mounts on Nandin after getting on my back. O hero, go back; protect this (your) body, the means of (accomplishing) all objects. This cow has come as my prey through destiny.

Devala said:

29. Hearing these words of him, along with the address as 'O hero', the king with his body paralysed replied to him:

The king said:

30-37. O lord of beasts, I salute Śiva, the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world, and Pārvatī, the mother of the world. O lord of beasts, as their servant you are respectable to me. Having heard the words which I (shall) speak,

direct me as to what I (should) do. You know, Vasiṣṭha, Brahmā's son, is our preceptor. This is his cow, Nandinī by name, accomplishing all objects. He has given (i.e. entrusted) her to me to propitiate her for the birth of a child (to me). For a few days she has been properly propitiated by me. This mother of a young calf is seized by you in the mountain-cave. It is not possible for me to release her forcibly from (you), a servant of Śiva. How can I go to that sage without her? She is the granddaughter of the desire-yielding cow, fit to be served by the world. There is no other cow like this with which I shall please him. Therefore, release this best cow, and have me for your meal. I give you my body tarnished by infamy. (Having done) like this, there will not be the loss of the sage's religious rite, and you will also have your meal. I, giving up my life for the cow, shall reach an excellent position (i.e. salvation).

Devala said:

38-41a. O best merchant, when the lion, on hearing this, remained silent, the king, conversant with religious practices, lay, looking up, before him. On him who was expecting the very unbearable jump of the lion fell the shower of flowers dropped by best gods. Hearing the words, 'O son, get up', the king got up. He saw (there) the cow like (his) mother and not the lion. To him, who was amazed, Nandinī said:

Nandinī said:

41b-43. By means of the illusion in the form of the lion, I tested you. O king, due to the sage's power (even) Yama cannot think of seizing me; then what other animals can do so? By offering your own body you were ready to protect me. Therefore, I am pleased with you. Ask for your desired boon.

The king said:

44-47. For (deities) like you there is nothing that is concealed in the (hearts of) beings. Therefore, O mother, you know it. Give it to me. Give me a son, continuing my family, born to the daughter of the king of Magadha. For pure ones like you, nothing is impossible.

Saying so the king with his eyes fixed stood before her in silence with his palms joined and expecting a reply from her.

Devala said:

Hearing these words of the king, Nandini, accomplishing the objects of the manes, gods, sages, men and (other) beings said these words:

Nandini said:

48-49a. From a cup made of leaves drink to your satisfaction my milk, O son. Ordered by the preceptor you will again drink the remaining in the hermitage. You will have a son, continuing your family and knowing (the use of) weapons and missiles.

Devala said:

49b. Thus addressed by that granddaughter of Surabhi, he politely said to her:

Dillpa said:

50-53. O mother, I shall drink the remnant of your (milk) only after the completion of the rite. Having drunk the nectar of your favourable words I am satiated. I do not desire anything else like a cātaka desiring water from the row of clouds (only). Having served you I have had the source of everything as a dullard has due to learning honoured by all men. Even the curse given by your grandmother has become a boon for me. Wherefrom, except you, can I get a son? How could I have had your sight? It has led to a boon only. O mother, (deities) like you are to be propitiated. Nobody would desire poison from Mahādeva, giving the three goals of human life.

Devala said:

54-58. Hearing these words, the cow, being pleased, said: "Well (said), well (said)", and being very proud, went with him to the hermitage. As on the previous day, the king's wife worshipped her on that day also. The cow, as it were, the accomplishment of (the king's) object embodied, became pleased. The lotus-eyed (wife) of the king, seeing the pleased face of the king,

knew that the object for which an effort was made, has been accomplished. Then the couple, along with the cow to whom worship was duly offered, went to the blessed preceptor. The best sage, the treasure of suprasensual knowledge, seeing them with their lotus-like faces pleased, delighting them, said:

Vasiṣṭha said:

59-64. O king, I know the cow is pleased (with you), for the lustre on your face today appears to be unprecedented. Surabhi (the divine, desire-yielding cow) and the divine tree are known to fulfil desires (of beings). Having propitiated her (grand-)child, if the object is accomplished, what wonder is there? The tree gives every desired (object). She (i.e. Surabhi), the innocent one, even though remembered from a distance (gives the desired object). Then, what will she not give like the divine river, when devoutly served (by remaining) in her vicinity only? Through my (supernatural) knowledge, I knew the test given to you by her. O king, you too preserve your righteousness as I am favourably inclined to you, as devotion is to the supreme soul, Lakṣmī is pleased with Viṣṇu, or Pārvatī is attached to Śiva. Highly devoted to the worship of the cow, you with your wife, pass the night here. O great king, you who have completed the rite will go to your city tomorrow.

Devala said:

65-68. O merchant, he, having, along with his wife, thus propitiated the cow, having obtained his desired object, having furnished his chariot, secured his preceptor's order, and went home. After a few days Raghu was born to that Dilīpa. The race of Raghu is well-known on the earth by his (i.e. Raghu's) name. O merchant, that man who will read this account of Dilīpa, will obtain wealth, grains, sons on the earth. O excellent Śarabha, you too, along with this (your wife), worship according to your own way and quickly propitiate Gaurī. She will also give you a son, the chief of your family, endowed with virtues, and sinless.

Śivaśarma said:

69. The sage, having narrated this very charming and aus-

picious account of Dilīpa to Śārabha, and having instructed him as to the manner of worshipping Ambikā, took to his desired path.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOUR

The Story of a Merchant Śārabha and a Demon Vikaṭa

Śivaśarman said:

1-3. O Viṣṇuśarman, then Śārabha, taking the materials of worship went with his wife to the temple of Śrī Caṇḍikā. Having duly bathed there, they, full of devotion, worshipped Caṇḍikā with flowers, incense and lights with a desire for (getting) a son. Ambikā, devoutly propitiated by them for seven days, spoke with a clear mind (these) words directly addressed to them:

Pārvati said:

4-7. O merchant, by means of your very firm devotion I am pleased with you. O good one, I shall give you a son for whom you are striving. Go to the Khāṇḍava (forest) of Indra. Do not delay. There is the excellent, very auspicious holy place called Indraprastha. There is the holy place, fulfilling all desires and fashioned by Bṛhaspati. With a desire to have a son, bath there. By means of a bath there, O dear one, you will have a son. O dear one, by bathing there, I obtained Skanda, the killer of foes.

Śivaśarman said:

8-14. Hearing these words of the goddess, my father, with his wife, came here and with a desire for (having) a son bathed (here). The intelligent one gave a hundred cows with household materials to brāhmaṇas after having gratified gods and the dead ancestors properly. After having stayed there with their minds controlled for seven nights, the couple with their lotus-like faces blooming due to having secured the desired object, went home. In the same month my mother conceived; and when, day by day,

nine months passed, I was born in the tenth auspicious month. O Viṣṇuśarman, the old account which I told you, was heard by me from my father when I was twenty years old. Once my father, seeing me capable of managing the household affairs and being detached from everything, handed over to me (the management of) the house. He, having his mind attached to Govinda and a religious nature, condemning addiction to objects of senses and repeatedly praising devotion for Viṣṇu, said to me:

The father said:

15-25. O you intelligent one, old age has come to me. My hair has grown grey. I shall resort to the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, that are resorted to by the good. That man whose mind becomes clear and quite steady due to service to him, is self-contented, and does not long for anything. Having no desire for pleasure and aversion to pain, and experiencing the natural (results of) good or bad deeds, he, at the end of them, casts his body and becomes unborn (i.e. is not reborn). Wealth gives excessive pleasure till the bliss of self-realization is not obtained. When it is obtained, it (i.e. the former) is small like buttermilk as contrasted with nectar. This Māyā of Viṣṇu is strong. It deludes a man. He like one intoxicated by liquor, does not know what is beneficial and what is not. The lord causes, as he wills, active worldly life or its absence, through knowledge or ignorance; for his sport is like that of a child. O dear one, when an act as told in the Veda is done by one desiring its fruit, it is great active worldly life. They (i.e. the acts) should be dedicated to the lord. As burnt seeds do not grow in spite of effort, similarly acts dedicated through desirelessness to the lord of the universe do not (fructify). Salvation is the destruction of (the fruits of) acts that give pleasure or pain. Bondage is their origin. This is the verdict of the holy texts. Therefore, I doing acts as told in the Vedas and not desiring their fruits and having devotion for Viṣṇu in my heart, am moving in (i.e. visiting) the holy places. Thus experiencing the (fruits of) acts that were commenced, and not censuring others, I shall destroy the disease due to (the life in) the world by drinking the medicine in the form of the company of the good.

Śivaśarman said:

26. O Viṣṇuśarman, listen accurately to what I said to my father after I had heard these words of him:

The merchant's son said:

27-33. The people are difficult to please; they will not give you any credit. (They will say:) He has gone leaving the bad family being dejected with it. These feet of Viṣṇu purify the three worlds. (Even) when remembered from a distance they remove sins. Why do you leave them? O father, even a sinful person who dies in Magadha, has his sins washed in Gaṅgā. He goes to heaven. Do not give up the auspicious (Gaṅgā), (since) sixty thousand sons of the noble Sagara, who were burnt by Kapila's anger, went to heaven due to her touch. O father, do not go elsewhere after abandoning her; that is a series (of steps) leading to heaven, that even brings about salvation, and is resorted to by those who desire salvation. Do not disregard Gaṅgā honoured by gods, (which is) in your vicinity. O glorious one, she, when resorted to, will give you what you desire. Even if lower animals, through ignorance, would die in her water, they would become Brahman. How do you abandon her?

Śivaśarman said:

34-47a. Hearing these words my father to whom sacred law was dear, being averse to all objects of senses, lived in the house. Everyday he thrice bathed in Gaṅgā, and always went to the house where a Purāṇa would be (read). O son, once listening to the greatness of Yamunā-tīrtha, the wise one heard about the greatness of this holy place. The religious merit of this holy place full of all holy places is a hundred times better than holy places like Avimukta, Haridvāra, Prayāga, Puṣkara, Ayodhyā, Dvārikā, Kāñcī, Mathurā and others. My father, having heard what the learned son had told him, went, unnoticed by all, to this holy place, after abandoning the house. My illustrious father, serving the feet of Viṣṇu like us came here with a desire for salvation. Bathing thrice (a day) at the Nigamodbodhaka Tīrtha he, the wise one, doing his rites and being desireless, lived at this best holy place—the abode of the unborn—for a few months. Once he had very severe fever. Due to the great pain

(caused) by the fever he, losing his consciousness, fainted. For a while the father remained in the condition of unconsciousness. When later he regained his consciousness he thought like this: 'Oh! misery has befallen me. My very intelligent, religious son, who would console me, with my body hot due to fever, is away. I have not atoned for the very fearful sin of illicit intercourse. What would be my fate? (If) my son will come I shall give him the wealth which I have hidden in my house and which even I have not seen.'

Śivaśarman said:

47b-51a. While he was thinking like this, a traveller, troubled by rain, afflicted by cold, and with his body trembling, entered the hut. Seeing him asleep, the traveller again went near him, and knowing him to be an ascetic saluted him with (i.e. by bending) his head, and said to him: "O sage, why are you sleeping? The evening has come. This sun is setting. This is not the time for sleeping for you." When the traveller had just uttered these words, Śarabha, my father, with his body hot with fever, somehow spoke to him:

Śarabha said:

51b-58a. O traveller, listen to the words which I am speaking to you. Listening to the course of my fate you do (what is proper), O good one. I am a merchant named Śarabha. My house is in Kānyakubja. Though prevented by my wife, friends and son I came here on hearing the greatness of this holy place told by my son. O good one, some months have passed after I came here. Now for the last three days I have been suffering from fever. My life had departed. Today it has come (back) again. O good one, some portion of my life still remains (to be passed). I have come (back) after having seen Yama's place, and due to my good fortune you have come here. O friend, take me to my house; I shall give you much wealth after reaching home. O you treasure of kindness, favour me. Dig a portion of the land here and take my wealth.

Śivaśarman said:

58b-60a. Having heard this, the wicked-minded rustic, addic-

ted to sensuous pleasures and greedy of wealth, said to him: "I shall do as told by you." Speaking like this, and digging the wealth from that piece of land, the traveller placed it before Śarabha and said:

The traveller said:

60b-61. O chief of merchants, I have taken out this your wealth from the piece of land. Quickly give (some money) to me to bring a palanquin; having placed you, suffering from fever, in it, I shall take you to your place.

Śivaśarman said:

62-76. Thus addressed by him, he gave him three golden palas. He too took that money and went to the city of Lavaṇa. O son, having stayed there for a night, he, having paid a couple of palas, brought a palanquin with attendants and carriers. The wicked one took the two palas for himself only. Having put the excellent merchant, Śarabha, in the palanquin, the traveller, hastening the carriers, started for Kānyakubja. The traveller, repeatedly making him (i.e. giving him) who was oppressed with thirst, drink a small quantity of water collected from that holy place in a water-pot, proceeded. Then, on the way, they got to the bank of a lake to eat (food). Having bathed and eaten food, they hastily moved from that place. Having crossed some portion of the land, they were oppressed by thirst. (The traveller) drank the water from the water-pot and made Śarabha also drink it. Then a very fierce demon, Vikāṭa by name, moving in the solitary forest, saw them going. Seeing them, he, with his mouth open, and overcome by hunger, and causing the earth to tremble with the strokes (i.e. the plantings) of his feet, speedily ran (to them), and coming near them speedily, he seized the traveller and the carriers at their testicles and he, moving in the sky, whirled them. He dropped them who were dead due to being whirled only, on the ground. He ate their flesh and drank blood from their testicles. Thinking, 'Where will this man suffering from a disease go from my presence? I shall (first) eat him up, and then drink the water', that chief among the demons then threw water from the water-pot on his face. As soon as the water was thrown he had the recollection of his former birth. He turn-

ed away from killing that Śarabha. He also got the recollection of the sin committed by him in his former existence, due to which he obtained demonhood though he was born as a brāhmaṇa. The demon, having recollected his sin, and having got knowledge, quickly approached Śarabha (my father) and said to my father:

The demon said:

77-78. “O best man, who are you? And who are these men whom, I, a mean demon, of a fierce form, devoured? Of which excellent holy place is this water, due to whose power even a sinner like me had the recollection of my former existence?”

The merchant said:

79-86. O best demon, I am a merchant. My home is in Kānyakubja. Travelling to (various) holy places I came to Indra-prastha. There I suffered from fever due to fate. O you having bad ways, then an idea to go home arose in me. Some traveller troubled by rain came there. I requested him to bring a palanquin and take me home. And this is that wise traveller who quickly brought a palanquin and having put me in it, had proceeded to my house. Now that traveller and the carriers of the palanquin have been eaten by you. Hear of which holy place this water is. In the Khāṇḍava Vana of Indra there is the excellent river Yamunā. On her bank is the best holy place called Hariprastha. The preceptor of gods lives there. The holy place accomplishes everything (and is called) Nigamodbodhaka, drinking the water of which you got the recollection. I have told you all this that you had asked me. O demon, I shall ask you something. Tell (i.e. answer) me quickly about it. Now (and) here you will recollect the deeds in your former existence. Tell me what sin you committed, due to which you became a demon.

The demon said:

87-100. Listen. I shall tell you everything. Formerly I was a brāhmaṇa (born) in the family of those proficient in the Vedas. I was wicked and sinful. While playing with dice everyday with those conversant with it, I lost much wealth, mine as well as of my father. My father having reported my act to the king,

formerly got me having no wealth, out of the house. I went to a village nearby. There was a friend, the best brāhmaṇa named Devaka. He, respecting me, allowed me to live comfortably in his house for a long time. When my friend had gone somewhere, I, afflicted by sexual urge, forcibly enjoyed his beautiful wife. At that moment only that very chaste lady, drinking strong poison, died. Seeing her (dead) I ran away at the dark night. I who was running (away) was arrested by the officers of the king. Saying, 'This is a thief', they cut off my head. Causing me to take up a body full of torment the servants of Yama threw me into the terrible Raurava hell by Yama's order. Having experienced severe torture there for sixty thousand years, I obtained demonhood due to that sin only. O chief of merchants, I have passed a hundred years as a demon. I (shall) tell (you) that remedy due to which I (shall) get salvation. O good one, you gave me religious merit. I shall speak (i.e. tell) it. Listen carefully to that by which this water of the excellent holy place got into my mouth. O merchant, in that same existence I observed the vow of Viṣṇu's day (i.e. Ekādaśī) due to company and not (my) desire, and kept awake at night. Having bathed on the Dvādaśī-day I got ready to eat also. (At that time) some devotee of Viṣṇu, having Viṣṇu's form, came to my house. Seeing him I got angry and uttered abusive words: "O hypocrite, O wicked one, why are you going amidst the ladies?"

101-109. When, addressed by me, the wise one, who looked equally upon respect or disrespect, silently went out of my house, my loyal wife, coming towards him, fell at his feet and brought the good man to the house. Though insulted by me, the noble one did not get angry. He was delighted when honoured by her, since he was one to whom enemies and friends were alike. She, having seated him on a seat (said to me): "O lord of my life, make him enjoy (i.e. offer him) food. Conquer the three worlds." Thus addressed by the chaste one, I, with a gloomy face, spoke to the noble-hearted one, of a pleasing face, "(Please) get up, pacify your hunger." Speaking like this, I, prompted by my slender-waisted (wife), again seated him on a seat and washed his feet. To the judicious one I offered a plate full of food. My good wife gave (i.e. poured) water on his hand. I was repeatedly prompted by her. The virtuous one, free from perturbation, went

at will, muttering. 'Hare Rāma, Hare Kṛṣṇa.' O merchant, due to this religious merit which I, prompted by my wife, did in the previous existence, this water of the holy place was brought to me.

Śivaśarman said:

110. O Viṣṇuśarman, when the demon got up after saying these words, the traveller and the carriers, having divine bodies, spoke in the sky:

The traveller and the carriers said:

111-115. O chief merchant, O good one, though we met with death immaturely, we obtained godhead after drinking this water due to your favour. O chief of merchants, since we went with you through greed of wealth, our desire for wealth had not left (us) even at the time of death. By the power of the water of this best holy place in our belly, we secured at death the friendship of the lord of wealth. O lord, we salute you; we are going to the city of the lord of wealth in aeroplanes which are brought by his attendants, which are decorated with various jewels. Go to the holy place Nigamodbodhaka. Do not delay. O good one, along with you quickly emancipate him also.

Śivaśarman said:

116-117a. O dear one, speaking like this, they went, all around, to the northern direction, producing sound in the sky and on the earth with small bells of the aeroplanes. Then my father, the merchant, spoke to the demon:

Śarabha said:

117b-118. Get up. Quickly take me to the holy place Nigamodbodhaka. I, suffering from fever, cannot go there on foot. There is none else except you, who (would) take me to that holy place.

Śivaśarman said:

119-122. The demon, comforting the merchant with the words 'All right' put him on his shoulder, and speedily went to that purifying holy place. Both, the chief merchant and the demon, just bathing at the best of all holy places, stayed there. I having heard about the great agony of my father, and urged by

my mother (to go to him) moved from my house. Having come here, I saw him, suffering from severe fever. I saluted him with (i.e. by bending my) head. He blessed me and said:

Śarabha said:

123-125. O dear one, why have you come here along a distant (i.e. long) path? My friend, a demon by name Vikāṭa, has come here, and (is) staying here doing his own rites. Get up, and fall at his feet (i.e. prostrate before him) like a staff. You should not be afraid of him who has given up harmful acts. Now, having reached this holy place, he stays near me.

Śivaśarman said:

126-127. Thus told by my father, that noble Śarabha, I got up and fell at his feet (prostrating myself) like a staff. He raised me (seizing me) with my arms, and closely embracing me and giving me a blessing said, "Welcome to you, O my friend's son."

The demon said:

128-129. O dear one, you are fortunate that you have come here on hearing your father's very severe suffering due to fever. Performing the rite with water mixed with sesamum-seeds, you will be free from the debt of your dead ancestors. Having bathed perform your rites; (thereby) you will remember your former existence.

Śivaśarman said:

130-143. O dear one, thus told by him, I, remembering the auspicious and inauspicious acts of the former existence, entered the holy place having excellent water. Having duly bathed here, I came near my father. I asked him the account of the demon: "Why has he become religious-minded?" Having heard the account of the demon, the carriers and the traveller, I praised this best holy place. Thinking, 'I shall go home when my father will be free from the disease', I stayed there for ten days. Within (those) ten days, while I watched (i.e. before me) the death of my father occurred in the (half) quantity of the water of this best holy place. Then, Viṣṇu, having a body like a fresh cloud, and holding Lakṣmī close to his bosom, came after having mounted

Garuḍa. He had put on yellow garments; had four arms; his lotus-like eyes were tawny. He was served by the divine Brahmā and others along with Andhakārin, and by the kinnaras singing the hosts of his virtues. He was being praised on all sides by Hāhā, Hūhū and others. Giving my father identity with his own form, and putting him on Garuḍa, and surrounded by Brahmā and others, Viṣṇu went up to heaven. Seeing my father's sameness of form with Viṣṇu, I thought, when, at that time, there sprang the truth in my heart: 'It is the greatness of this crest-jewel of holy places that in half of its water a being that is dead becomes four-armed. I shall rightly not at all leave this best holy place having a strong efficacy urged by thirst for the disease in the form of wealth. I shall stay in this hut of my father till (I get) freedom from the (fruits of) acts that have been commenced on the earth.' Having thought like this and performed proper rites (in honour) of my father, I stayed (there) with a desire for salvation along with the demon.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIVE

The Efficacy of Nigamabodha

Śivaśarman said:

1-10. Once that best demon, having seen a milch cow plunged into mud, entered it to take her up. 'There is a great religious merit in (i.e. due to) protecting a cow. The protector would go to heaven.' He who was thinking like this was seized by a crocodile (literally, a water-elephant). He was taken down into the water. With his belly full of water, and with his body pressed by him, he died instantly. He resorted to a divine form; an aeroplane with an attendant was brought near him sent by gods led by Indra. I asked the chief of the demons, going (to heaven) after having died here in this great holy place, very difficult to be reached, and giving salvation, "O intelligent and divine one, how did you reach heaven?" Thus addressed, he said, "O innocent one, I longed for it." When that meritorious one had gone to

heaven, the place of the meritorious ones, I, remaining alone, was taken to Viṣṇu, the good resort. With a concentrated mind, I, while going, standing, sleeping, keeping awake, bathing, constantly meditated upon that lotus-eyed one only. "O Viṣṇu, I have sought the shelter of your lotus-like feet. I have no longing for the position of Brahmā, Śiva or Indra." O dear one, making my mind free from the (longing for) objects of senses, and soliciting that Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, I lived at this great holy place.

Viṣṇuśarman said:

11-14. When, while staying at this great holy place, you died, then how did you get a birth again? This is my doubt. The traveller and the carriers, on their having ignored the restriction (laid down) at this holy place due to greed for money, met with death from the demon (and) went to heaven on drinking the water of this great holy place. So also the demon meeting with, at his will, death from the crocodile, went to heaven while you were looking on (i.e. in your presence). There is no (re)birth (for a man whose) death takes place there.

Nārada said:

15. O Śibi, having heard the auspicious words of his son, Śivaśarman told him the former account, the cause of his birth.

Śivaśarman said:

16-19. O Viṣṇuśarman, listen to this cause of my birth. I am telling it to you. Having heard it, be free from doubts. Once when I had resorted to meditation while worshipping Viṣṇu, Durvāsa, irascible by nature, came to my hermitage. Not aware of his having arrived (there), I, intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu, remained in that condition recollecting (Viṣṇu's) name for a long time. The sage, standing for a while, full of anger and with his eyes red, spoke loudly to himself these (words):

Durvāsa said:

20-25. Oh! I, Atri's son, born from the womb of Anasūyā, a portion of Śiva, am thus excessively neglected by this human

being: This wicked man even ignores me who caused Indra to fall from the kingdom of the three worlds! Who are you that are not afraid of me who am like the destructive fire at the end of the world, since I have the greatest worth barring (that of) the three gods? How is it that that deity whom he is meditating upon, does not advise him that Yama has come in an embodied form? Indeed he is meditating upon Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, being satisfied with the nectar of meditation upon whom he does not have the knowledge of his surroundings. Let him meditate upon Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, or any other (deity). He should be punished by me by all means. He has disregarded me.

Śivaśarman said:

26-45. Thinking like this, he roused me, and with his eyes red due to anger, cursed me who had become conscious. "How will that desire, which you, ignoring me, had in your mind at the time of meditation, come true at all?" O dear one, when, after having spoken like this, the sage born of Atri, moved (to go), I dreaded with fear, seized his feet, and said like this: "O best sage, forgive me; give up your anger. (People) like me do not properly know the deeds of (sages) like you. Now you have given a fearful curse to me who am innocent. Favour me who am polite. Show favour for the end of (i.e. ending) your curse." Thus addressed, Durvāśas, giving up his anger, became cool. O darling, is it not proper, since he is Śiva (himself)? The wise one said to me: "You, being the best brāhmaṇa, will meet with death here only, and will not be reborn." Having thus favoured me that Śiva (i.e. Durvāśas) left, after staying there that day and being honoured by me with a hospitable reception. I, having thought that the sage's words would not be untrue, and repenting in my mind, went home: 'Oh! to me, having my hermitage in a holy place, and constantly meditating upon (Viṣṇu) the sight of Lakṣmī's lord has become difficult to have in this existence, like that of a cloud to a cātaka in Caitra and Vaiśākha, causing heat? Wherefrom has this one, causing obstacle in my course to Vaikuṇṭha come like a cloud (coming in the way) of a man who has set out (on a journey)? It is not the fault of the sage. It is indeed the desire of that Viṣṇu only. Having well appeared before me, he has given me another (i.e. a new) existence. I, scared

of the worldly existence, should seize the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, as a traveller heated by the heat of summer (takes to) the shade of a tree. What is the use of the transient wealth, children, wife and other relatives to me who am muttering 'Govinda, Paramānanda (the highest joy), Rāma.' Not censuring other acts, and resorting to Viṣṇu, and remaining like a neutral person among the members of my family, I shall enjoy what is destined.' O dear one, thinking like this, I, after having bathed in the water sacred to Viṣṇu, came home after a few days. I told my mother and relatives about the death of my father. Hearing (the news) they lamented; they did not know that this (worldly existence) is transitory. Having no longing for the worlds like Satya, I remained in the house and died on the bank of Gaṅgā, resorted to by the sages. Due to the curse of the sage Durvāsas, I was born in the family of Viṣṇu's devotees. Having died at this holy place, I shall reach Viṣṇu's feet.

Nārada said:

46-51. O noble one, thus the two best brāhmaṇas talking to each other about the sins committed by them in their former existence, and thinking about Viṣṇu's foliage-like feet, remained at the holy place fashioned by the preceptor of gods. Thinking about and remembering Viṣṇu, of lotus-like eyes, of four arms, having a body dark blue like a cloud, and shining with his weapons and ornaments, they got absorption into Viṣṇu. The story of this excellent holy place which is the one called Indraprastha has been told. O Śibi, listen to its fruit. A man obtains the same fruit by devoutly listening to it as is obtained by him on bathing in Gaṅgā or by giving away his daughter (in marriage). There is no doubt that that fruit which is produced on the earth at the birth of a son, or by a bath in the water of Godāvarī when Jupiter is in the Zodiacal sign of Leo, is obtained by listening to it. There is no other holy place giving all objects than this best holy place, by dying at which even lower animals become four-armed (ones).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIX

*A Woman Should Never Desert Her Husband**Saubhari said:*

1. That religious king, the wealthy Śibi, having heard those words of the sage Nārada, was pleased in his mind, and (thus) spoke to the best one:

Śibi said:

2-3. O sage, you have properly described the greatness of this excellent holy place Nigamodbodhaka. I have heard it; that removes sins. O sage, there are hundreds of holy places in this Indraprastha. Tell me the greatness of some other holy place, if there is any.

Nārada said:

4-17. O king, I shall tell you what formerly took place in this Dvārakā which is situated within Indraprastha. Listen to it from me. In Kāmpilya there was a certain brāhmaṇa, Cupid embodied as it were. He attracted the hearts of all women with his excellent amorous actions. He was skilled in the science of music. His voice was sweet like that of a cuckoo. Once, that very intelligent one, holding a lute in his hand, repeatedly playing upon it, singing, without an equal, with voice sweet like that of a cuckoo, moved in the city. Having heard the sound of his song, full of melody and protracted tones, the wives of citizens abandoned their domestic work and went (to him). Fascinated by his handsome form, they could not bear the force of lust. Hearing the song actually they were disturbed. What other self-controlled and wise person than the two (viz. Brahmā and Śiva) is able to conquer Cupid who created a longing for Sarasvatī in the mind of Brahmā, or who made half of Śiva's body to be given to Pārvatī? And women are fickle by nature. Even the chaste ones were unable to put up with the excitement caused by Cupid. What could be said, O king? Cupid is difficult to be conquered in the world. They went everywhere he, singing with his throat and lute and fascinating with his tone, went. Their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers came there, and threatening them,

took them (back) to their own homes, O king. When they again looking for him, approached him, the citizens told the account to their king. The king too called the best brāhmaṇa and asked him in private: “O best brāhmaṇa, tell me by means of which charm you fascinated the women in the city. I shall give you much wealth. Othwise I shall drive you out of my kingdom. There is no doubt about it.”

Nārada said:

18. Hearing these words of the king, the best brāhmaṇa, the ocean of handsomeness and virtues, spoke to him true words.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

19-21. O king, I, a beggar, have neither a charm nor a herb; but all the women in your city have no control over their senses. O king, the women in your city cannot put up with the force of lust on seeing my handsome form and hearing the sound of my songs. O great king, what can I do? O lord, what is my fault? The order of the king, like (the fruits of) former acts, can never be resisted.

Nārada said:

22. O king Uśīnara-Śibi, when the brāhmaṇa was telling like this all citizens, coming together, spoke thus to the king:

The citizens said:

23-27. O king, this brāhmaṇa has fascinated the wives of the citizens. They do not remain in their houses. They cannot be stopped by us. O lord, if this one who infatuates the women lives in the city, then today (only) we shall go to other countries. Our bull-god of the nature of havya and kavya (oblations to gods and dead ancestors) has gone(?). They have started going after him like a cow from the field of sinners. O lord of men, we, abandoned by glory, have no other shelter to seek. They will follow him as the female elephants follow their lord. How can Lakṣmī (wealth) remain in a vacant house? Since these three, viz. piety, worldly riches and house, depend upon the wife, one that depends upon

the wife's piety and wealth cannot remain, when the two are lost.

Nārada said:

28. When the citizens were speaking like this, their wives came to the king, sat there, and thus spoke to one another:

The wives of the citizens said:

29-31a. Our minds open excessively on seeing this brāhmaṇa of a charming form as lotuses in the water do on seeing the lord of the day and they close in his absence as the white lotuses close without the moon: come, together we shall seize (and take) him before the king. He is not fit to be killed, nor are we. What will the king do?

Nārada said:

31b-33. Saying so, they hurriedly seized the best brāhmaṇa, when their own husbands were watching and in front of the king himself; and they said to him: "O lord of our minds, come to our house, and quickly pacify (the agony) tormenting our hearts. Today we cannot remain (i.e. live) without you." Hearing these words of them, the brāhmaṇa replied:

The brāhmaṇa said:

34-40. I am your son; you are my mothers. Leaving your houses, why are you wandering? Propitiate your own lords, since, when the husbands are propitiated, wives certainly (enjoy) the two worlds, and Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, is pleased. (And) when he is pleased, what is difficult to be obtained? That woman who, forsaking her own husband, resorts to another (man) with a desire for enjoyment, invites censure and goes to a fearful hell. She, the deceiver of her husband, lives there till the end of the kalpa. Again having moved out of it, she reaches the state of an inanimate object. Even from there, she obtains beasthood for many existences. Then freed from that (stock) she is born as a crippled one. Knowing the sinful course to be like this, turn away from Cupid. Otherwise at the end (i.e. fall) of your body, you will go to a very fearful hell. You will not have the pleasure

that you desire to get from me. It is your sin, since it is a fall of a human being.

Nārada said:

41-43. Having heard his words like these, and seeing the faces of their husbands, they hung down their faces through shame like creepers struck by a (stormy) wind. The very terrible fire of lust of the women in the city went out due to the cold water in the form of the words of the chap. O king, all of them, condemning Cupid as one that fascinates even gods like Brahmā, Indra, got up, and walked (away).

The women said:

44-52. Fie upon this, committing sinful acts, an axe to the wood in the form of good character! He who has struck Cupid for the happiness of passionate beautiful women, is blessed. What should we say to Rukmiṇī, venerable to the world, who carried in her womb this Rāhu, named Pradyumna, eating the Moon of the good character of women? If that mean god comes within the range of our sight again, we shall throw him into the fire of the eye of the lord (Śiva) by meditating upon him. He, the sinful one, whom Viṣṇu, delighted in self, created, made Viṣṇu dear to (or the lover of) sixteen thousand women. Then what can be said about us?

Having thus censured that Cupid, the women praised that best brāhmaṇa who preserved his own character and that of them also, O king. 'Blessed is that mother of this (best brāhmaṇa) who gave, birth to this excellent brāhmaṇa who vanquished Cupid and preserved the virtue of others! Fie upon us who were laughed at by the king's men, who were vanquished by Cupid, and by whom great sin was committed through speech and mind!' All the women who were thus thinking, who were of the same view, being admonished by the brāhmaṇa's words, went to their respective houses. Then king Kāmpilya also, having honoured that brāhmaṇa with garments and ornaments, sent him to the house of that good man.

53-63. As time went on, the powerful lord of Kārūṣa besieged lord of Kāmpilya and his city with armies (i.e. a large army). A great war took place between the two. He (i.e. Kārūṣa king)

got him killed. He plundered the entire city and the brave ones were killed everywhere. Those women eating (i.e. drinking) Kālakūṭa (poison) died. They had not made any atonement for that sin. Due to that sin all those were born as demonesses with huge bodies and causing fear in the city of the demon called Bhīṣaṇa. All the women in the city were killed by Hanūmat, occupying the banner of the chariot of Viṣṇu relishing sacrifices. The same were again born as demonesses on the path to Maru. They were oppressed by hunger and thirst, and caused fear at their sight. Thus due to the sin committed by means of speech and mind, they obtained two existences, mixed with (i.e. along with) the existence as demonesses. Due to their sin the two cities along with their kings were destroyed. Therefore, O lord, women, fearing sin, should never resort to another lover even through speech or mind. Women desiring salvation should not desert their husband even though he is diseased, dull, poor or blind. O Śibi, I have told you in great detail about the sin produced through devotion to another lover by means of speech or mind, so also the fruit of it obtained by these (women). By the drops (of water) of the pious Dvārakā, seen by those going to Indra-prastha, falling on their bodies, the women in the city reached heaven after abandoning the severe condition of corpse-eaters, which they had reached due to their having resorted to another lover, and obtained the form of divine ladies delighting gods.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVEN

The Story of Vimala

Saubhari said:

1. O son of Dharma, having heard these words of that noble Nārada, king Śibi politely spoke these (words):

Śibi said:

2. O best sage, how did those demonesses, moving on the path to Maru, get the water from this Dvārakā?

Nārada said:

3-9. O king, listen to the story, pure and destroying sin, of a brāhmaṇa named Vimala, living in the valley of the Himālaya (mountain). In the Himālayan valley lived a brāhmaṇa by name Vimala. He honoured gods, sages, his dead ancestors, and guests. He was engrossed in worshipping Viṣṇu's feet. He knew the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas and religious practices. His mind was (devoted to) listening to the Purāṇa containing the hosts of Viṣṇu's virtues. In his old age a son was born to him due to Viṣṇu's grace. The father then named him Haridatta (literally, given by Viṣṇu). He duly performed his (sacraments like) shaving etc. Haridatta received (the knowledge of) the Vedas from his teacher. Having duly studied the Vedas, having paid the fee of the teacher, he, being detached, took to renunciation, (having) completely (dropped) the two stages (viz. the second and the third) of human life. On coming to know that act of him, his mother who loved her son, bathing (i.e. making wet) her pair of breasts with tears due to separation from her son, wept.

The mother said:

10-16. O dear one, like a bee abandoning coarse grass, where are you going, leaving me who am helpless, and your father stricken with old age? Due to service of the feet of Viṣṇu, I got you in my old age. You have resorted to his feet for salvation after having abandoned me. O dear one, I was certainly a fool, since having propitiated that eternal Viṣṇu I longed for you, the unsteady one, for getting happiness. O child, you are intelligent since you are resorting to Viṣṇu, the all-in-all. You too are looking upon this transient world as permanent. What should I do? Where should I go? Māyā cuts off my understanding, as a strong person having a weapon cuts off a plantain tree producing good fruits (right) from its roots. Blessed was king Daśaratha who died due to agony (caused by separation) from Rāma. Fie upon me who am (still) sustaining my life (even) after separation from my son! Come, appear before me, emancipate me. O dear one, O ocean of virtues, speak to your father words consisting of (the words from) the Vedas.

Nārada said:

17-20a. Weeping like this, O king, the mother fell on the ground like a digit of the moon due to its being cut off (from other digits) given to Rāhu. O best king, the brāhmaṇa sage came there. Seeing her fallen on the ground, he said: "What is this? Why has she, with her hair dishevelled and garments and ornaments disordered, fallen on the ground? Is Haridatta well?" All those her friends said to that Vimāla, O king:

The friends said:

20b-21. Your son, Haridatta, having studied the Vedas, having paid the teacher's fee, and being highly devoted to Viṣṇu, has renounced the world. Due to the grief caused by separation from him she has fallen on the ground.

Nārada said:

22. Having heard these words of them, the very wise Vimāla roused his wife with this nectar of his words.

Vimāla said:

23-26. O (my) wife, get up. Listen to the words spoken by me. Why have you fallen down and are dejected? Your son who, knowing this (world to be) transient, has resorted to Viṣṇu's foliage-like feet, is blessed. You too, his mother, whose son has served the feet of Viṣṇu, are blessed. He will also undoubtedly emancipate me, (our) family, and men born in our family, O auspicious one. What a lot of difference is there between this unsteady world, and the service of Viṣṇu's feet, giving an eternal world! Thinking like this kings like Bharata resorted to Viṣṇu. So (has) your son (done), O chaste one. Unless a wise man, free from lust, resorts to the foliage-like feet of Viṣṇu, in every existence (of him) his wife, wealth, house, body, relatives cause grief to him.

Nārada said:

27. Thus admonished by him, the wise one, she got up from the ground, and with a piteous voice spoke to her husband:

The wife said:

28-31. O darling, I understand all that you have said well. I am very much tormented since I do not see a leader for our family. What is the use of service to Viṣṇu, when there is the great holy place in the form of a son? Even if we meet with death in our house only, we shall have (the fruit of) both the worlds then (i.e. when we have a son). Men indeed should try to beget a good son; since sons emancipate their ancestors from the ocean of the mundane existence. O you very intelligent one, if you desire a son, the foremost in the family, then, with a desire to have a son, resort to the creator and supporter of all beings.

Nārada said:

32-36. Hearing these words of her Vimala, the brāhmaṇa, said: "With a desire to have a son, I shall go to Brahmakṣetra Prayāga." Saying so, the brāhmaṇa set out and went to Haridvāra. Having duly bathed there, he then went to Indraprastha after a few days. O brave one, having bathed there (at the holy place) giving (whatever is desired) to everyone that solicits, in the evening, and having eaten (food) he slept at night on the bank of Yamunā. Near that Vimala sleeping at night, the lord of gods along with all holy places quickly came after having mounted on a swan. Having come he raised Vimala, desiring a son; and the best got spoke sweet words.

Brahmā said:

37-43. I know the desire hidden in your mind. Since there is no way to fulfil it, listen to the reason. Once all gods, led by me and Śiva, gathered on the peak of Meru, and praised Viṣṇu for success. Being praised by gods like me lord Viṣṇu was pleased then, and said: "Choose (a boon)." Thus addressed by Viṣṇu, all gods, having received (from him) a boon as desired, went to their respective houses. I said: "O lord of gods, give me an excellent boon. May my holy place, Prayāga, give all the desired objects. May another holy place of me at Indraprastha be a hundredfold (meritorious). O sinless one, I have properly chosen it from you." Having heard these words of me, the lord then said to me: "Let it be so," and again spoke (certain) words. Listen to (those) words.

The lord said:

44-56a. In Indra's Khāṇḍava forest there is an auspicious holy place on the bank of Yamunā, called Indraprastha. Those who die there are equal to me. O Brahman, my own city of Dvārakā is a hundredfold more meritorious than when formerly it was at the shore of the ocean. A man who, having ignored it, resorts to another holy place, does not obtain the fruit of (a visit to) the holy place. This statement is not false. A man would obtain the merit said to be accruing from all holy places. The city of Dvārakā preserves another illusory holy place. He who, having bathed at other holy places, and having performed various rites, will come here, will certainly get the fruit of those holy places.

O best brāhmaṇa, having spoken these words, Viṣṇu disappeared. I too went to my world situated below Vaikuṇṭha. Kāśī is said to be a hundredfold more meritorious than Prayāga, my holy place. Similarly the hilly place Nigamodbodhaka is a hundredfold more meritorious than Kāśī. This group of seven holy places is said to have the fruit equal to the three. O brāhmaṇa, to him who goes to Prayāga without ignoring these three, I give his desired objects. Not otherwise. Some sages say that the seven, Ayodhyā etc., are equal in merit. Indraprastha is said to be hundredfold superior to those. O brāhmaṇa, having come to that holy place Śrī Dvārakā, which gives all the desired fruits, bathe there with the desire for a son. When the hundred names are uttered, unlimited religious merit accrues from them. This holy place will give you a son, the foremost in your family; and due to your bathing here, Viṣṇu will be pleased.

Nārada said:

56b-58. Speaking like this, Brahmā, the lord of the chief of gods, vanished. Vimala also then bathed, and offered oblations to gods etc. Thus said the pious one: "O Dvārakā, dear to Kṛṣṇa, give me a son, your devotee. Salutation to you." When the brāhmaṇa spoke like this, there was (heard) a divine voice.

The divine voice said:

59-60a. Due to the favour of this holy place, the crest-jewel

of all holy places, you will have a son, knowing the truth of religious practices and continuing your family. Go home; do not delay. The bath is well done.

Nārada said:

60b-69. Having heard that (divine) voice, he, trusting in the birth of a son (i.e. trusting he will have a son), took water of Dvārakā in a water-pot, and left (the place). On the way he met his friend living on the Malaya mountain. He was going (back) home after having visited all holy places. He told him all the account consisting of his dialogue with Brahmā. He too was amazed on hearing what had taken place at the holy place of Dvārakā. The pious one said: “O friend, listen to my words. I desire to visit all those holy places that are fashioned in Bhārata. O friend, take me to that holy place, granting all desired objects and show it to me. On the earth those friends who oblige their friends are excellent. In the world none is like them—(even) the father, the mother, or the son. All relatives desert a poor man. But friends, afflicted by his grief, do not leave the friend. A friend emancipates his friends plunged into the ocean of mundane existence. Having taught me the devotion to Viṣṇu, capable of destroying existences, you have become my best friend. O oblige me. O brāhmaṇa, show me the best holy place called Dvārakā.”

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHT

The Greatness of Dvārakā

Nārada said:

1. Taking the brāhmaṇa (with him) Vimala came here to Dvārakā. And the two wise ones with a desire for devotion for Viṣṇu bathed there. In the sky there was again heard the divine voice, deep like that of clouds.

The divine voice said:

2. Listen, O best brāhmaṇas, this is Viṣṇu's holy place. You

will have, due to the grace of this holy place, devotion for Viṣṇu, due to which people abandon the strong infatuation due to Māyā.

Nārada said:

3-4. The two best brāhmaṇas having heard the incorporeal speech, said to each other: "This is Viṣṇu's favour." The two, having duly bathed there and obtained great devotion for Viṣṇu, saluting him and talking to each other walked.

The brāhmaṇas said:

5-7a. As we two, walking on the path came in contact with each other, as on the earth contact with a house and wife etc. takes place, so the future separation of us, being on the way, is (but) proper. So is (the contact and separation from) the wife, son etc. being in the mouth of tiger in the form of Death. That man who realising the contact with wife and sons to be transient, would ever resort to and worship Viṣṇu, is blessed.

Nārada said:

7b-11a. "(Please) remember me. I am your servant, resorting to your feet. You may send me a message." Saying like this, they went home. O king, listen, how that friend of Vimala, going along the path, brought about the liberation of the demonesses. The brāhmaṇa, while going, reached that place void of water, where the demonesses scorched by sins stood oppressed by hunger and thirst. Then they, seeing from a distance that brāhmaṇa with a pot containing water in his hand, said to one another:

The demonesses said:

11b-13a. Some traveller, holding a pot of water in his hand is coming. Our hunger and thirst will be at least partially satisfied. We shall eat him up and drink the water in the pot in his hand. We are oppressed by hunger and thirst for a hundred years.

Nārada said:

13b-21. One said: "Having first eaten his hot liver, then having drunk his blood, I shall gain life." The other said: "How

much material does he have, O Gajānanā? Even for me, Vyāghrānanā, it is not seen to be enough for drinking.” Another one called Rathacakrā, (said): “Hear my words. From one I shall fashion an ear-ring, and a girdle from (other) intestine.” Another one said: “I, skilled in gambling, will play dice in the gambling hall with his sixteen teeth, made black from one side.” All of them, thus speaking among themselves, ran to the brāhmaṇa, with their mouths opened, tongues lolling and bright great arms. Seeing them coming, the brāhmaṇa was overcome by fear. O king, he protected himself all round, as told in the Vedas. The demonesses of fierce valour having come (to him), stood away from him. O king, they were repelled by his lustre and hymns. And they said: “Tell us, who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Seeing you our mind is delighted. O brāhmaṇa, what will be the fruit of touching your feet? Therefore, place your lotus-like feet on our heads.”

Nārada said:

22a. Hearing their words Haridattaja (Haridatta’s son?) said:

The brāhmaṇa said:

22b-23. I am a brāhmaṇa who has come after visiting holy places. Now I am going to Puṣkara. What do you desire? Since, if I am able to give it, I shall do so.

The demonesses said:

24. O brāhmaṇa, tell us in which holy places you bathed. All those are meritorious. Liberate us from this bad existence, giving terrible agony due to great hunger and thirst.

The brāhmaṇa said:

25-38. From my hermitage I went first to Haripura, Avantī. From there I went to Dvārakā. Having bathed in the water of Somodbhavā, I went to the holy place Prabhāsa situated on the shore of the sea. Then I bathed at the highly purifying Setuni-bandha. From there I came to the very holy Kiṣkindhā where Rāma had killed Vālin, the lord of the host of monkeys. From there I came to the Sarasvatī temple situated on the bank of Narmadā where Sarasvatī, served by all, dwells. Then I reached

Veṇī, saluted her and saw the two cities Śivakāñcī and Viṣṇukāñcī in the southern part of India, due to having died where a man becomes Śiva and Viṣṇu. From there I reached Utkala where lord Viṣṇu, actually giving the four ends of human life and the desired objects to his devotees dwells. Having duly worshipped him, and eaten the eatables offered to him, I went to Gaṅgā-sāgara which was his favour only. Then having duly gratified gods, sages and (my) dead ancestors, I came to that place where Gaṅgā had a hundred faces (i.e. flew in a hundred courses). Then having gone to Gayā and having duly offered piṇḍa, endowed with Tulasī blossoms, sandal and water to the dead ancestors, I came to Kośala, to Śarayū which by means of her touch cloudy due to the water, had purified all people. There is a holy place called Gopratāra difficult to be reached (even) by gods. O demoneses, there I did the acts like bathing etc. From there I reached Kāśī, the capital of the lord of Umā. Having saluted god Viśveśvara, so also Bindumādhava, I devoutly bathed in the Jñānavāpī at Maṇikarnikā. Having stayed there for three nights, I again came to Prayāga where actually Brahmā (lives) on the fourteenth day of the bright half of Pauṣa.

39-49. At a dawn of Māgha, having bathed there, again from there I came to Naimiṣa on the bank of Gomatī, where all holy places, with their enchantment dwell. From there I reached Mathurā where there is the holy place called Viśrānti. Near it is a holy, excellent pool called Asikuṇḍa. There very holy Yamunā giving everything and having the holy places of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, Dhruvā, Krūrakeśī, Kālī exists. On both her banks are forests shining with splendour and producing all holy places. Having bathed in them and drunk (their water) a man is not born again. From there I came to the holy, excellent city of Hastināpura. There is the best river Gaṅgā that rose from lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. Then coming to the place of Nārāyaṇa situated in the Himālayan region and seeing Mādhava (there), I came to Kedāra. Having worshipped Viśveśa (there) and having drunk the water of Haṁsā (lake), I came to the very holy Haridvāra, on the bank of Gaṅgā. Having bathed there and having gratified gods, sages and (my) dead ancestors, I came to Kurukṣetra where there is Prācī Sarasvatī. There too, I with my senses controlled, performed all rites, and having worshipped Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet I went to Puṣkara. On the way

my friend named Vimala, going from the holy place Indraprastha, met me.

50-60. O demonesses, the brāhmaṇa, causing me to return, took me to the holy place Śakra-(i.e. Indra-)prastha, giving all (desired) objects. There is holy Dvārakā fashioned by Viṣṇu himself. There I actually saw Viṣṇu, not in form but through words. There he and I bathed to obtain devotion for Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, of the form of Kṛṣṇa, gave it to him and me. We heard Viṣṇu's words, but did not see his form. We secured devotion for him. From that place I came to Puṣkara. O demonesses, I tell you that this water in the water-pot is from that holy place called Dvārakā, the chief among holy places. I have told you what you had asked me. Seeing this bad plight of you, compassion is produced in my heart. Tell me what I should do. I am at your disposal. Let knowledge come to you.

Saying so, he sprinkled them with (that) water. Due to the touch of that water they remembered all the acts in their (various) existences, and gave up their powerful demonish bodies. Obtaining divine bodies, and turning into celestial nymphs, they got into an aeroplane that had come from heaven, and saluted the brāhmaṇa. And they said: "O best brāhmaṇa, due to contact with the water from Dvārakā we are freed from demonhood, and are (now) going to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, there is no other better holy place giving all desired objects than this Dvārakā situated in Indraprastha."

Nārada said:

61-68. Speaking like this, O king, they got into the aeroplanes. And ordered by the brāhmaṇa, they went by that (aeroplane) to the eastern direction. A man, hearing the greatness of this Dvārakā situated on the bank of Yamunā, is freed from sins, O king. The same fruit as is had by giving meals to a hundred brāhmaṇas as desired by them, is produced by listening to this greatness. O king, as happiness is experienced on worshipping Viṣṇu, similarly (it is had) by listening to the greatness of this Dvārakā. That fruit which is got by giving twenty palas of gold (to a brāhmaṇa) at the time of the solar eclipse and the lunar eclipse, is obtained by one hearing the greatness of this (Dvārakā). Having heard (the

account of) the acquisition of a son by Vimala, (a man) obtains a son; and hearing (the account of) the acquisition of his friend's devotion (a man) secures the best devotion. He who, endowed with devotion, listens to (the account of) the liberation of the demonesses, goes like them in an aeroplane to heaven. O best king, I have described to you the greatness of Dvārakā that should be resorted by men in the three worlds and that is situated at Śakratīrtha. Tell me, what other (account) more meritorious than this, I should relate to you. No delay should be done in (securing) one's bliss.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINE

The Story of Brāhmaṇa Mukunda

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O Saubhari, of which holy place, situated at Śakratīrtha, did the sage Nārada describe the greatness to Śibi? Therefore, a desire to hear it is produced in me. Tell me who have bowed (to you) the meritorious dialogue between Śibi and Nārada.

Saubhari said:

3. O Dharmarāja, king Śibi, having heard the description (made) by Nārada, and also the greatness of Dvārakā, respectfully asked him only.

Śibi said:

4-5. O son of Brahmā, O greatest god, I have heard the excellent, wonderful greatness of Dvārakā situated on the slope of Indraprastha. O sage, if there is any sacred story (about someone) in Ayodhyā, then tell it to me who am thirsty of drinking the nectar of your words.

Nārada said:

6-24. As to this there is a holy account, destroying great sins, of a barber and Mukunda, a diligent brāhmaṇa. Both the barber,

the killer of a brāhmaṇa, and the king who died prematurely, went to heaven due to the favour of Kośalā. The city is situated on the bank of Candrabhāgā. There was a sinful, censurable barber, Caṇḍaka by name. The sinful one snatched the wealth of others through stealing. He killed the travellers with weapons and nooses etc. and robbed them (of their possessions). He was always engaged in gambling and (drinking) liquor, and hankered after others' wives. He broke the walls of temples, and sold the bricks and stones. Near his locality lived a brāhmaṇa, endowed with wealth, knowing the Vedic rites, and named Mukunda, O king. Once at night he with his limbs loosened after fatigue due to coitus had fearlessly slept, having embraced his young wife. That Caṇḍaka entered at night the house of that Mukunda to snatch away ornaments etc. (found) in the mansion. Taking whatever was (found) outside the mansion, he went home, and again entered the brāhmaṇa's house. He made a great effort to break the door; (but) he was blocked by iron bolts and was unable to open it. He then climbed (over the wall) and entered the brāhmaṇa's house. The cruel one, holding a sword in his hand, entered the mansion. There he saw the couple, asleep and alarmed. To snatch away the golden ornaments, he approached them. The barber, after having taken many ornaments lying on one side of the bed, extended his hand to snatch away ornaments (put) on his body. The brāhmaṇa was awakened by the thief's touch and was overcome by fear. He did not say anything; (but) closing his eyes remained there only. When the sinful thief took the ornaments from his body and moved, the brāhmaṇa unable to bear the loss of his wealth, came from behind him, and seized him with his hands. O king, the thief also struck the brāhmaṇa with his sword. With his pierced belly, he cried. 'O father, O mother.' People shouting "What (happened)?" came near him. They saw him with his entrails coming out and his body smeared with blood. And they asked Mukunda: "Who has done such an act?" With great difficulty he too spoke like this to his relatives:

Mukunda said:

25-26a. This is the result of my deeds done in the previous birth. None (else) gives pleasure or pain to a human being. These

are just (the results of) piety and impiety. Their root lies in one's former act(s).

Nārada said:

26b-28a. Speaking like this, he was troubled by great agony. O king, at that time, when his friends were looking on (i.e. in the presence of his friends) he cast his life. O kind, then his mother, a chaste brāhmaṇa-lady wept after putting his head, adorned with ear-rings on her lap.

The mother said:

28b-35a. O son, you, reaching the final stage (i.e. dying) have destroyed me, as the day's grace is destroyed by the sun going to the western mountain. O very intelligent one, this body (of you) which is fit for being smeared with sandal, has, having plunged me into the ocean of affliction and grief, been greyish due to dust. Your habit of chewing tām̐būla is certainly being perpetuated by its being mixed with emission of blood. Those very eyes of you which formerly surpassed the beauty of lotuses have now become, as it were, covered with a mass of darkness. O child, get up, get up. Teach your students. At the end of the Vaiśvadeva (sacrifice), honour the guest that has arrived. Your friends, standing at the door, have called you. Go to them. Give them whatever is to be given to them, and take from them whatever is to be received. Oh, Oh! Give reply to me. I fall at your feet. Otherwise, I shall cast my life near you.

Nārada said:

35b-36a. Saying so, the mother of Mukunda, then fainted. His wife, taking his head on her lap, wailed:

The wife said:

36b-41. O lord, O ocean of virtues, listen to my words. If for some reason you are angry with your mother, speak out to me. O good one, formerly you never resorted to silence like this. Some younger brother has insulted you. This parrot in the cage does not eat food without you. Give him well-cooked food, so also to the sārīkā uttering indistinct but sweet words. Teach the

parrot and the sārīkā the series of names of Viṣṇu (like) 'Rāma, Rāma; Hare Kṛṣṇa'. Get up. The two are very clever. What offence have I done to you, that you are not talking to me? I have well preserved the wealth which you have given to me. O lord, I will not wait till the delivery of your lustre (i.e. semen) that you have put into me. I shall follow you.

Nārada said:

42-44. Having thus lamented, that dear wife of Mukunda, desiring to follow him, stopped weeping. O king, then the ascetic, the preceptor of Mukunda, called Vedāyana, wandering over the earth went to his house. "Where has Mukunda gone? The mother and the wife of the intelligent one are not seen." Thus he then asked the female servant.

The female servant said:

45-47a. O preceptor, some thief killed my master at night. He took (away) all the ornaments and silken garments of the daughter-in-law. Falling dead, he (i.e. his body) is at the top of the mansion. His mother, the daughter-in-law, his brothers, fallen into the ocean of great grief, are weeping near him.

Nārada said:

47b-49a. Having heard these words uttered by the female servant, the ascetic, going up to (the top of) the mansion saw his dead disciple. Seeing his relatives weeping excessively near him, the wise one desiring to take them up from the ocean of grief, said to them:

Vedāyana said:

49b-59. O mother, tell me whether you are thus lamenting for his body or his soul. Tell me the truth. (Your) lamenting is not proper for both (the body and the soul). This body, an aggregate of the elements, is earned due to (i.e. as a result of) deeds commenced (by one in one's existences). When they are exhausted, the elements get separated from them. The coming together of them with the deeds is the birth of men. When they perish, the getting separated of them (i.e. the elements) is the death (of men). Since the coming together or getting separated of the

beings is due to their deeds, the wise should not lament for the dull body, dependent on (the deeds). Birth and death are seen in the soul due to the beginningless illusion. (A man) thinks them (to be there) due to his looking upon the body as the soul. (In reality) they are not there. When that (notion of identifying the body with the soul) is removed, he (becomes) that pure, formless Brahman which is self-illuminated, the cause of the world, itself beyond a cause (i.e. having no cause), distinguished with virtues, which is eternal, which is knowledge, joy and which always illumines the world with its lustre. The tongue never licks it. The eyes never see it. The ears never hear it. The nose never smells it. The skin never touches it. It is beyond the senses. It is self-illuminated; it is self-sighted. It is never the object. It is beyond the mind. It cannot be grasped even by the intelligence. Deities of pure sattva that are the forms of its incarnation serve it, but do not understand its form which is beyond the existent and the non-existent. Such is the nature of the (highest) soul. What man would be so foolish as to be angry with it, since it is neither produced, nor does it perish?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TEN

Mukunda Goes to Heaven

Nārada said:

1-15. Having thus enlightened them with words expressing the highest truth, the ascetic got done his (obsequial) rites. The learned one stopped the young, pregnant wife of Mukunda, who insisted on following her husband. O' king, having taken his bones, his brother, along with the anchorite, went to drop them into the water of Gaṅgā. O king, the brāhmaṇa (Mukunda's brother) and the ascetic reached along with the members of a caravan this holy place Indraprastha after a few days. O king, in this Kōśalā which is in Indraprastha on the bank of Gaṅgā on earth, they slept at night. Keeping the bundle of the bones between themselves, the two, fatigued due to the journey, went

to sleep. When, at night the members of the caravan had slept, a dog came there to take away cooked food etc. The dog, repeatedly smelling the kitchen, licking the vessels, at times tolerating the stroke of a staff, moved in the entire camp. Then being struck by someone on the head, he ran from there like a hen-pecked husband struck by his wife but unable to retaliate. The dog again entered the same place with a desire to lick the vessels containing food, as he was struck with staffs and bricks, like a poor person loving a prostitute (enters her house) with a desire for enjoyment. Thus wandering, the dog (came) where the two were asleep, and took away the bundle of bones. Having carried it for a distance, he tore the bundle with his teeth and seeing the fleshless bones in it, threw them into the water of this Kośalā. The moment the bones were thrown into this water, O king, Mukunda, seated in a divine aeroplane, came there. Seeing his preceptor and younger brother asleep, he gently awakened them. O king, he, of a divine form, having saluted his teacher, said:

Mukunda said:

16-19. O my preceptor Vedāyana, I salute you. O my younger brother, my blessing to you. Due to your favour my bones have fallen into this holy place. This I, having died, having gone to hell and got its fruit, have secured a divine course due to the grace of this holy place. I have come here to salute you, my preceptor, who are a holy place. I, going to heaven in this divine aeroplane, saluted you, this holy place, and saw (i.e. met) my brother. (Please) allow me. I (shall) go to heaven causing happiness.

Nārada said:

20. Hearing these words of Mukunda, his preceptor Vedāyana with his amazement removed, said to him seated in the aeroplane.

Vedāyana said:

21-22. O Mukunda, tell me the truth. After your death, to which world did you go, from where you are now going to heaven, O dear one? O dear one, what happened there? Who is

the ruler of that world? What kind of subjects are there? What are the religious practices? Tell all that.

Mukunda said:

23-28a. O preceptor, I shall tell you what took place after (my) death. Now my recollection is revived due to the favour of this holy place. When that wicked barber Caṇḍaka killed me, Yama's very fearful servants came (there). They were tawny-eyed; their hair was red; their bodies, nails and lower lips were dark. They were short; had long feet, short noses and projected teeth. They said to one another: "Take him, take him, by the order of Yama, to (Yama's) city (called) Saṁyamani only." Speaking like this, very angrily they put me into a body being tormented; fastening me by fierce nooses they struck me with iron mallets. I who was being taken by them, being overcome by grief, wept very much on the path having heated sand on it; and I was again beaten by them. And being firm, they, very much deriding me, said:

Yama's messengers said:

28b-33. Since you offended against your preceptor explaining (to you) the eternal Brahman, what will you do before Yama? You will have to see his fierce face. You will have to experience the fruit of that fearful sin. O sinner, due to that sin only you died prematurely.

Saying so, in a short time they took me to Saṁyamani, Yama's city, situated in (an area of) many yojanas, where king Yama himself dwelt. Having saluted king Yama, and having placed me before him, they reported to him about me: "This sinful brāhmaṇa is brought." Seeing me, king Yama said to the members of his assembly:

Yama said:

34-35a. O members of the assembly, being well attentive, listen to my words. When Brahmā assigned me this charge, he, the grandsire of the worlds, spoke to me like this:

Brahmā said:

35b-37. You, the lord of Saṁyamani, will punish impious

people. O son of the Sun, punish them in accordance with their offence. You should throw into hells these two, committing major sins, viz. one who does not support his parents and one who offends against his preceptor. The punishment would be staying in each hell for a myriad years. O you lord of the (Southern) quarter, you have not to show compassion to these two.

Yama said:

38-41. Therefore, O members of the assembly, by Brahmā's words I do not take pity on a man offending against his preceptor or not supporting his parents. This brāhmaṇa has offended against his preceptor. Due to that offence he met with an untimely death; and he, unfit to be seen, is brought (here) by my servants at my order. O servants, first throw him into the fearful Raurava (hell) for a myriad years; and taking him who has offended against his preceptor out of that (hell), throw him again into another (hell) for that much period. Then quickly let him stay for the proper period in all the hells.

Mukunda said:

42-51. O preceptor Vedāyana, O master, the servants, by Yama's order, took me to the fearful Raurava (hell), and fastening me with chains, threw me into it. There, O dear one, I experienced very severe, poignant agony, so that even a moment was passed as a yuga by me. Staying there I passed thirty days painfully. Today on this thirty-first day I have come out (of it), when (my) bones fell into this most excellent holy place. Due to the grace of this holy place my sin due to offending against my preceptor, perished instantly; and I went to heaven. I shall happily live in heaven as long as fourteen Indras (rule the heaven). The subjects that live in Yama's city cause fear to sinners, but are pleasing to the pious. The young women there have faces like those of lions, elephants, boars; have large fangs, plump bellies; have faces like those of cats; have tawny hair; and have long feet and long hands. When I became free from the sin due to the favour of this holy place, I saw in Yama's abode the subjects of divine forms. All of them were truthful in their speech, were full of modest behaviour, had worn divine ornaments, and were adorned with divine garments. O dear one, I have told this (in reply to)

what you had asked me. (Please) allow me to go to the city of the lord of gods.

Nārada said:

52. That ascetic, having heard these words spoken by his disciple at that time, again asked that brāhmaṇa, Mukunda, O king:

Vedāyana said:

53-55. From your childhood and with affection for your preceptor, you learnt everything from me—Veda with the Pada (-pāṭha) and Krama-pāṭha (the two ways of reciting the Veda), along with the science of words (i.e. grammar). You excellently served me with devotion. O good one, in you reside the virtues of the good like tranquillity, control etc. O dear one, tell me, so that I shall understand it properly, how you committed the sin of offending against your preceptor.

Mukunda said:

56-62. I have never disobeyed them who gave me birth, performed my thread-ceremony, those who supported their daughters and the Vedas, so also him who made me wear the sacred thread. I served my mother-in-law and my father-in-law like a servant. I did not also disobey you who taught me the holy texts. (But) I offended against him who was the family priest, the preceptor of my family, and who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. (Please) listen to it. The settled rule of our family is: 'If a righteous son is born in our family, then his umbilical cord is cut off after a cow, or a gift (equal to) her (value) is given to the family priest.' O dear one, when a son was just born to me only on an auspicious day, I, the foolish one, did not perform the rite of (i.e. befitting) my family. Due to my not performing it, I offended against my preceptor. I have told (you) all this as to how I committed a sin by offending against the preceptor. Now permit me. It (shall) go to heaven.

Vedāyana said:

63-64. Due to the favour of this auspicious Kośalā, situated within Indraprastha, the recollection of the previous existence

appears. O Mukunda, due to which religious merit were your bones dropped in this holy place? O sinless one, tell it (if) you have its recollection.

Mukunda said:

65-69. (One) evening a brāhmaṇa came to my house. I duly gave him a seat and food. He too, having eaten as he desired, slept on a good bed. At night his entire body suffered from a very severe fever. Troubled by it, the brāhmaṇa did not get sleep. In the morning only he died. When his death took place, O preceptor, I performed all the rites like cremation and dropped his bones, according to the sacred rule, in Gaṅgā. Due to that religious merit my bones fell into this auspicious holy place, named Kośalā, fashioned by Brahmā.

Nārada said:

70. O king, the brāhmaṇa, having thus told his account, and having a charming body like that of a god, quickly went to heaven in an aeroplane. It is told how he met his death at the hands of the thief and obtained heaven through the grace of this best holy place.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ELEVEN

Caṇḍaka's Fate

Nārada said:

1-3a. O Śibi, I have told you the entire excellent account of Mukunda. Listen also to the account of the barber Caṇḍaka from me. O king, on the day when Caṇḍaka killed the brāhmaṇa Mukunda, the citizens heard that news. Hearing that they clearly reported like this to the king:

The citizens said:

3b-4. O king, Caṇḍaka has killed Mukunda, the best brāhmaṇa, and has taken (away) his ample wealth. Do what is pro-

per. You are the protector of us (your) subjects, and the chastiser of the bad.

Nārada said:

5-7. Hearing this, the king with his eyes red with anger, said to the minister who was by his side: "Listen to what these (citizens) say. Quickly bring that sinner. Otherwise I shall kill you. O most sinful one, get up, get up, (and) do (what leads to) the happiness of the good. A king in whose country his subjects are harassed by thieves and who does not protect them from them (i.e. the thieves), goes to hell."

Nārada said:

8-10a. O Śibi, having heard these words of the king, the minister quickly mounted his horse, and with a hundred foot-soldiers went to Mukunda's house, and asked his relatives: "Who killed Mukunda? Tell me the truth. By the order of the king I shall kill the sinner."

Nārada said:

10b. Hearing these words of the minister, the relatives of the brāhmaṇa said:

The relatives of the brāhmaṇa said:

11-12. O minister, Mukunda was killed by Caṇḍaka, the barber. This is his turban that had fallen when he was running away. The young wife of Mukunda herself has seen the sinner. What shall we do? We have plunged in the ocean of grief.

Nārada said:

13-19. Hearing these words of the relatives of the brāhmaṇa, the minister went to the house of that sinful barber. Quickly he got down from the horse and with some foot-soldiers went into his house and saw him asleep. Ordered by him the foot-soldiers seized him by his hair that moment (only) and they raised that sinful, mean barber from (his) bed. When the sinful barber saying, "What is this? what is this?" opened his eyes, he saw him (i.e. the minister). Recollecting his act—the sin that he had committed at night—he, for a moment, remained with his

face hung down and realising (that) Yama had stood over his head. Getting him arrested by his foot-soldiers, the minister took him to the king, and thus spoke to the king: "O king, this barber Caṇḍaka, the killer of the brāhmaṇa, has been brought. I shall quickly do what you order."

The king said:

20-22. O best minister, O you who know religious practices, O long-lived one, listen to my words. Here there is this clean, best river, Candrabhāgā. Those who cast their lives here go to the place of gods. Therefore, this wicked barber should not be killed here. If (he would be killed) outside the boundary of five krośas of this (place), he would go to fearful hells. Make no delay.

Nārada said:

23-30. Thus addressed by the king, the best minister prompted cāṇḍālas to kill him at the king's order, O king. The cāṇḍālas taking him up on the other bank of Candrabhāgā to a place at a distance of two yojanas, cut off his head. The sinner became a serpent having a deadly body, living in the hollow of a dhava tree, and with his mouth producing flames of poison. The dhava tree dried due to the fire from his hissing as a pool full of water dries due to the heat of the sun. Due to the sinner's going there the dhava tree and the land around it, with the grass etc. cut off, became a barren land. O Śibi, once there came a caravan from the southern region. It especially was going to Nārāyaṇa's hermitage, called Badara. On the way a brāhmaṇa had joined the caravan. O king, carrying on his shoulder a holeless wooden box containing the bones of his father and mother, he was going to drop them into the water of Gaṅgā giving the desired objects even to sinners.

31-41a. He too came there to the forest where the serpent was and kept the box made of red rods at a secluded place. Coming there the serpent raised a rod with his hood. When the box was partially opened, he entered the box. The rod returned to its original position. The serpent, dreadful due to poison, remained motionless there in the box only. Then in the morning all of them moved from that place, O king. The brāhmaṇa also taking the box covered with a blanket on his head, proceeded to Gaṅgā.

O king, the caravan of the pilgrims reached this pure Kośalā after some days. Then the brāhmaṇa, sick due to cold opened the blanket which covered the box there on the auspicious slope of Ayodhyā. The serpent too who had no food (for a long time) got his food, i.e. air, and throwing up a strong rod, moved out of it. Seeing the serpent to have moved out, all men, saying 'A serpent, a serpent', and with clods in their hands, went there. While the serpent was running (away) he was hit by one of them. While the pilgrims were watching he cast his life. Giving up his serpent-body, he obtained godhead, difficult to be obtained. Getting into a divine aeroplane, he spoke these (words) to the people:

The serpent said:

41b-44. O brāhmaṇas from the south, hear my words. Formerly I was a mean barber named Caṇḍaka who killed a brāhmaṇa. Due to the great sin of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, I became a serpent in (this) desert. Having experienced the miseries in the hell for five lakhs of years, I have passed two myriads of years in this existence as a serpent. Due to the favour of this holy place, I have obtained excellent godhead. Therefore, this sacred place giving all (desired) objects should not be abandoned; from it, I, a sinner, have reached heaven.

Nārada said:

45-50. Thus that sinful barber, having reached a censurable existence, went seated in an aeroplane to heaven. The southerners, becoming ascetics, lived at that sacred place—whose grandeur they had seen—only, with their minds (fixed) on the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. That best brāhmaṇa, noticing the greatness of this holy place and having developed faith in it, dropped his parents' bones there. When the pieces of the bones fell there, his parents, seated in a divine aeroplane, came there at that moment only. And, while (other) people were listening, they said to their son: "O son, live long; be happy in the world with wealth and grains. Due to your having caused the liberation of both of us, you will obtain salvation. This is not false." Due to the dropping of the bones, both—the fruit that the son would have by offering piṇḍas into Gaṅgā and the parents' going to heaven—took place.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWELVE

*The Efficacy of Kośalā**Nārada said:*

1-6a. Speaking like that, the brāhmaṇa's parents, of divine forms, got into the excellent aeroplane, and went to Viṣṇu's city. Their son, having lived there in Kośalā only for three days, went home, thinking about the grandeur of the holy place. This, O king, is called Kośalā by the wise. I shall tell (about) it to you whose mind has a curiosity to listen to it. Having gone to that Kośalā, the brāhmaṇa chaps from the south, desiring to die (there), lived in it giving proper objects. One of them going to Nārāyaṇa's place after ignoring it, was stopped by Viṣṇu in the guise of an old brāhmaṇa. He thus spoke to the brāhmaṇa:

The old brāhmaṇa said:

6b-15. O best brāhmaṇa, ignoring this auspicious Kośalā, where are you going? O brāhmaṇa, this holy place Indraprastha is the best of all holy places. O son, here is this Kośalā, dear to Viṣṇu, and giving salvation. Success will not come to you there, where you are going after ignoring this giving a position free from all desires; and Viṣṇu will be averse to you. O brāhmaṇa, if you desire salvation, then this holy place will give you that object, with the desire of which, you, after taking a pledge, will bathe at this holy place. O brāhmaṇa, even within the range of your sight (i.e. when you were seeing), a serpent became a god. Due to the favour of this the brāhmaṇa couple resides in heaven. How then do you, even after having reached it due to the dawn of good fortune, and even after being convinced on seeing its greatness, ignore it? O fool, you appear to be like one who, after being oppressed by thirst, leaves the ocean of nectar, and goes to muddy water. Your fate appears to be like that of him who, being deluded, throws into a well the desire-yielding gem that was in his hand. Your fate is that of a foolish man who, after having propitiated Viṣṇu, desires the worthless pleasure of senses. No man goes (to another place) after having ignored this Kośalā, giving all desired objects. One who bathes here, goes to heaven. One who dies here lives among the immortal.

Nārada said:

16. O king, having heard (these) words of Viṣṇu, upholding the welfare of brāhmaṇas, he spoke to the brāhmaṇa, “Badarikāśrama is the best.”

The brāhmaṇa said:

17-21. O best brāhmaṇa, in me who have heard about the grandeur of the small village, faith is produced by means of these words of you. I have never heard about this holy place, Indraprastha. O old one, how is Kośalā (situated) in it, where actually Viṣṇu (lives), and where the meditating saints are liberated. How should I ignore that meritorious hermitage and stay here as Viṣṇu, having himself come (here), and telling me like this, would stop me? O brāhmaṇa, this holy place is superior to Badarī. So, though driven to that hermitage, I shall not proceed (to it). Desiring salvation (I have come here). Otherwise I would not have stayed here.

Nārada said:

22-23a. When the brāhmaṇa spoke like this, Viṣṇu, the four-armed one, giving up the ordinary form (of a man), and having a divine form, said to the noble brāhmaṇa, desiring salvation:

Viṣṇu said:

23b-28. This Indraprastha is best of all holy places. As Śiva is among all those who know Brahman, as Gaṅgā is among rivers, as Himālaya is among mountains, as Garuḍa is among birds, as Śakra is among gods, as Nārada is among Viṣṇu's devotees, as the Sun is among luminaries, as the Milky Ocean is among oceans, as brāhmaṇa is among castes, as the grand-sire is among the created, as the son of Kausalyā is among the incarnations of Viṣṇu, so is this holy place Indraprastha the best of all holy places. A man, without or with a desire, sometimes goes to a holy place. At every place I myself am the giver of the fruit. A devotee who goes (to another holy place) by ignoring Kośalā situated in Indraprastha, does not obtain the fruit from the protector of the host of the givers of fruits.

Nārada said:

29-35. Having thus heard those words, and having seen that excellent form, and having saluted Viṣṇu, the brāhmaṇa left. The lord, the soul of the universe, instantly disappeared. He devoutly worshipped that brāhmaṇa as the supreme principle. Having come there to Kośalā the brāhmaṇa told the entire account to all his companions, O king. Those noble brāhmaṇas from the south, did not eat there and abandoned their ordinary bodies. Just then, Śrī Viṣṇu mounted upon Garuḍa came there with his attendants in those many aeroplanes shining with lustre. They, with divine forms, seeing him and the aeroplanes with attendants, fell prostrate like staffs on the earth. All the brāhmaṇas, having divine knowledge and bodies praised that god of divine form whose lotus-like feet are adored by gods.

The brāhmaṇas said:

36-44. Salutation to you who have a body shining like an atasī-flower, who have covered yourself with a yellow garment, who have various lotuses put on the bright ear-rings, who have put blue small lotuses on your ears. Devotion to you is indeed the desire-yielding creeper (tree) which, when resorted to, gives what is desired by the mind. Similar is this your Kośalā with objects of enjoyment. The two are secured through your grace. We salute your lotus-like feet saluted by respectable hosts of gods etc., thought of by delighted groups of meditating saints, and the root of salvation, the source of the highest joy. O lord of Lakṣmī, we have reached your form, distinguished with charming marks like Śrīvatsa etc.; yet we long for your service, secured and honoured by Nārada and others. (Even) Lakṣmī, residing within your chest (i.e. in your heart) does not have that happiness which is obtained by those who have become your servants. O lord of Lakṣmī, Śrī Maheśa knows it. He and none else has experienced it in the world. Among us, even having no attachment, he is to be honoured. The best sages like Nārada, your devotees, worship the lord of the worlds, due to him. Śambhu, though his heart is full of the joy due to Brahman, is satisfied only by serving you. Full of devotion to you he repeatedly dances excessively to receive your virtues. For this reason human beings who have secured your service, have no desires.

His two doorkeepers, with your marks on their bodies reach their own abode through delusion(?). Your desire is with reference to this world. Quick fall of your worlds never takes place. Who would know your Māyā which is difficult to be known by gods like Brahmā, Śiva etc.?

Nārada said:

45. That lord, eager to reach his place, being thus praised by them, said with a voice deep like that of clouds, to the southerners.

The lord said:

46-52. O brāhmaṇas, due to the grace of this Kośalā you have obtained absorption into me. You will also obtain my service. O brāhmaṇas, from today this excellent holy place of me will be known by the great name 'Dakṣiṇakośalā', where, Rāma, born as Daśaratha's son, will kill Rāvaṇa. That where a poor wise man goes up to Vaikuṇṭha is called Uttarakośalā by all excellent sages. Even he who would live here without that (i.e. knowledge) goes to heaven. They say that this Dakṣiṇakośalā is ten times superior to it. Some best sages describe it to be eleven times superior. I think the difference between that and this is: My attendants carry to Vaikuṇṭha one who dies there; while I myself take him who dies here; putting him on Garuḍa I absorb him into myself.

Nārada said:

53-55. O king, having thus spoken to those brāhmaṇas, and taking them (with himself) and himself praising the greatness of this holy place, Viṣṇu went to Vaikuṇṭha. O lord of the world, I have told you the reason for which the wise call her Dakṣiṇakośalā. O best king, I have described to you the greatness of Kośalā which destroys the sins of Kali, which is desired for reaching the feet of the Lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu); (now) I shall tell you the account that took place in Madhuvana.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTEEN

A Śrāddha at Madhuvana Is More Meritorious

Nārada said:

1-7. O dear one, O Śibi, Viṣṇu, who was pleased, established (this) city, this Madhuvana for Indra. Here is this holy place called Viśrānti, best in the three worlds, giving salvation to the very wise men, holy and resorted to by the good. O king, Viṣṇu, the universal soul, lives in the form of Śrī Kola (i.e. a bear) at this best, meritorious holy place called Viśrānti. O king, it is said that he who has always propitiated Viṣṇu during many existences, dies here. On the very bank of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā) another holy place called Viśrānti, is fashioned by Viṣṇu himself, where Kaṁsa was hurled down. O king, the two are equal in merits giving Vaikuṇṭha. Due to the dawn of good fortune, it, giving all (desired) objects, is obtained. To you I shall tell the importance of this holy place, having heard which you will obtain the fruit of bathing in all holy places.

8-16. O king, there lived a poor brāhmaṇa named Kuśala in the auspicious city of Kirāta in the land at the foot of the Himālaya mountain. His wife of a bad conduct was fondly attached to a man of a bad character. The unchaste woman deluded her husband with her (bad) acts. Her husband deluded by her was unable to ward her off. He, the poor one, was intent on obeying her orders, and was (i.e. lived), as it were, bought (by her). People ridiculed the brāhmaṇa, the husband of the unchaste woman. He too, scared of the ridicule, did not stir out of the house. She put on very costly silken garments and ornaments given by her paramours. The wicked one, though ridiculed, was not ashamed. Due to his servile nature she, the wicked one, contemptuously gave her husband old garments taken off from the bodies (of others). That her own husband who was thus slighted by the unchaste woman, being very much afflicted by grief, ate (i.e. drank) poison at night and died. The wanton woman was then scared of the king due to her bad conduct. She spoke (these) false words: "I shall follow my husband." O king, her friends, tutored by her only, went near her, and speaking like this, stopped her.

The friends said:

17-22. O deer-eyed woman, why do you do this worthless act, that you are ready to destroy your body resembling gold? O friend, what happiness did you get from this poor, incapable (husband), not industrious, and filling his own belly? Nourish this young son? Except you, who is his guardian? O beautiful lady, all of us will die, if you die. O you beautiful lady, look after this your house; rise. Let this your son, who will give happiness later, be victorious. All the relatives desire your life (i.e. that you should live). Get up. Do what is desired in their minds by your relatives. O good one, all your friends due to affection for you, are weeping. Stop them who are much grieved (from weeping) by giving (i.e. speaking to) them your words.

Nārada said:

23. That wicked one, having thus heard their words flowing from righteousness, raised her face, and making her own relatives listen, said:

The friend said:

24-28. I know that the proper words that you spoke are indeed true. Yet women must respect their husbands, giving (the merit of) both the worlds. O friends, listen to words uttered by me and following the code of laws. If it is proper, permit me (to follow my husband). That woman, even though she is a sinner, who, devoted to her husband, follows her dead husband, lives with him for a long time in heaven. Women should never desert their husbands even though he is poor or diseased. He, alive or dead, should be followed (by them). This is (i.e. thus says) the ancient holy text. Thinking thus in mind, O friends, I am following my husband. He (i.e. son) will live by his fate. What shall I do to him?

Nārada said:

29. Thus addressed, her wicked friends, giving a wicked counsel, said to her, deluding all people by means of her righteous words:

The friends said:

30-33. O you lady of beautiful eyebrows, first desert us and then follow your husband, O dear one. All of us are unable to put up with separation from you. You, destroying us, and following your own husband, will have little religious merit and great sin. How can you obtain heaven? You well looked after this husband of yours, when he was alive. O friend, you have done what is laid down for a husband and his wife. As long as this your son is unable to have his livelihood, he will live by your fortune.

Nārada said:

34-45. Thus addressed, she turned away from following her husband. She got performed his obsequial rites by her son. Then after some time she thought of getting his thread ceremony performed, got it performed by brāhmaṇas after having given them the wealth given to her by her paramours. The boy born in adultery¹, whose thread-ceremony was performed, who knew the real nature of human soul, quickly went out of the house, and was highly devoted to Viṣṇu. Having secured the company of the good, and given up his trifling body, he went up to the perpetual world, not accessible to the meditating saints. When the son went out she was unhappy in her mind. O king, on the same day she again dallied with her paramours. When she was thus dallying with her paramours, in course of time old age, destroying the arrogance of beauty, came over to her. Seeing her body stricken with old age, she was abandoned by the paramours. She spoiling the character of the group of other (women), became a go-between. Then she snatched the cow, along with her calf, of one brāhmaṇa; and, O king, she sold it for some money. O king, thus she passed some time (working) as a messenger. Then her dry body became worthless. When leprosy overcame her body, her five limbs—hands, feet, and the nose as the fifth, dropped. When, she who was reduced to such a condition, did not get food, she was taken to the market by a maid servant. There she, appealing to people with piteous words, and being despised, filled her belly.

1. Kuṇḍa: A son born in adultery. A son born of a woman from someone who is not her husband, and when the husband is alive.

46-51. O king, a brāhmaṇa, knowing all the Vedas, a great orator, who lived near, seeing her, spoke these words: "Sin gives pain to people in this world and the next. Therefore, men, afraid of pain, should not commit a sin. A man who, having committed a sin, performs an expiation, has not committed the sin; so he would not get its fruit. He who, having repeatedly committed sins, does not perform an expiation, meets the same fate as this woman, in this world and in the next. In this world she committed a host of sins. She will suffer its fruit here only, and also in a hell. In the holy texts an expiation is seen for all sinners, but not for women averse to (good) deeds."

Nārada said:

52-63a. Speaking like this, the best brāhmaṇa, afraid of seeing her, again and again remembering Viṣṇu, and saluting the Sun, left. O king, she, thus suffering the fruit of her acts, obtained by herself, became miserable and died after a few days. No burning on funeral pyre of her, the sinful one, was done. Cāṇḍālas dragged her by (seizing) her hair, and took her out of the city. At the time of her death, Yama's servants came (there), and making her take up a body that caused torment, they took her to Yama's city. That god, gentle to the pious and actually hated by the sinners, seeing her again, turned away his face. Yama, thus turning away his face, ordered his servants: "As pronounced by me, throw her into the Raurava hell." Thus addressed, the servants remembering the acts which she had done, took her and threw her, with her face (turned) down, into that fierce Raurava. In that Raurava (hell) she remained for one period of Manu. Later she was born as an alligator eating the flesh of the dead in a cremation ground. There also, she, eating excessively the flesh of the dead, got the fruit, viz. misery. of her acts. Once that brāhmaṇa who was born from her womb in the stock of brāhmaṇas, and who was roaming came there to the cremation ground. The sage's son, seeing her eating the flesh of the dead, thought for a moment in his mind, and recognised her to be his mother. Recognising her to be his mother, he said to himself:

The sage's son said:

63b-66a. Today I shall emancipate her from the ocean of

misery. Oh, a being is not freed, except at (the end of) the period of suffering (the fruit of his sins), from the sinful deed done by himself. She passed in the hell the period called (i.e. that was equal to) the period of a Manu, and with men she has passed here a hundred years. How much has she to experience (the fruit of) her great sin hereafter?

Nārada said:

66b-67. Thinking like this, he, closing his eyes, again thought by means of his sacred knowledge. Having noticed the fearful condition, with his divine sight, of that sinner, the best brāhmaṇa again said to himself, O king:

The sages' son said:

68-71. Oh! her liberation is not seen (to be possible) even after a hundred kalpas, except her dying at a holy place, or submitting herself to (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī. Or she will not obtain heaven except by my offering piṇḍas at Gayā, even for hundreds of kalpas. In this birth of her she will never have these two—death in the region of a holy place, or liking for serving Viṣṇu. The (only) cause of the emancipation of her, the sinful one plunged in the ocean of sins, will be a śrāddha performed by me at Gayā.

Nārada said:

72-73. Thinking like this, the pious one went to his father's hermitage. He told his father the entire cause of his mother's misery. Having heard the son's words telling (about) his mother's misery, the best sage spoke to his son who had bowed his neck (i.e. head):

The sage said:

74-82. As a king, knowing polity, takes the sovereignty of his enemy in a war, O dear one, quickly raise your mother from this miserable condition. If a son, capable of emancipating his mother or father from misery, does not emancipate them, he goes to hell. Having received water and piṇḍas from their sons at an excellent holy place, the dead ancestors go to heaven from hell, and from heaven to Viṣṇu's place. Therefore, get up quickly. Go

to Khāṇḍava-vana. There is the holy Yamunā, resorted to by the best sages. On her bank is Hariprastha, full of all holy places. Then there is the holy Madhuvana set up by Viṣṇu himself. Having duly bathed there, and having done your (usual) rites, offer a śrāddha to her, your mother, and (also) perform (other) rites. When a śrāddha is offered there by you desiring heaven for her, she abandoning the strong body of an alligator, will reach Viṣṇu's world. O dear one, the good have declared that the religious merit (due to offering a śrāddha) at Madhuvana, is a hundred times more than the one due to offering piṇḍas at Gayā. O dear one, now the Sun has entered the Zodiacal sign Libra. O son, go and offer a śrāddha to your ancestors.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Greatness of Madhuvana

Nārada said:

1-9. O king, having heard these words of his father, he quickly went to the holy Madhuvana, a hundred times holier than Gayā. Then the learned brāhmaṇa spoke to the brāhmaṇas living at that holy place, and again having invited them after some time, spoke to them words of welcome. Then having washed their feet and worshipped them with sandal etc. he made respectful offering at their feet, and similarly himself sipped (water). Then taking the brāhmaṇas he seated them at the place of the śrāddha. And filling the pot (used) for the rite with darbhas, water, tulasi (leaves), flowers, sandal, sacred rice-grains and sesamum-seeds, he remembered Viṣṇu. The brāhmaṇas thrice recited the verse: *Devatābhyaḥ*.... Then he tied it containing sesamum-seeds with darbhas that were purified, in the directions beginning with the east, in the proper order with (the recital of) the hymn *Agniṣvāta*With the hymn *Rakṣobhūta*...he tied the ends of the garment worn round the waist into a knot. Then taking the pledge, he gave darbha seat to the brāhmaṇas. Then the best brāhmaṇa invoked his dead ancestors. Then giving respectful offering into their

hands, he turned down the vessel and made it lie on its face. Having offered sandal etc. he, with his sacred thread hanging down over the left shoulder, sipped water. Then the brāhmaṇa gave the pots after having his sacred thread (once) hanging down over the left and (once) over the right shoulder.

10-24. Permitted by the brāhmaṇas, he offered oblations like ghee into the fire. Then he filled those vessels (with water), O king. With his hand turned up and down he took the vessels and taught by the brāhmaṇas he recited (the hymn) *Prthvī tvā...* With (the reciting of) the hymn *Asaṁskṛtapraṇītānām...* the brāhmaṇas offered seats with the darbhas strewn (there) with their points in the southern direction. O king, with (the reciting of) the hymn *Agnidagdha...* he put food mixed with ghee and along with water on the seats made by darbhas. Again, with his sacred thread hanging down over the left shoulder, he sipped a mouthful of water. He asked them, “Are you satisfied?” They replied, “We are satisfied.” He took the permission of those brāhmaṇas to eat the remaining food. The brāhmaṇa made an altar of the measure of the length of twelve aṅgulas, and drew a line facing the south with a darbha. He laid the firebrand with (the reciting of) the hymn *Ye rūpāṇi...* in the direction of fire. O king, he duly offered darbha-seats and six piṇḍas only to them who were, in the former existence, his mother, father, so also to their parents, i.e. his grandfathers, so also, O best king, who were his maternal great-grandfather and paternal grandfather, along with their wives. Having worshipped them with sandal etc. and having cast off the middle piṇḍa and after having smelt the pot containing the piṇḍas, he put it on his left shoulder. Then taking the vessel containing water, and reciting (the hymn) *Vāje vāje...* again offering respectful oblation to their feet, he pleased them with presents etc. Having followed them up to the door, and having secured their permission, the brāhmaṇa dined along with his relatives, O king. O best king, when the best brāhmaṇa, after thus finishing the śrāddha of his ancestors in the pious Madhuvana, and with his mind tranquil, started for his father’s hermitage, he met on his way those who had eaten at the śrāddha. They, seated in six aeroplanes, adorned with divine ornaments, wearing celestial garments thus spoke to the best brāhmaṇa:

The ancestors said:

25-26. O child, O best brāhmaṇa, ask for an excellent boon. You, performing a śrāddha at this holy place, have emancipated us. Due to your favour we have become Viṣṇu's attendants. O you very intelligent one, ask for what is desired in (i.e. by) your mind.

The sage's son said:

27. Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? How did you become (Viṣṇu's) attendants? Why do you grant me a boon without my having obliged you?

Nārada said:

28. Hearing these words of the son in his former existence, the father, who had died after taking poison due to grief, said:

The father said:

29-35. O brāhmaṇa, I am your father, a brāhmaṇa, in your former existence. I was very much troubled by your unchaste mother. Being extremely afflicted, I took poison at night, died prematurely, and, therefore, became a demon: O dear one, after being turned into a demon, I passed a period of Manu and one hundred and fifteen years (in that condition). Now in the (hundred and) sixteenth year, when you performed a śrāddha in this meritorious holy place Madhuvana, I attained godhead. This aeroplane sent by Indra along with attendants and a host of the celestial nymphs has arrived from heaven for me to get in. I, along with the attendants and the host of celestial nymphs, have, while going to the heaven after getting into the excellent aeroplane, come here to give you a boon. Ask for a boon. God bless you. We can't brook any delay. Indra, mounted upon the elephant Airāvata, is waiting for me.

Nārada said:

36-37a. O king, thus telling his son his own account, and giving him the devotion for Viṣṇu (as) asked by him, he went to heaven. Then his mother spoke to him, her son in the previous existence:

The mother said:

37b-41. Due to your favour I have become a goddess and am freed from sins. O best brāhmaṇa, I, though a sinner, have become the friend of Śacī, when you performed the śrāddha at this holy place called Viśrānti. O glorious one, ask for what is desired by your mind. I shall give it to you, since the words of us, the deities, are never falsified. O best brāhmaṇa, you know the sin due to which I, after staying in the hell for a long time, became an alligator in the cremation ground. O son, allow me (to go). Śacī, surrounded by hosts of celestial ladies is waiting for me in the sky.

Nārada said:

42-43. O king, his mother too, having thus spoken to him, her desireless son, went after being saluted by him with his head (bent down) to heaven. Then his grandfather, having similarity of form with Viṣṇu, again spoke (these) words to his grandson, the best brāhmaṇa.

The grandfather said:

44-46. O child, O child, live long. Obtain what is desired by you. Due to your favour we have crossed over this ocean of mundane existence, difficult to cross. O child, I am your grandfather, and this is your grandmother. The chaste lady followed me who had died, and soon obtained residence in the same heaven (as of Viṣṇu). When today you performed the śrāddha-rite at Viśrānti, we have obtained similarity of form with Viṣṇu in his heaven.

Nārada said:

47-48. O best king, the brāhmaṇa, after having spoken like this, went along with her, his wife, to Vaikuṇṭha after having crossed Brahmā's world. O best king, listen attentively to the words, the brāhmaṇa, his great-grandfather spoke to him, which I am telling you.

The great-grandfather said:

49-54. O child, O glorious one, I am your great-grandfather. As a result of my causing an abortion, I obtained the stock

of (i.e. was born as) a pig. Then I went out of it, and being oppressed by my sin, became a dog. Then I became an inanimate object on the best mountain, Vindhya. Then I who for a long time remained in that condition of an inanimate object, was forcibly uprooted by an elephant. Then at that time only you performed the śrāddha at this excellent holy place. And therefore I was freed from that inanimate condition and got an excellent residence in the city of the lord of yakṣas. O best brāhmaṇa, permit me. Due to your favour I (shall) go. With the desire to see you I have come here, and have seen you of a pious appearance (and) the Madhuvana, the best of all holy places.

Nārada said:

55. Thus addressed by him, the sage's son, knowing religious merit, asked, after saluting his great-grandfather with (having bent) his head to him, his great-grandfather:

The sage said:

56-57. O dear one, you were born in a great brāhmaṇa family. How did you, O great one, commit the sin of causing abortion, due to which you obtained (i.e. were born in) a series of censurable stocks? O illustrious one, tell me that if you recollect (it).

The great-grandfather said:

58-66. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly, in the existence of a brāhmaṇa, I maintained myself by the employment of spells and amulets. Due to greed of wealth, I, with my understanding destroyed due to (ill) luck, gave them (clients) medicine for conception and abortion; for greed would take away the understanding of those having no wealth, as the sun takes away the water of the canals in the hot season. O dear one, when a man's understanding perishes, he certainly commits a sin. Due to the sin he gets (into) a hell, and from there goes to (i.e. is born in) a bad stock. In that existence, one pregnant woman asked me: "O brāhmaṇa, shall I give birth to a son or a girl?" Then I said to her: "A daughter will be born to you. (Therefore) I shall give you a medicine for the birth of a son." Thus addressed, the woman, the crest-jewel of the foolish, seized my feet and gave me a pala

of gold. She said to me: "I have given birth to six daughters. You have now told (i.e. predicted) the seventh. After her birth I shall not live. O brāhmaṇa do that by which I shall not give birth to another daughter destroying my life."

67-79. Hearing these words of her, I again said to her: "At the time of your delivery I shall give you a medicine (capable of) generating a son." Saying, "All right" and having heard me she went home and believing in my words, remained waiting for that time. When she had gone, I became anxious like this. Listen as to how I became so. I (shall) tell it. 'She convinced of the birth of a son, gave me a pala of gold. I did not know what (i.e. a boy or a girl) would be born to her. What should be done in this case? How would that (gold of) a measure of a pala remain in the house of me who am poor?' Thinking like this, I handed over to her maid that medicine causing abortion and made her give it to her. Due to that medicine she aborted in the third month (of pregnancy). The sign of either a boy or a girl was not noticed. She, dejected due to the abortion, came to my house, and having no hope for the birth of a son, demanded (back) the gold. Then I showed her powder of bricks (mixed) with ash, and mixed with turmeric powder and with water. "O mother, for the birth of a son to you I have prepared this powder. For preparing that I required double the money that you had given me." Thus addressed by me, she ignored the powder, and went home, saying to me, "O brāhmaṇa, I shall take it from you at the proper time." O dear one, I have thus caused a very fearful (sin of) abortion, due to which I roamed in three very censurable stocks. Now due to your favour I am freed from the state of an inanimate object. O best sage, permit me. I (shall) go to the auspicious Alakā.

Nārada said:

80-82. O king, his great-grandfather, speaking like this, and saluted by him with his head (bent down), went to the northern direction in a beautiful aeroplane having rows of small bells with gandharvas dancing (in it) and charming with jewelled ramparts. Then the great-grandmother of the brāhmaṇa seated in an excellent aeroplane, spoke to her great-grandson, O great king:

The great-grandmother said:

83-85. O you of a good vow, due to this religious merit you have not to go anywhere else except the temple marked with Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. O sage, this my sinful husband is your great-grandfather. He, of a very wicked mind, though warded off by me, committed a sin. He too, of a very sinful mind, is liberated by you from the ocean of misery. Who is able to describe your virtues?

Nārada said:

86-96. Speaking like this, she too went to her husband's world, O best king. With that same husband she rejoiced in Alakā for a long time. Then all those—grandfather etc.—got into the aeroplanes along with their wives and went to heaven. The best brāhmaṇa went from that holy place to his father's hermitage. And he described to his father the full account. He also went along with his family to Madhuvana and prepared a hut of leaves near Viśrānti. The best sage, bathing three times (a day) at the holy place called Viśrānti, did not even long for Viṣṇu's world. O king, once, while bathing in the water he wondered: 'When shall I see Viṣṇu?' O king, when the excellent sage was wondering like this, Viṣṇu, seated on the king of birds, hastily came (there). He came along with Lakṣmī (close) to his chest; he had four arms. The complexion of his body was like a fresh cloud. He was covered with a garment with the colour of lightning. His large chest was shining with the Kaustubha (jewel). He held a conch, a disc and a lotus. His neck shone with a garland of wood-flowers. His earrings had the shape of crocodiles. His eyes resembled the blooming lotus-flowers. His hands were tawny, and feet had good soles. Covering the directions with the mass (of lustre) like that of the moon, he spoke to the best brāhmaṇa, illumining him with his lustre :

The lord said:

97-99. O best brāhmaṇa, this is the meritorious place known as Viśrānta, and sacred to me. It gives all desired objects on one's bathing in it. Today at the time of your bath you longed for my sight. I have presented it, difficult to be obtained by

gods, to you. O brāhmaṇa, give up this human body. Take up a divine one. Mounting on the lord of birds, come to my place along with me.

Nārada said:

100. O king, having heard these words of the lord of Lakṣmī, the chief of sages, bowing down, praised him (by remaining) in the water only.

The sage said:

101-107. O lord of Lakṣmī, your beautiful lotus-like feet have lovely lotuses offered to them. They destroy the torment of the mundane existence and are saluted by gods. O lord, those beings that are deluded by your Māyā here, can never be liberated without your grace. O lord, due to their resorting to holy places, and their company with the good, devotion (for you) in (these) men is produced due to your grace. O Viṣṇu, he who, having heard the narration of your merits uttered (i.e. made) by many good people and destroying all sins, repeats it, would not fall into the cavity of a mother's womb. O lord of Lakṣmī, the mind of your man (i.e. devotee), (though) fallen into the great going (of the mundane existence) and covered with dust (i.e. passion), does not, like an excellent gem, give up its purity. The man who having horripilation on his body falls (prostrate) like a staff at your lotus-like feet, takes his family to your place, longed for by all meditating saints. O lord, this very soul, deluded by your Māyā roams along all paths, (but) by means of the glances of your charming eyes, crosses the ocean in the form of the world.

Nārada said:

108-111. Praising Viṣṇu like this, the best sage, saying, 'Victory to you', fell at his feet (prostrating himself) like a staff. Lakṣmī's lord, raised the best sage fallen at his feet like a staff, and the universal Soul put him and (the members of) his family on Garuḍa and went to Vaikuṇṭha. O Śibi, I have told you the greatness, destroying all sins, of Madhuvana, O king. What else do you desire to hear? A man who listens to this (account) is freed from all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN

*Budha Infuriated and Appeased**Saubhari said:*

1. O Yudhiṣṭhira, having heard these auspicious words of Nārada, modest Śibi Auśinara said to him:

Śibi said:

2-4. O sage, from your mouth (i.e. from you) I have heard about the greatness of Madhuvana; but there is some doubt in my mind. How was he, of a pious mind, who liberated all his kinsmen, the son of a wanton woman, in two existences? O revered one, tell this. You virtually know everything—the past, the present, and the future also, O Nārada.

Nārada said:

5-9. Once all sages gathered at Haridvāra on the tenth of the bright half of Jyeṣṭha connected with all festivals. There they having duly bathed and performed their (respective) auspicious rites, rested on the surface of Himālaya with their hearts at ease. Into the company of the sages, there came Budha, Tārā's son, full of excessive handsomeness and, as it were, another Cupid embodied. Seeing him coming all the sages got up. Saluted by him with his head (bent down), they again sat down. Seeing the regard shown to Budha by the pre-eminent sages, the sage's son thus asked his father, O lord:

The sage's son said:

10. O father, who is this that has come (here), who is another Cupid in handsomeness and very much respected by sages like Vyāsa?

Nārada said:

11. The pious, best sage, having heard these words of his son, said to him who had insisted (on knowing who Budha was):

The father said:

12. This is the intelligent, great son of Bṛhaspati, the pre-

ceptor of gods, and born of Tārā, and the perpetuator of the family of the Moon.

The son said:

13-15. O father, how have you spoken irrelevant words? How is he the son of Bṛhaspati as well as the perpetuator of the family of the Moon? O father, the Moon was born of Anasūyā from the chief of the sages, viz. Atri. How can this son of Bṛhaspati perpetuate his family? O father, this is a great doubt lurking in my mind. O best brāhmaṇa, remove that doubt of your child who is confused.

The father said:

16-24. O dear one, formerly Bṛhaspati's glorious wife named Tārā was forcibly kidnapped by the powerful Candra (i.e. the Moon). Kidnapping Bṛhaspati's wife the Moon took her to his house and dallied with her for a long time. O dear one, after some time she conceived. Then Bṛhaspati appealed (to Candra to return) his wife. Candra too, overcome by pride and puffed up by his power, did not give her (back). Then, O dear one, Bṛhaspati, getting ready along with gods like Indra, started fighting with the powerful Candra. To help Candra Śukra then came there to the battle that was commenced with the demons. Then a great war for Tārā took place. All people will look upon (that battle called) Tārakāmaya as important. In that very terrible war (both) gods and demons were killed. O dear one, no one was victorious or defeated. Then Brahmā came there, and stopping that fierce battle, gave, after admonishing the Moon, Tārā to Bṛhaspati. Bṛhaspati, seeing Tārā to be pregnant, was angry, and in the presence of Brahmā (said to) Tārā in the gathering of the gods and demons:

Bṛhaspati said:

25. O Tārā of unsteady eyes, listen to my words. Whose child do you bear—of Candra or of me?

The father said:

26-27. O dear one, when that beautiful (Tārā) who was abashed and was thus repeatedly asked, did not say anything to

him, then he (i.e. Budha), who was born (of her) and was angry, said to his mother when the gods and demons were looking on (i.e. in the presence of the gods and the demons).

Budha said:

28. Why do you not, giving up your sense of shame, declare my father? See the power of my curse.

The father said:

29-32. When, speaking like this, he was on the point of cursing her after taking water, she gently said: "Candra is your father." When the chaste lady spoke like this, Candra gladly took this Budha, his own son, and went home. Bṛhaspati also took that Tārā and went home. Brahmā, (other) gods, and demons also went home. I have told you all this that you had asked me as to how he, born of Bṛhaspati's wife, perpetuates Candra's line.

Nārada said:

33-34. Hearing these words of his father, the sage's son laughed loudly and said to his father: "This is the son of a wanton lady, born in adultery."

The father said to the son:

O son, don't speak (like) this. He, knowing (what is going on in) the heart of every being will, understanding your words, curse you.

Nārada said:

35. O king, when the sage had spoken like this, the son of Candra understood what he had said, and while all the sages were listening, he said:

Budha said:

36-46. O best sages, may you listen to my words; and think whether they are good or bad. Do not delay. To see you who know the truth, I have come here. I have not in the least offended anyone. (Then) why do the infatuated ones insult me through jealousy? I long to see you to make my life fruitful. It is the very nature of the wicked that they, like the cuckoos with sweet notes,

sometimes upset the good though innocent. The wicked do not abandon their wicked nature even in the company of the good, as the ocean becomes saline even in the company of the water of Gaṅgā. Oh! (see) the wickedness of the hunter that he kills the deer leading life like sages, moving in the forest, and knowing their own songs(?). What offence have the fish done to the wicked fishermen that they kill them moving in the water at a sacred place? It is their very nature. The good also do not give up their nature in the company of the wicked, as the sandal trees, though surrounded by serpents, do not abandon their coolness. The good dance (with joy) even at the prosperity of their enemy. Then what to say of (the prosperity of) one belonging to their own party? The best sages are eager as the peacocks are (at the sight) of a cloud. The good sustain even their bodies for the good of others, as my father bears the digits for the sake of manes, gods and men. To the good the continual rise (of others) causes joy, as the cool rays of my father (the Moon) cause joy to the white water lilies.

Nārada said:

47-51. Angrily speaking these words, Budha cursed that sage's son: "You too quickly become, like me, a son born in adultery on the earth." Having heard the curse given by Budha, the father made his son fall at his (i.e. Budha's) feet, saying, "(Please) forgive (him)". And he said, "This boy does not know your grandeur. It is not proper for (persons) like you to be angry with this boy. Forgiveness is the nature of a good man who is angry for some reason, as coolness in the nature of water heated by fire. Therefore, having forgiven him quickly favour this child having no discrimination, for forgiveness is the essence of the good."

Nārada said:

52. (Budha,) the son of Candra, thus addressed by him, gave up his anger, and with a cool mind favoured him.

Budha said:

53-58. O sage, this your son after being born in adultery on

the earth, will obtain the perpetual place after a sacred thread is given to him (i.e. after his thread-ceremony).

O best king, due to the curse of Budha the sage's son obtained birth as a son born in adultery, and liberated his dead ancestors. Having heard this purifying greatness of Madhuvana, a man gets the entire fruit of a horse-sacrifice. The mind of those men who keep in it the excellent significance of this greatness, is not overpowered by objects of senses. There is no doubt that those highly intelligent ones who will recite and listen to this (description of the) greatness will go, after casting their body, to Viṣṇu's world. I have described to you this ceaselessly pure account of Madhuvana, which delights the lord of Lakṣmī, which promptly cuts off the mass of blemishes due to Kali, which is the cause of warding off the senses going astray (and of leading to) the pious form (of Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTEEN

The Greatness of Badarikāśrama

Nārada said:

1-12. O king, this Badarikāśrama is situated in the region of just eleven dhanus (i.e. forty-four hastas) from this Madhuvana. To you I shall describe the wonderful greatness of this excellent holy place. One listening to it is free from fear. O king, there was in Magadha a truthful, restrained brāhmaṇa named Devadāsa, who was, as it were, another Dharma. Proficient in all lores he was, as it were, another Bṛhaspati. Like Prahlāda, the king of demons, he pleased Viṣṇu. Though he had a wife, he had conquered, like Śiva, Cupid. Like the sage Viśvāmitra he was always engaged in good acts. He was honoured in the house of Magadha's lord, as Droṇa in Kuru's house. Like Bali, lord of demons, he was disposed to giving gifts to worthy recipients. His wife by name Uttamā was excellent with virtues like Lakṣmī. She was engaged in serving her husband like Janaka's daughter (Sītā). He had one intelligent son named Aṅgada; and he had

one daughter Valayā by name, having excellent marks. Of them the son was elder, the daughter was younger, O king. The best brāhmaṇa got them married in due course. O king, that daughter, endowed with auspicious marks, who was married, went to her father-in-law's house after some time. The very intelligent Aṅgada who knew all holy texts and who was adorned with the splendour of youth, bore the burden (i.e. the responsibility) of the household. Once that best brāhmaṇa, seeing his son to be capable of managing the duties, said to his wife, O best king:

Devadāsa said:

13-21. O good lady, listen to my words proper for this time; (and) then quickly do what is fit, O good one. This old age has come. Causing the limbs to tremble as a storm causes to tremble a ripe fruit, it will cause the body to fall. O you of a good vow, it will also make dull the brightness of the eyes, as the morning time makes dull the brightness of the stars along with the moon. Like an iron fetter this old age will lessen the speed of the stumbling feet at every step. Therefore, O auspicious one, as long as this old age does not become advanced, we should quickly do what is good to us. O fortunate one, a house, sons, friends, brothers, parents are perishable. So also is wealth etc. A wise man is not attached to them. Therefore, I, with my senses controlled, will wander, in the manner of an anchorite, about all holy places and will see Viṣṇu. Then, O auspicious one, taking to renunciation at an excellent holy place, I shall cast my body at the end of the fructification of my karmas. If thus I would be free from life, salvation would be (possible) for me who have properly placed my mind at the lotus-like feet of Lakṣmī's lord.

Uttamā said:

22-25. What man or woman (except one) having no sense would take delight in the perishable mundane existence, leaving Viṣṇu (i.e. and leave Viṣṇu), the perpetual abode? Therefore, O lord of my life, take me, serving your lotus-like feet with you, and quickly lift me up from the ocean of the worldly existence. This (our) glorious son Aṅgada has become capable of sustaining the burden of the household. This auspicious daughter-in-law will help him. That foolish man or woman, who, when his or her son

is capable (of looking after the household), would not be detached, is deprived of bliss.

Nārada said:

26. Having thus talked to each other, that couple called their son Aṅgada on the same day and told him:

The couple said:

27-33. O Aṅgada, know us to have our limbs drooping due to the appearance of old age. At some holy place we shall strive for our spiritual good. Devoutly worshipping Viṣṇu is said to be the highest good. For that only the desireless good people strive on the earth. They who have no attachment for objects of senses, who look equally upon all beings, who are neither delighted nor dejected due to pleasure or pain, are alone the good men, serving the feet of Viṣṇu. By merely seeing them a man is blessed. A wise man, eager to see him (i.e. Viṣṇu), and wandering about the holy places, would see him by good luck. Therefore, O Aṅgada, having placed on your two long arms the burden of (maintaining) the family, allow us to go on a pilgrimage. O son, if, in course of our pilgrimage, we may see a good man, then we would be blessed.

Nārada said:

34-36. Thus addressed by the parents, the son spoke good words: "You have told this to be the emancipation of the entire family. Quickly order me what beneficial thing to you I should do. I always obey the orders of you whose feet are respectable (to me). Take with you the excellent wealth stored by you for giving gifts at holy places. So also take me with you as a servant to serve you."

Nārada said:

37-41a. Speaking like this, and taking money (with him) he went with them for a couple of krośas; and somehow sent back by them, he came home. They took some money with them, and thinking, 'May Viṣṇu come to us' lived there for three days, eating bulbs, roots and fruits. O king, when the couple set off from that place, they met a siddha on their way.

Saluted by both of them with their heads (bent down) he sat down. When the chief of siddhas was seated, they asked him thus: "Tell (us) who you are, wherefrom you have come, what you desire to do".

The siddha said:

41b-46. O best ascetic, I am a siddha. My house is at Kalpagrāma. I have come from Indraprastha. There I saw a great wonder. There is the siddha Kapila resembling Viṣṇu in merits. Learning Sāṃkhya from him I lived in his hermitage. Once my celebrated teacher, Kapila, went from his hermitage to the very holy (place) called Badarī, to bathe in the water of Yamunā. There one wild buffalo, oppressed by thirst, entered the water of Yamunā, and having drunk it, recollected his former existence. The wild buffalo, having recollected his past deeds, quickly came out of the water and saluted (my) teacher, Kapila; and when I was listening, the buffalo spoke with a human voice, which I (shall) tell you today. Listen to it, (which is) very wonderful.

The buffalo said:

47-48. O you Kapila, O you who are a portion of Viṣṇu, O you lord of the siddhas, tell me who have bowed to you, what the name of this great holy place is. Due to the touch of the water of this excellent holy place, I got (the recollection) of my deeds in the past existence, O illustrious one.

The siddha said:

49. Having heard these words of the buffalo, the great sage, though he knew his account, laughed and said these words:

Kapila said:

50. O best of buffaloes, who were you in your former existence? What deed did you do then, due to which you obtained (i.e. were born in) the stock of the buffalo?

The buffalo said:

51-61. O best sage, listen to the account of my former existence. Formerly I was a king, the mighty chief of Kalinga.

Deluded by passion I did not know (i.e. discriminate between) my wife and that of another. I took away the wealth of sinless merchants of good conduct. O king(?), I, being fearless, wandered at night in the city to dally with beautiful wives of others. I, deluded by Cupid, at night lived in that house in which I saw a beautiful woman, as an elephant lives in a field. Sporting there fearlessly, and snatching wealth from that house, I returned to my house after a few days. By day I seated in my assembly made two city-lads fight a base duel in front of me. Regarding the boy who put down (the other boy) as rich, I forcibly took the wealth, little or much, of his father. Saying, "This one due to his cowardice is not fit to live in my city", I killed him who was defeated, O sage. The citizens seeing the king to have begun behaving like this, abandoned the city, and went to another country. Durvāsas, the great sage born of Rudra, while roaming over the earth once came to my city. Then all citizens, gathering together approached him. Saluting him, they spoke to him these words acquainting him with their misery:

The citizens said:

62-71. O son of Atri, O best sage, O treasure of pity, favour us. Turn to piety this king, engrossed in doing unrighteous deeds. Due to the dawn of our good fortune you have come (here). Rescue us like a raft from this ocean of misery due to the king who is transgressing its limits. O best sage, the greedy one took away our wealth. The passionate one spoilt chaste and innocent ladies. Many children aged about ten years were killed by him. O great sage, this king is the store of innumerable faults.

The buffalo said:

Having heard these words of the citizens, that sage, the son of Atri, thinking, 'He must be punished', came to my assembly. Seeing the naked sage coming, I stopped him through my servants, saying, "He is not fit to be seen." I many times ordered my servants: "Stop him whose figure is like that of a buffalo, with his entire body smeared with dust." Then the servants quickly went to stop him. Just by means of a 'hum' sound the sage reduced all of them to ash, as you did Sagara's sons, protecting the sacrificial horse of their father. Seeing the servants to

be completely reduced to ash, I quickly got up and was about to enter my house. The best sage, addressing me as “O sinner”, cursed me:

72-77. “Now become a buffalo in a great forest.” Thus cursed by him, I gave up the royal body; I became a buffalo in a great forest in the Maru country, O sage. O best sage, I lived there for a long time. Hear due to which religious merit I have come here. I had got constructed many reservoirs of water, wells, and tanks. I had (also) planted many mango trees on (the sides of) the path. O god, due to that religious merit, I did not fall into a hell. And I got the contact of the water of this holy place. I have thus told you about the righteous and unrighteous deeds in my former birth, due to which I reached this holy place, and due to which I had reached the buffalo’s stock. Due to the touch of the water of this excellent place, I remembered my former existence. O sage, tell me how I shall be free from this miserable stock.

Kapila said:

78. This holy place of Lakṣmī’s lord called Badarī is very meritorious. Bathe here, you will quickly obtain what is in your mind.

The siddha said:

79-80. O great sage, having heard these words of the king, he, desiring heaven, entered (the water of) the holy place to bathe. When, having bathed there with a desire (to go) to heaven, he came to the bank from the water, Indra came there just at that moment from heaven.

Indra said:

81. O lord of Kalinga, give up your body of the buffalo. Receiving a divine body come to my heaven. You bathed (here) with a desire to (reach) heaven; you have secured that abode of gods.

The siddha said:

82-83. Thus addressed by him, he then abandoned his body of buffalo, and securing a divine body, he mounted upon the lord of elephants. Having mounted upon the lord of elephants, and remaining in the air for a moment, and saluting the god with his head bent down, he praised the sage Kapila.

The Kalinga-king said:

84-92. O highest lord, salutation to you, the cause of absolute knowledge, the bridge to all Vedic sciences, and an enemy of those who oppose them. The flow of the Sāṃkhya (principles) causing the knowledge of the absolute truth among the human beings whose minds are overpowered by illusion, is due to you, O lord. O sage, you punish and throw into stocks of lower animals those who give up what is laid down in the Vedas and behave as they like. All regents of quarters like Indra are under your control. Afraid of you, the chastiser, they do what you desire. You, the soul of all, caused the gods to incarnate in each former yuga to destroy those opposing the practices laid down in the three Vedas. O lord, those enemies of gods who were killed by you, gave up their sorrowful bodies and reached Viṣṇu's heaven. O lord of the world, order me to go to heaven. Also favour Indra, with your nectar-like glances, who is bowing to you. O lord of gods, by the favour of you and (the holy place) called Badarī, I have given up my miserable body, and have got a virtuous body. O you treasure of grace, by your favour, I am, after mounting upon the lord of elephants, going to heaven willingly.

The siddha said:

93-96. Thus praising Kapila, the lord of gods, and saluting his feet, the Kalinga-king went to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, I, attending upon my preceptor, saw this wonder and also liberation from sin at Badarikāśrama. In the three worlds there is no better holy place giving all (desired) objects. If you desire the highest good, go there with your wife. O brāhmaṇa, to take my old father desiring salvation (and) having no other yearning to Badarī, I am going home.

Nārada said:

97-101. O king, after having narrated the greatness of this excellent holy place called Badarī, the siddha went home. Then after some time that brāhmaṇa (Devadāsa) along with his wife, visiting (various) holy places, reached Indraprastha where the two were taken to his own abode by him (i.e. Vāsudeva) (appearing) in his own body (*corrupt reading*). The siddha also, having quickly brought his father from his house, bathed him,

desiring salvation, there only at that excellent holy place. The old father of that siddha, saluted by gods, was also taken to his own abode by Śrī Viṣṇu. This (holy place) called Badarī, is in Indraprastha. The lord would give all the objects desired by the minds of those bathing here. O king of a modest mind, I have described to you its holy greatness. Having heard it, a man will never fall into a mother's womb (i.e. he will never be reborn).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

The Greatness of Haridvāra

The king said:

1-5. O good one, you have described to me the greatness of Badarī, having heard which my mind has become pure, O sage. O best sage, this excellent, wonderful greatness of Śākraprastha gives all the four goals of human life. O Nārada, there is no other holy place than this, which is the best, which gives salvation even to lower animals, which destroys sins just when it is seen. O Nārada, from you, giving delight, I really desire to hear about the greatness of Haridvāra which is in it. O sage, by the description of this holy place situated in Śākraprastha, emancipate me who am a poor person due to wanton deeds indulged in because of ignorance.

Nārada said:

6-19. O illustrious one, listen. I shall describe to you the greatness of Haridvāra, giving the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. I shall tell you today how a sinful cāṇḍāla went to heaven. O lord, listen to it attentively. In Dharmakṣetra Kurukṣetra there lived, outside the city, a sinful cāṇḍāla known as Kālīṅga. He cheated the citizens' boys, five or six years old, forcibly took them to a forest, and killed them there, O king. Having killed them, the mean one took away silver, golden ornaments, and jewels etc. from their bodies. At night he entered the houses of the good to snatch away wealth. Aiming at the wealth of travellers, he killed

them in a lonely forest. Once, on the day of a solar eclipse, people desiring to make various presents came to Kurukṣetra from many quarters, O king. O king, having, on that solar eclipse day, duly bathed there, and having duly given presents, the people went home. One, best among merchants, having much wealth, proceeded towards his house after all men. He, seated on a horse, had twenty foot-soldiers in front of him. That great sinner Kāliṅga proceeded after him for (snatching) his wealth. After having traversed (the distance of) a few camps, the mean man, the cāṇḍāla could not wait (as) he did not get an opportunity to rob his wealth. Even with force he was unable to seize his wealth. The merchant was accompanied by twenty men, while he was alone. O king, the sinful (cāṇḍāla) came for (snatching) the merchant's wealth. At night he entered his camp to take away his wealth. But one of the merchant's men keeping a watch, noticed the sinner while entering.

20-25. Seeing him about to give a blow, the man keeping the watch, even while lying, seized him by both his feet, O king. The man, keeping the watch, seizing his feet, and awakening other people, was struck by the thief just with his hand. Other people, hearing (the sound) seized him who was running away. Again striking him who had seized him, he ran away. O king, one of the (merchant's) servants having a bow, struck the mean one who was quickly running, from a distance only. As soon as he was struck by the arrow, he quickly gave up his life. The thief killed two followers of the merchant, O king. The three, getting into excellent vehicles brought by the attendants, remained in the sky, and spoke these words to the merchant.

Kāliṅga and the merchant's servants said:

26-27. O chief merchant, O good one, this Haridvāra is an excellent holy place in Indraprastha which is propitious even to sinners. O merchant, we three who died at this excellent holy place, will now go to heaven. Good luck to you.

Śrī Nārada said:

28-30. O Śibi, speaking like this the three went to heaven, the place of those who do good deeds and where many things of enjoyment are obtained according to (one's) desire. O king,

when the night had passed, the merchant burnt the dead bodies of his two servants and dropped their bones here. O king, when the bones were being dropped at this holy place, the two servants came back here from heaven, and said these words to the merchant:

The two servants said:

31-36. O chief of the merchants, O good one, due to death at this holy place on the earth, even sinful beings undoubtedly go to heaven. O merchant, if the bones of a being who dies on a dry land, fall into the water of his holy place, he would stay in Satyaloka. Due to the bones of us who died on a dry land being dropped in the water (of this holy place) we have reached Brahmā's world, and will stay here as long as Brahmā lives (here). Since the bones of the thief who died on a dry ground did not fall in the water of this holy place, he went to heaven, O king. Finding out his body also quickly drop it into (the water of) this place, so that, O best god, he too will obtain our state. Good men should always oblige others. They should never mind even a very bad turn done by the bad.

Nārada said:

37-49. Speaking like this the two illustrious ones went to Viṣṇu's city(?) due to their bones being dropped into the water of the holy place of Haridvāra. O illustrious one, the merchant looked for the thief's body to burn it; but, O king, he did not find it. Again returning to that crest-jewel of all holy places, viz. Haridvāra, O great king, he bathed there only with the desire: 'Having produced good sons, having pleased brāhmaṇas and my kinsmen by (giving them) wealth earned righteously, and having propitiated Viṣṇu by serving him, and having died at you (i.e. at this holy place) only, I shall go to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of the holy places, salutation to you. You must do this.' With this desire, O king, the merchant bathed with all his servants at that holy place giving all desired objects, and then went home. Having gone there the intelligent one produced sons on his wife and pleased his kinsmen by (giving them) wealth earned righteously. O king, having propitiated Lakṣmī's lord with great devotion, he died at this holy place, due to which he would reach

Vaikuṇṭha. O king, I have thus described to you the greatness of this holy place Haridvāra. Listen to the fruit (obtained) by listening to it. A man would obtain that fruit which he would obtain by giving a droṇa (approximately 30 kilograms) of sesamum seeds (to a brāhmaṇa) in Māgha. The fruit due to listening to (the account of) the greatness of this (holy place) is the same as by giving gopīcandana, and eating from brahma-leaves(?). The same fruit as is obtained on keeping awake in the last watch of the Prabodhini Ekādaśī would be obtained by listening to (the account of) the greatness of this holy place. There is no other holy place on the earth, giving the fruit of the four goals of human life, like this Haridvāra in Indraprastha.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

The Greatness of Puṣkara: Puṇḍarīka's Story

Nārada said:

1-2. O illustrious one, listen to the very wonderful greatness, causing propitiousness, of the holy place Puṣkara, situated here. Viṣṇu, the lord of all gods, being pleased due to the grace of that holy place would live in Puṇḍarīka's house for a month. His younger brother, though engaged in committing sins, obtained salvation here only.

Śibi said:

3-5. Who is that righteous Puṇḍarīka? What act did he do, due to which the lord, being pleased, lived in his house? O sage, tell me all that how his sinful younger brother reached Śrī Hari's place due to the grace of this holy place. Listening to its greatness I am not being satisfied.

Nārada said:

6-9. In the Vidarbha-city, there lived a brāhmaṇa called Mālava, who was very famous, who knew the Vedas, who was tranquil, learned and highly devoted to Viṣṇu, who worshipped

deities, sages, dead ancestors, and fed beings and men. He was not addicted to the objects of senses, and was free from greed and folly. Once that illustrious one went to bathe to the very holy Godāvarī, when Jupiter had entered the Zodiacal sign Leo. To offer (to brāhmaṇas) there he took ten thousand palas of gold from his house. The righteous one going along the way thought in his mind :

Mālava said (to himself) :

10-16. From my house I have taken ten thousand palas of gold to be given (to brāhmaṇas). They are not to be given to anyone. They are to be given to a respectable good man. That which is given at the proper place and time to a worthy brāhmaṇa who has not rendered any service (to the giver), would be inexhaustible. The righteous sage, himself living by gleaning corn, having given what was obtained by gleaning corn to Durvāsa, gave up his own position, and went to the highest one. King Bali, the lord of the demons, knowing Vāmana to be a worthy recipient, gave him, even his enemy, the three worlds earned with his own arms (i.e. power). Therefore, to please Viṣṇu, I should give my wealth, earned righteously, to a worthy recipient. I should not long for its fruit. My sister's son, the pious Puṇḍarīka, who is the crest-jewel of all worthy recipients, will come when called from (the city) called Gaja. Half of the wealth brought by me I shall give to that worthy recipient, my sister's son. The remaining I shall duly give to learned brāhmaṇas.

Nārada said :

17-21. O king, then that best, pious brāhmaṇa Mālava, reached after a few days the holy Godāvarī. His sister's son, Puṇḍarīka, the pious one, joined him. O king, he had come there before that Mālava. Having duly bathed there, on the day when (the Sun) entered Leo, he gave half of his wealth to Puṇḍarīka, saying, "May Viṣṇu be pleased with me." That pious Puṇḍarīka also, having bathed in the water of Godāvarī, gladly gave the fourth part of his wealth to learned brāhmaṇas. He (i.e. Mālava), having bathed there and given gifts according to his capacity, spoke to his sister's son who was going home, O king:

Mālava said:

22-27. Tell (i.e. convey) my salutation to the elders and blessings to the younger, since, our union here has become (i.e. proved) to be momentary. Similarly our union with our sons, wife is momentary. Therefore, that wise man who gets detached from the mundane existence, where the union is momentary, would certainly be fit for Viṣṇu's favour. Due to viṣṇu's grace, a being would be interested in good company. Then in him is produced a desire to hear about Viṣṇu's playful acts. Having heard Viṣṇu's playful acts narrated by the good, he with a strong desire narrates them and then merely remembers Viṣṇu. Then he has love for serving Viṣṇu's feet. Then a man quickly crosses (the mundane existence) as a great ocean with a raft. For this reason, the good, the wise exert in deeds. O pious one, therefore, you also exert.

Nārada said:

28-34. Thus speaking, he, with his face bedewed with tears, dismissed his sister's son, with his eyes full of tears and went (home). The pious Puṇḍarīka also proceeded to his house. O king, after a few days, he came to this auspicious place. He saw his younger brother called Bharata, fallen on the ground, breathing, and smeared with blood flowing out of his wounds. Weeping loudly, he asked his brother: "Due to what are you reduced to this condition? For what purpose have you come here from (your) house?" O lord of kings, when Puṇḍarīka was asking like this Bharata afflicted by great pain, instantly died. O king, while men and his preceptor were watching, a wonderful vehicle with attendants descended from the sky. Having got into it, that Bharata, though he had committed sins, became one of a divine body, saluted his elder brother, and said these words to him:

Bharata said:

35-44a. O very intelligent Puṇḍarīka, due to the grace of this holy place, Puṣkara, I, though a sinner, secured a position in heaven. O brother, though you know my fierce deed, yet I shall today tell it (again), (because) some (part of it) is unknown to you. I dallied with the prostitute Prabhāvatī, and spent much

money on liquor in her house. I lost in gambling whatever wealth I had earned by stealing. I ate the remnants of the offering to Śiva on Śivarātri, for which you blamed a brāhmaṇa named Jebuka. O Puṇḍarīka, you know this deed which I did. O brother, you do not know the deed which I did when you went to Godāvari. I shall tell you that also. When you had left, and a fortnight had passed, I learnt from people words difficult to be borne by a man, viz. that the maternal uncle had called Puṇḍarīka to give him wealth. 'Having killed Puṇḍarīka, my uterine brother, I shall snatch away the wealth taken by him which (our) maternal uncle has given him; and with that great wealth I shall please Prabhāvatī. I shall play with a gamester and those who know it (i.e. gambling).'

44b-47. Thinking like this I remained blocking your way, to kill you and to take much wealth from you, O you very intelligent one. When the wealth was (to be) taken possession of (by me), O brother, from somewhere a caravan of merchants came, where I had slept at night, O very intelligent one. Then at night a thief entered the place full of the men of the caravan to snatch the wealth of the merchants. When the thief, after having taken some wealth, ran away the servants, crying, suddenly ran after him.

The servants said:

48. Catch him, catch him. He is a thief going away hurriedly after having snatched much wealth in the midst of us (though) many.

Bharata said:

49-54. O brother, having heard these words of them, I suddenly ran after him in front of them with a desire to seize whatever he had snatched. Then the merchants' servants with swords in their hands, taking me to be his protector, and having a sword in my hand, struck me quickly. I, a sinner, killed an excellent brāhmaṇa among them (though he was) saying, 'I am a brāhmaṇa', with a sharp-edged sword. The merchants' servants killed me with edges of swords (i.e. sharp-edged swords). In the morning the merchants went to the kingdom where they wanted to go. Then you came here and saw me breathing and with my body smeared with blood flowing (from the wounds),

and dead due to unconsciousness caused by the injury. O brother, I have thus told you what for I had come here, and I have also told you how I met with a premature death.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETEEN

The Greatness of Puṣkara; Puṇḍarīka Attains Absorption into Viṣṇu

Nārada said:

1. Hearing these words of him, the noble-minded Puṇḍarīka spoke to his brother, when his companions were listening:

Puṇḍarīka said:

2. O Bharata, tell me if you know due to which religious merit you died at this holy place. Your sin is quite well-known.

Bharata said:

3-7. O Puṇḍarīka, listen. I am telling you which religious merit I did in this existence, which gave (i.e. brought) me (to) this holy place. Once, after having snatched wealth, I, while coming back to my house, saw a dead, helpless child of someone in the market. Putting it on my head, taking it to the auspicious bank of Gaṅgā and adorning it with a garment etc. I performed his funeral rites like burning his body. I spent all the wealth I had obtained through gambling. Due to that religious merit I secured (i.e. I reached) this holy place, bringing auspiciousness. Perform funeral rites, of my body after burning it.

Śrī Nārada said:

8-16. O king, when the funeral rites were performed, even the sinful Bharata went to heaven by the favour of this holy place. Now listen as to how Viṣṇu, Hari, lived for a month in Puṇḍarīka's house by the favour of this holy place. The pious one seeing that Bharata got felicity at this holy place, thought in

his mind that this holy place gives desired objects. That wise Puṇḍarīka bathed at this holy place with this desire: 'May Viṣṇu in his original form live in my house during the month of Māgha'. Having bathed with this desire he went home. O best king, Puṇḍarīka told his brothers about the death of Bharata at this holy place giving all (desired) objects. They too, with their minds covered by Māyā, having heard it, lamented. Then Puṇḍarīka, doing his (usual) rites at home, and being highly delighted, lived in his house thinking that Viṣṇu would come due to his penance. On the full-moon day of Pauṣa he celebrated a great festival, thinking that Hari would certainly come to his house the next day. He adorned his house by sprinkling it with sandal mixed with water, smearing it with cow-dung, and by arranging the quadrangle with pearls. He fed two hundred brāhmaṇas with various kinds of food. He gratified them with profuse presents.

17-21. Singing at night with those skilled in playing on various musical instruments and singing sweet songs, he kept awake with his kinsmen. In the morning having dismissed all those singers etc., he with his mind longing for Viṣṇu's arrival sat in his house. Then sending back his vehicle from the vicinity of his (i.e. Puṇḍarīka's) house, he (i.e. Viṣṇu) entered his house to do what was desired by his man. That Puṇḍarīka, having seen that Viṣṇu to have arrived, quickly got up from his seat, and saluted him by (bending down) his head, O king. That pious one, delighted to see Viṣṇu, having worshipped him by offering him materials of worship etc. said to him, seated on a seat:

Puṇḍarīka said:

22-29. You have very clearly done what removes the torment of the mundane existence. O Viṣṇu, you, causing preservation, stay here, till this pure penance would come to an end. Your Vaikuṇṭha, free from all blemishes, exists there only where all your servants, serving (you) live. We have heard from the mouths of the good that, O lord, Viṣṇu lives in that house where your deeds are described. They indeed are the good, in whose speech remains your name, in whose hearts remains your handsome form, and in whose ears remain your virtues. They indeed are the good whose heart (longs) for your service, and on whose heads are the remains of an offering to you. O lord of Lakṣmī, they

alone are the good whose mind (views equally) their enemy and their friend, so also their gain and loss. O lord of Lakṣmī, they alone are the good whose mind is not affected by emotions. The good live where you live ; you live where the good live. So knowing (me) to be good live in my house during (the month of) Māgha.

Nārada said:

30. Viṣṇu, having heard these words of that Puṇḍarīka, and brightening the quarters with the lustre of his teeth, said (these) words:

The lord said:

31-33. O you very intelligent one, you are the best among the virtuous men on the earth, since with a desire for my company you bathed at the holy place. O brāhmaṇa, get up. Bathe in the water of Gaṅgā in Māgha. At the end of Māgha, on the full-moon day, I shall bathe you at Puṣkara. All that entire fruit due to bathing in the month of Māgha at Prayāga, would be (obtained) due to bathing (just) on one day at the holy place, Puṣkara.

Nārada said:

34-42a. That best brāhmaṇa, Puṇḍarīka, thus addressed by Viṣṇu, bathed in the water of Gaṅgā, when the sun had slightly risen. Puṇḍarīka actually worshipped the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) with tulasī(-leaves), blooming flowers, barley, saffron, sandal, and he waved five lights of camphor before the lord of Lakṣmī, whose body was made fragrant with incenses of agaru. Having fed the lord of the world with four kinds of food, he fanned him lying on a jewelled bed with chowries. He shampooed the feet of the lord of Lakṣmī. He gave him a tāmbūla with camphor. Taking a mirror in his hand the best brāhmaṇa stood in front of Lakṣmī's lord when he was tying the turban. Thus the brāhmaṇa passed the entire month of Māgha in worshipping (Viṣṇu) destroying the mundane existence and living in his house. Then on the full-moon day at the end of Māgha, he saw Garuḍa waiting in front of him, who had come there on merely being remembered by the lord of Lakṣmī. Seeing him, the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) said to Puṇḍarīka:

The lord said:

42b-46. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the words which I am speaking to you. I have given you—viz. that I lived (in your house) for a month—(what was desired by you), when you had by chance gone to the holy place Puṣkara situated in Indraprastha for a bath. O you very intelligent one, today having mounted upon the lord of birds with me go to that Puṣkara (again) which is the crest-jewel of all holy places. O brāhmaṇa, since I am at your disposal, I shall give you, bathing at the place giving the four goals of human life, whatever you desire. Your brother Bharata, though a sinner, desiring heaven got it when he died there. What else can be spoken about him?

Nārada said:

47-52. O lord of kings, having thus spoken to the best brāhmaṇa and putting him on the lord of birds, he came to that best holy place. From Puṇḍarika's body a flash went out along with his vital breath and reached Viṣṇu's position. O king, Puṇḍarika, by means of a bath at the holy place Puṣkara, situated in Indraprastha, obtained absorption into the lord. Thus by the solicitation of the holy place, even Viṣṇu happily lived in his house like his relative. Who can describe the greatness of Puṣkara situated in Indraprastha? I have described only a part equal to one fraction of a crore. O king, by devoutly listening to or by reciting the greatness, a man obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTY

The Greatness of Prayāga: Mohint's Story

Nārada said:

1-4. To you I am describing devoutly the very meritorious greatness of the auspicious Prayāga, the principal among holy places. O king, there was a gandharva (named) Viśvāvasu, well-known in the world. Once he went to Brahmā's assembly on Sumeru to sing. Viśvāvasu saw there the lord of gods resorted to

by all hosts of gods, seated on an excellent seat, O king. O king, near the seat of Brahmā he saw Indraprastha, as if it was another lord of the world, seated on an excellent seat.

5-8. He saw the lord of gods and the chief of holy places waving chowries on the heads of Brahmaprastha and Indraprastha, O king. O king, he also saw there other divine holy places, standing with the palms of their hands joined in obeisance, at a distance from the two. In front of the two he sang an excellent Gāndharva-rāga. Leaving the gods he went to Satyaloka with the holy places. Then, O lord of kings, the intelligent Viśvāvasu, seeing the grandeur of the holy place Indraprastha, spoke these words to Hāhā.

Viśvāvasu said:

9-13. O best of gandharvas, in the world this holy place called Indraprastha is very wonderful among the heaps of (i.e. many) holy places, since he was seated on a seat near that of Brahmā who is the lord of the movable and the immovable, and whose lotus-like feet are saluted by the gods. Even the chief of the holy places standing behind, waved chowries on his head, (thus) becoming his servant. Then what can be said about other holy places? (All) the holy places that are there grant as a fruit (of a visit to them) the three goals of human life; but this holy place Indraprastha grants (all) the four goals. The holy places stationed here are Dhruva in merits. Their great merits cannot be described even by Śeṣa.

Nārada said:

14. O king, the intelligent Viśvāvasu, seeing the grandeur of Indraprastha like this, which was purifying and giving all desired objects, went home.

15-20. As Śakra, lord of Śacī, is the greatest among gods, and Brahmā is superior to him, so is this Prayāga the best of all holy places. Indraprastha is superior even to that, O great king. O king, I shall tell you the account of the prostitute Mohinī, which took place at Prayāga which is seen within it. O king, on the bank of river Narmadā there is the city Māhiṣmatī. In it was a prostitute named Mohinī, who had ample wealth, was endowed with beauty and youth, and skilled in dancing and singing.

She, greedy of wealth, committed many sins. She killed seven brāhmaṇas and many maid servants. She, the sinful one, also many times caused their abortions. In this way she passed her good (i.e. valuable) youth in sinful acts.

21-28. Then after some time old age came to her body. She with her body afflicted by old age and with her desire for sensual objects gone, did not have a longing for young men, nor did they have (any longing) for her, O king. About her wealth, earned sinfully, she did not confide in anyone. She did not give it (to anyone); she did not enjoy it herself; she did not deposit it somewhere. Once, at night, she being awakened, thought like this: 'Whose will this wealth earned sinfully be when I am dead? It will take me to a dreadful hell. The maid servants and their husbands will enjoy that wealth of me. Then now, why should I not make a good use of it?' Thinking like this, she resolved upon doing righteous acts and constructed gardens, tanks, wells, reservoirs of water and temples. Near the city she fixed a place where water is distributed to travellers in summer; and she gave them food (also), O great king. Near her house she put up a guest house for foreigners to stay in. And she also gave them excellent food.

29-37. O king, when that Mohinī was thus engaged in righteous acts, in course of time old age came to her, and sometime she thought: 'Though I have spent much money on righteous acts, yet I still have much more wealth in (the form of) gold, silver etc. I shall voluntarily give it to learned brāhmaṇas.' Thus she thought. Thinking like this Mohinī invited the brāhmaṇas of the city. O king, when they, realising that the acceptance of the wealth from her was fearful, she divided her wealth into two parts. O king, she gave one part to her maid servants and the other to foreigners. She herself became destitute. Knowing that her death was imminent, her maid servants left her, took the wealth, and went (away) as they liked thinking that wealth which would be given by her when she would be free from fever (was already with them). She, after having observed eighteen fasts, was then free from fever, as (a part of the span of) her life was still left, O king. O king, she had one maid named Jaradgavā. Being careful, she actively waited upon her with (i.e. by giving her) salutary diet etc.

38-43. After a few days she was fit to take full diet. With (a sense of) shame she ate in the house of that Jaradgavā. 'Here (i.e. in the world) I have lived happily. Now misery has come to me. I shall not live in poverty.' Thinking like this, she went elsewhere. While she was going to a forest, the thieves of the city, thinking 'This is Mohinī, going after taking wealth', struck her. O king, not finding wealth with her, they left her breathing in that very forest. Then, O king, some anchorite, carrying water from Prayāga in a water-pot came to the forest. Then seeing her fallen with her body wounded by weapons and asking for the water by means of signs made by her hand,

The anchorite said:

44-50. Who are you? Who has wounded your body with sharp weapons? Why have you, all alone, come to this lonely forest? O auspicious one, with a desire to do good this water of Prayāga, situated in Indraprastha, is brought by me due to good luck.

Thus addressed by him, she, unable to speak, opened her mouth to drink water, with the desire, 'May I be a queen'. O king, when this water of Prayāga was dropped into her mouth, that prostitute Mohinī gave up her life. At the time of her departure she longed for the status of a queen. Therefore, she, being born in the house of the lord of Kerala, became due to drinking the water of the holy place, the wife of king Viravarman endowed with (good) family, (good) character, wealth, prosperity, in the Draviḍa country. The lotus-eyed one had a body yellowish like gold. Therefore, her father named her 'Hemāṅgī'.

51-53. Once that Hemāṅgī, adorned with golden ornaments, went to the house of Kalā, her friend and the minister's daughter. There she was bathed (after being smeared) with barley oil, was fed with various foods, and was seated on an excellent seat. With her braid tied with flowers, and adorned with thin silken garments, and having a tāmbūla in her mouth, she said to Kalā:

Hemāṅgī said:

54. O Kalā, speaking sweetly but indistinctly like a cuckoo, understand my words. Show me the thing which is wonderful in your house.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYONE

*The Greatness of Prayāga: Hemāṅgi and Vṛavarman
Go to Vaiṣṇava*

Nārada said:

1-3. O king, that Kalā, thus addressed by the king's wife, got brought a golden box from her treasure, and put it before (her). She said, "O queen, O wife of the great king, this is a very wonderful book. There are pictures in it. Having opened the book a little, see what it contains. By seeing the pictures in it your mind will be delighted."

4-12. Thus addressed by her, the queen got the box opened by her maid and took with her hand the book that was in it. In it she first saw succinctly (the pictures of) the incarnations. Then she saw the globe having an expanse of fifty crores of yojanas. In it she saw a region full of darkness. Between the two stood the Lokāloka mountain, O king. Then she saw the seven islands surrounded by seven seas. So also in them, she saw rivers, mountains and continents, O very wise one. The wife of the king saw this Bhārata-khaṇḍa. She saw the chief rivers like Yamunā, Gaṅgā. O king, the illustrious one saw this auspicious Indra-prastha along with Vraja on the bank of Yamunā. O king, the high-minded one seeing in it the holy place fashioned by Brahmā, recollected the act(s) done by her in her former birth. Then silently getting up she, determining, 'I shall not eat (food) till I leave for the holy place', hurriedly went home. Then only, that Hemāṅgi, loving the chief holy place, said to king Vṛavarman, dear to her like her own life:

Hemāṅgi said:

13-19. O lord of my life, listen to my righteous words, and carry them out quickly, O illustrious one. (My desire) will be fulfilled. Formerly I was a prostitute. I committed many sins in my youth and in my old age I had a mind to do pious acts. I spent righteously the wealth I had earned sinfully. O king, when I who was penniless, went out of my city and was going in a forest, thieves who were sinful, who were tormented by improper poverty, struck me, with a desire to grab (my) wealth. The

thieves, with their desires frustrated, leaving me, with my body wounded with sharp weapons, and breathing (but) unconscious, there, went (away). Then an anchorite carrying the water of Prayāga situated in Indraprastha, came into that forest. The ascetic seeing me lying in that condition there asked me: "Who are you? Wherefrom (have you come)? Why and by whom were you hit?"

20-24. I then did not say anything, but asked for that holy water. He put it into my mouth, and I abandoned (my) body. Hearing that that water fulfils all desires, I desired, O lord, at the time of the departure of my life: 'May I be (born as) a queen.' Due to the grace of that holy place I became your wife practising acts of a good family and of a very good character. O king, now I desire to see, along with you, that chief holy place Prayāga situated in Indraprastha and giving all desired objects. O king, I have taken this pledge that I shall eat food only when I proceed to that chief holy place, O lord.

The king said:

25. O you of unsteady eyes, how would I know (to be true) what you said? Convince me, O good one; I would do what you said.

Nārada said:

26a. When the king said like this, there was a voice in the sky.

The divine voice said:

26b-27. O king, your wife has spoken the truth. Having gone to the auspicious Prayāga, the best of all holy places situated in Indraprastha, bathe there; you will get whatever you desire.

Nārada said:

28-33. Having heard the words coming from the sky the king prostrated himself on the ground like a staff, and said, "I salute him who spoke those words." Then having called his minister, and having entrusted the kingdom to him, he, getting into an excellent chariot, went with her to the excellent holy place. After a few days the king came here with Hemāṅgī. The king with his wife drank the water at the chief holy place. The

couple bathed there at that auspicious holy place, giving all desired objects, desiring 'May I reach Vaikuṇṭha with this body.' When the couple had just bathed there, the best gods (Brahmā and Viṣṇu) having the swan and the eagle respectively as their vehicles arrived there. Seeing them who had come there, that king Viravarman, with a concentrated mind, saluted by (bowing) his head, and praised them.

The king said:

34-41. Salutation to you, O best gods, having dark and tawny bodies and wearing garments like gold and red lead. I salute you, having mainly (qualities of) sattva and rajas, the wonderful lords of Vaikuṇṭha and Satyaloka, having four and two hands, and carried by best birds. I salute by (bowing) my head bent through good thoughts, you, giving good liberation and pleasures to men having detachment and attachment, and with your lotus-like feet saluted by gods. O you whose lotus-like feet are saluted by gods, nobody knows your original form, since you are beyond Prakṛti and transcend the mind and speech of man. O you highest soul, that man is blessed who, thinking this world to be transitory, resorts to your lotus-like feet saluted by hosts of sages. This holy place, where your feet are resorted to, is indeed difficult to be reached by men worshipping you, and it gives all desired objects. Yet these two are to be resorted to for salvation, not secured through any other (means). He who resorts to it with any other desire (than salvation) is (indeed) duped. Desiring to conquer all worlds the good, resorting to you and to this place giving salvation, do not long for anything except it.

Nārada said:

42. When having thus praised the lord of gods and the lord of the worlds, the king remained (silent), then that Hemāṅgi spoke, O king:

Hemāṅgi said:

43-46. O lord of Lakṣmī, O you having eyes like lotus petals, O Brahman having a high seat, and venerable to Sarasvatī, I salute you; if you favour me of a mean heart, then (help me to) cross this ocean of the mundane existence. O lord, due to the

grace of this holy place I became a queen. I had your view difficult to be had even by gods. You two know the hearts of all; you have given us the best, which we two had longed for at the time of bathing.

The best gods, thus praised by both, had their faces pleased, and they said to the couple:

Viṣṇu and Brahmā said:

47-48. O Hemāṅgī, you are blessed since you, due to the contact with this holy place, have emancipated your husband whose mind was attached to the pleasures of the kingdom. Such a salvation is difficult to get for kings attached to objects of senses. Your husband has a wife like you due to the grace of this holy place.

Nārada said:

49-53. Speaking like this, and looking at Garuḍa, the best of birds, the two best gods (and the couple) went to Satyaloka, O lord of men. There they (the couple) were all duly honoured by Brahmā, O king. Then they stayed there for some time at the request of him. O king, then with the couple Viṣṇu, mounting on Garuḍa, went to Śrī Vaikuṇṭha. O king, I have thus told you the greatness of the chief holy place, which is meritorious, destroys all sins, leads to success and gives sons. A man who would listen to or read this account daily would go to his desired place. I have told the truth.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Kāśī, Gokarṇa, Śivakāñcī, Tīrthasaptaka and Bhīmakuṇḍa

Nārada said:

1-8. O king Śibi, listen. I am describing to you the excellent, meritorious greatness of Kāśī giving success and long life. O king, formerly in the auspicious Kṛtayuga there was a tree called

śimśapā in Kāśī situated on the slope of Indraprastha. There was a crow that had made its nest on the tree; and below it in the hollow (of the tree) lived a great serpent. Once his wife laid a couple of eggs in the nest and went somewhere. She did not come back to her nest. O king, that crow took care of the couple of eggs; lived high up on that śimśapā tree only. Once at night a great storm came and it broke the śimśapā tree from its root though strong. Then at the root of the śimśapā tree shattered by the storm, the crow and the serpent were crushed and died. The tree, śimśapā tree, (the serpent and) the crow etc. had divine bodies, and getting into three aeroplanes, went to Viṣṇu's abode.

Śibi said:

9. O divine sage, due to what religious merit did they reach the city giving salvation? Who were they before that? Tell (me) all that, O Nārada.

Nārada said:

10-14. There was a brāhmaṇa named Śravaṇa in the Kuru-jāṅgala country. His wife was Kuṇḍā by name, and his brother was Kuraṇṭaka. That Śravaṇa ate, without having bathed (first), sweetmeats. Due to that sin he became (i.e. was born as) a village crow. His brother Kuraṇṭaka was a strong atheist. He stopped (following) the path laid down by Śrutis and Smṛtis, and censured deities. Due to that fault he became a deadly serpent after his death. Śravaṇa's wife Kuṇḍā shared the sins of both (of them). Therefore, she got the condition of an immobile object (viz. the tree) which was resorted to by both (Śravaṇa and Kuraṇṭaka). O king, I have told you this that happened in their former existence.

15-20. Hereafter I shall tell you about their religious merit due to which they reached the charming city of the lord of the world, viz. Kāśī, O king. Once they were returning home from another village. Seeing the cow of a traveller fallen into a well and being urged by him they took her out. Hearing what they told, Kuṇḍā said: 'Well (done).' Due to that religious merit they met with death at Kāśī, on the slope of Indraprastha, which is difficult to have, and went up to Vaikuṇṭha. O king, I have told you this excellent greatness of Kāśī. Tell me what else you desire to hear.

Śibi said:

21-22. O sage, you mentioned three holy places of Śiva: Kāśī and Śivakāñcī, and the other (i.e. the third) one, viz. Gokarṇa. O great sage, you have told me the greatness of one viz. Kāśī, Tell me, if there is any, the greatness of Gokarṇa and Śivakāñcī.

Nārada said:

23-30. O king, Gokarṇa is a very purifying holy place of Śiva only. A man dying there would be Śiva; there is no doubt about it. If a being would die there on land, in water or in the air, he after becoming Śiva, shines on the peak of Kailāsa. One dying here at the holy place of Gokarṇa is not born again. Shining like Śiva, one obtains salvation at any time. O king, O lord, O very intelligent one, I shall describe to you the greatness of this Gokarṇa also, which I had heard from Brahmā's mouth. This frontier mountain of a meritorious appearance is seen near Gurutīrtha at a distance of two miles from Prayāga. On it was a very cruel bhilla named Karkāṭa. His wife was Jarā by name. She had killed (her) five husbands. That Jarā prepared a sweetmeat (mixed) with poison to kill Karkāṭa, (her) sixth husband. The noble bhilla heard about it from the mouth of his sister. That very cruel Karkāṭa set about killing that young woman.

31-39a. When the king of the bhillas, with a sword in his hand, came to kill her, she, realising that he was ready to kill her, went (away). Being frightened and desiring (to save) her life she ran to a forest. That Karkāṭa, with a sword in his hand, seized her here at the holy place of Gokarṇa. Having cut off her head with the sword, and having dropped her body into the water of the holy place Gokarṇa, he went to his place. That sinful Jarā also met with death there at Gokarṇa. She became the friend of Pārvatī on the peak of Kailāsa. I have told you this glory of Gokarṇa. I shall describe to you the holy greatness of Śivakāñcī. O lord, the same bliss which I told (is obtained) in Gokarṇa is also obtained in Śivakāñcī situated on the slope of Indraprastha. Here god Śiva, on propitiating Viṣṇu, the lord of all gods, obtained the status of the chief devotee and metaphysical knowledge.

Therefore, we all, the sons of Brahman, always propitiate him, with a desire to get good devotion and knowledge.

39b-48. O king, here the demon Bāṇa, observing a fast, propitiated Maheśvara for a hundred years with a desire to have qualities like him. The god was pleased with him and gave him the status of his attendant. And he himself became forever the protector of his city. O king, this city formerly belonged to the magnanimous Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, pleased with the penance of Śiva, gave it to him. Here formerly a very wonderful event took place. A brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Śiva, reached Vaikuṇṭha here. O king, there was a religious brāhmaṇa by name Heramba. With his body, mind and words he was always engaged in worshipping Śiva. O king Śibi, once the noble one, Śiva's devotee, while visiting places holy to Śiva, came here to Śivakāñcī. The intelligent one did not leave this charming (holy place). Later he died in its water. There only the attendants of Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) took the best brāhmaṇa and proceeded to the Kailāsa mountain by his (i.e. Śiva's) order. In the middle came the attendants of Viṣṇu from Vaikuṇṭha. They forcibly set out to take that best brāhmaṇa from them. There was a great battle between the attendants of Viṣṇu and Śiva.

49-56. In that battle none got victory or defeat. Viṣṇu, seated on Garuḍa, came there from Vaikuṇṭha. Śiva, the supporter of the three worlds, seated on his bull, also (came) there from Kailāsa. Then the two looking at each other's face, laughed (i.e. smiled) and only watched the great battle waged by their attendants in the sky. Then Viṣṇu warded his own attendants and those of Śiva off the battle in the sky, and putting the brāhmaṇa on Garuḍa, Viṣṇu went to Śiva's abode, surrounded by Śiva, Śiva's attendants and his own attendants. The glorious one while going along the way was saluted by gods. Led by Śiva he entered his abode, showing the brāhmaṇa the beauty of it. Then from that Kailāsa, Viṣṇu, saluted by Śiva with great devotion went to Vaikuṇṭha. The glorious brāhmaṇa also obtained the sight of Viṣṇu due to the grace of this holy place and enjoyed in the vicinity of Viṣṇu. O king, I have told you this grandeur of Śivakāñcī.

57-64. Listen very attentively to (the holy place) named Tīrthasaptaka. O great king, this holy place gives the fruit of the

four goals of human life (to one who) visits it, comes in its contact, thinks about it or even (merely) remembers it. O king, great sages like Vasiṣṭha stayed there and practised severe penance for the creation. The religious Marīci also bathed here for (getting) a son; and the glorious one obtained an excellent son, viz. Kaśyapa. Atri also pleased here the best gods by his penance, and obtained three sons from them—Soma, Durvāsas and Datta. The pious Āṅgiras also obtained, due to the favour of this holy place, sons. They, the brāhmaṇas, viz. the Āṅgirasas, were born in his family. Pulaha also got a son, Dambholi, of excellent virtues, who was, O king, Agastya in olden times. By bathing in this holy place Pulastya, practising penance, got a son, the glorious Kubera, Śiva's friend. Kratu too had thousands of sons (called) Vālakhilyas.

65-67. Due to the favour of this holy place they were perpetual celibates. Vasiṣṭha too, practising severe penance, got seven sons, Raja and others. O best king, I have described its greatness. O king, there are many other holy places also, like Kapilāśrama, Kedāra, Prabhāsa. O king, their greatness cannot be described even by Ananta even during a million years; then how (can it be described) by (persons) like me?

Saubhari said:

68-71. Having spoken like this, Nārada, the best sage, extolling Viṣṇu's virtues went to Śiva from the sky. O king, Auśīnara Śibi, having heard about the grandeur of Indraprastha from the sage's mouth, regarded himself blessed. The king, having duly bathed there at Indraprastha, and having performed all auspicious rites, went to his city. O lord, I have described to you the greatness of Indraprastha, the holy place purifying people and situated on the bank of Yamunā.

72-77. O best king, in Kali (age), people, void of faith, will not have regard for this Indraprastha, the crest-jewel of all holy places. That fruit which is obtained by listening to the eighteen Purāṇas and Bhārata is produced by (listening to) the greatness of Indraprastha. That fruit which is obtained by means of a lakh of baths at dawn in the month of Māgha would be had by devoutly listening to (the description of) the greatness of this (holy place). O king, he who devoutly listens to (the description of) its

greatness, would gratify his dead ancestors, gods and sages. That fruit which is had by means of the vows like Kṛcchra, Atikṛcchra, Parāka, and Cāndrāyaṇa, would be had by devoutly listening to (the description of) its greatness. O king, that fruit which is due to all sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice would be had by devoutly listening to (the description of) its greatness.

Sūta said:

78-80. King Yudhiṣṭhira having thus heard the greatness of Indraprastha from Śaunaka Saubhari, went to Hastināpura. Then having instructed his brothers led by Duryodhana, he went to the auspicious Indraprastha with a desire to perform a Rāja-sūya sacrifice. Having brought from Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa, his family-deity, the king performed the Rājasūya sacrifice.

81-85. Thinking that this holy place could give salvation even to the abusive (Śiśupāla), Kṛṣṇa killed Śiśupāla there. Śiśupāla too, due to dying at that holy place only, got absorbed into Kṛṣṇa, giving all (desired) objects. Bhīma fashioned a very extensive pool at the place where Śiśupāla was killed, and the (Rājasūya) sacrifice was performed. Bhīma fashioned there a very extensive pool with his mace. It is known as Bhīmakunḍa, and has become purifying on the earth. There is no doubt that that fruit which is had by bathing in Yamunā at Indraprastha is had (by bathing) in that pool.

Sūta said:

86-90. That holy place will forgive the faults of a living being who stays there by practices like going round it for a year. The man who goes round it every year, would not be tinged with the evils (committed) at the holy place and sins. He who does not go round (it) does not get sanctification at the holy place. Therefore, those who desire a fruit should go round it. He who reciting Viṣṇu's names goes round it, obtains at every step the fruit of presenting a brown cow. The man who goes round Indraprastha on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Caitra, is blessed, and is freed from all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

*Gem of a Formula**Śaunaka said:*

1-2. O glorious Sūta, you are blessed that you make us, plunged very much in the ocean of the mundane existence, drink a large quantity of nectar. O good one, tell us, desiring to cross the worldly existence, the gem of a formula, pure due to devotion, of which the mobile and the immobile are full.

Sūta said:

3-4. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall tell you the very wonderful gem of a formula, which the noble Vasiṣṭha spoke to Dilīpa. Once Dilīpa having saluted Vasiṣṭha, the best brāhmaṇa, his preceptor, asked him as you did (now).

Dilīpa said:

5-9. O revered one, you have particularly told me all the practices, so also practices with those of castes and the stages of life and the daily and occasional obligatory rites. O best sage, I have also heard the kingly duties, sacrifices, gifts (to be made) at holy places and vows etc., which give inexhaustible pleasures in heaven. Now I desire to hear about the ancient path leading to salvation. Tell me about it along which I can luckily go. What is the best of all sacred formulas, the only medicine for all the diseases in the worldly existence? What is the best formula giving salvation to all human beings? Tell all that truthfully and for the love and regard (that you have) for me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

10-11. O king, you desiring the good of all the world, have asked well. I shall, in private, tell you a great secret, emancipating (you) from the worldly existence. Formerly all holy sages intent on (performing) sacrifices and (giving) gifts, asked Nārada, Brahmā's son, the best sage:

The great sages said:

12. O revered one, by what formula shall we go to the

highest position? O glorious one, tell that to us. Please favour us.

Nārada said:

13. Formerly all meditating saints—Sanaka and others—asked in private Brahmā about the path to salvation, very difficult to be obtained.

Brahmā said:

14-20a. O meditating saints, listen to this wonderful secret. All gods and sages having penance as their wealth do not know it. The immutable god Nārāyaṇa told it to me at the beginning of the creation. He, along with the great goddess was worshipped by me. Then the immutable Nārāyaṇa was pleased with me. He gave me the status of the creator and all the literature having its origin in the Veda, so also illuminating formulas, pervasive and non-pervasive. Then I spoke to the god, the ancient Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu): “O revered one, by what formula (can) men cross the mundane existence? Tell me about it truly for the good of all people. Which of all formulas, is the one without (i.e. not requiring) initiatory rite, which gives men the highest place (even) by being uttered once (only)?”

The lord said:

20b-27. O glorious one, you, desiring the good of all the people, have asked well. Therefore, I shall tell you the secret by means of which men would reach me. Of all the formulas the gem of a formula is auspicious. It gives the highest position even when it is remembered just once. The two gems of (i.e. in) the formula (are: Lakṣmī, Nārāyaṇa). *Nyāsa* (assignment?), *Prayati* (purification?) and *Śaraṇāgati* (approaching for shelter?) are necessary. The formula ‘Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa’ gives all fruits. Understand in succession the names of the gem of a formula(?). Merely by its utterance I am always pleased. A man born in a (noble) family, an ascetic, one who has mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, one who is given to (performing) sacrifices and (giving) gifts, one resorting to all holy places, so also one who has taken a vow, one who speaks the truth, or even an ascetic having knowledge—is not entitled to the formula. He should carefully avoid it.

Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, women, and others—all are entitled to it if they are my devotees.

28-33. The excellent formula should be given to those who do not seek the shelter of any other (deity than Viṣṇu), who do not serve any other (deity than Viṣṇu), who do not (try to) reach any other (deity than Viṣṇu). Even if recited once it gives a quick fruit to the afflicted. It keeps away another (i.e. re-)birth even of haughty beings. (If) an afflicted person, or an inquisitive person, or one longing for wealth, or a wise person or a king seeks my shelter (but) once, he would obtain all his desired objects. It should not be told to him who is not initiated, to him who is not a devotee, to a proud person, to an atheist, to a greedy person, to one who is averse to (i.e. who has no) faith. It should not be told to him who has no desire to listen (to it); to him who does not abide by Śiva, to him who is free from lust, anger, hypocrisy, greed, so also to him who resorts to me with steady devotion, this excellent gem of a formula should be duly told.

34-37. (The devotee should observe) rules with regard to place and time, (should have) exact determination of foes and friends, (should know) the nyāsa,¹ mudrā² etc., along with the initiatory rite; he should have his body marked with (the impression of) my disc, so also do my worship, should dedicate his actions to me, should seek my shelter only. With great confidence in me he should assign all fruits to me. He should not possess anything. He should avoid talking to non-devotees of Viṣṇu or saluting them. He should also avoid saluting or worshipping other deities than (me).

38-44. Rules like this are declared for him who submits himself (to me). To a man endowed with such qualities, the excellent gem of a formula should be told. I, Nārāyaṇa, ancient Viṣṇu, am its seer; so also I, the ocean of affection, am its deity, along with Lakṣmī. I, Nārāyaṇa, the lord of the entire world, the glorious one, of a good character, fortunate, omniscient, omnipotent, with my desires always fulfilled, omnipresent, having every-

1. Nyāsa: Assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities which is usually accompanied by prayer and corresponding gesticulations.

2. Mudrā: Certain positions of the fingers practised in devotion or religious worship.

one as my relative, ocean of the nectar of pity am with Lakṣmī said to be its deity. Its metre is said to be the goddess Gāyatrī, having twentyfive syllables. He should twice assign seven, six, three, five, two or six limbs(?) He should meditate upon me, along with Lakṣmī not separated from me, of the form of the universe, having in my hands a disc, a conch, a mace, and a lotus, and of a divine form. He, being restrained and pure, should worship me along with Lakṣmī seated on my left lap, with this gem of a formula, and with sandal, flowers and offerings. O lord of the beings, even if I am worshipped once I am pleased.

Brahmā said:

45-48. O lord, you have properly told this excellent secret, so also the power of the gem of a formula, which gives every success to men. You are the father of all the worlds, so also their mother and preceptor. You are the master, friend, brother, recourse, refuge and friend. O lord of gods, I am your servant, disciple and friend. Therefore, O you ocean of pity, you told this excellent (formula) to me. Now with the desire for the good of all people, tell fully accurately the initiation of this gem of a formula for its proper practice.

The lord said:

49-54. O child, listen, I shall tell you the great rite of the initiation of this gem of a formula. To secure my resort, a man should first resort to a preceptor. The preceptor (should be) endowed with (the knowledge of) the Veda, (should be) Viṣṇu's devotee, free from jealousy, (should) know the formula, (should be) devoted to the formula, (should) always resort to the formula and (be) pure. He should belong to a good school; he should be proficient in the science of Brahman. He should not follow any other (deity than me); should not have any other aim (than me). He should be a brāhmaṇa, free from anger, attachment, and greed. He should teach good behaviour, should long for salvation, and should know the highest soul. A preceptor, a friendly one, having these qualities, who would teach (good) practices is called a preceptor. He who depends upon his preceptor when taught good behaviour, is steady in (obeying the preceptor's) order, is said to be a disciple by the good.

55-64. A preceptor should teach the excellent gem of a formula to a disciple having these characteristics, and endowed with all virtues. On a Dvādaśī day, or when the Sun is in the Śravaṇa constellation or on some day holy to Viṣṇu, a good preceptor should initiate the pleased (disciple). He should get fashioned the Sudarśana disc or the Pāñcajanya conch out of gold, silver, copper or bell-metal. Having bathed it with pure pañcāmṛta,¹ he should worship it before me. He should duly worship it with sandal and flowers, with (the utterance of) the formula. There he should establish fire in accordance with statements from his own Gṛhya (sūtras). The preceptor, the best brāhmaṇa, should offer ghee (into the fire) to the accompaniment of the formula. He should make oblations one thousand and eight times, or one hundred and eight times with the repetition of this gem of a formula or other auspicious formulas sacred to Viṣṇu. With (the recitation of) the hymns like the Puruṣasūkta he should offer ghee and milk into fire. The best brāhmaṇa should drop the disc and the conch into that fire. The preceptor, to the accompaniment (of the formula) of six letters should offer ghee into the fire twenty times. The preceptor, taking a heated disc, should make a mark (with it) and with the conch, to the accompaniment of the formula, on the left and the right arms. Having finished the remaining rite, he should again perform the worship. Then having brought a pitcher full of pure water, having consecrated it with (that) formula only, he should sprinkle (the water) on his head.

65-67. The preceptor should teach the formula to the disciple who has put on a white garment, has sipped water, is polite, has put on the sectarian mark. He should explain the meaning of the formula, and especially its operation. The disciple who has received the formula, should honour the preceptor with ornaments etc. O best god, he who, in this manner, learns the formula from a preceptor, Viṣṇu's devotee, goes to (the place) of Viṣṇu, not otherwise.

1. Pañcāmṛta: The collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

Nārada said:

68-70. The father, Viṣṇu, having thus spoken to the Creator, marked him with his own disc, and he himself gave (i.e. taught) him the formula. O best sages, the god, that lord Brahmā, my father, the lord of all worlds, duly gave (i.e. taught) the formula to me also. Therefore, O best sages, O brāhmaṇas, you too, putting on (the mark) of the Sudarśana (disc), seek the shelter of Viṣṇu's couple of feet.

Vasiṣṭha said:

71-80. All the sages, thus addressed by Nārada, the divine sage, and entitled to the two (feet of Viṣṇu) went to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, O royal sage, you too desire absorption into Viṣṇu after putting on (the mark of) Sudarśana according to the proper rule of initiation. Seek the shelter of the two feet of Viṣṇu alone. Brahmā, the lord of all the people and the three worlds, himself told me and Nārada also this excellent formula. Nārada taught the formula, exclusive devotion (to) and seeking refuge (of Viṣṇu) to the great sages like Śaunaka living in Naimiṣāraṇya. O king, the great sages, deities, siddhas, sādhyas and demons do not know this most secret formula. I too gave to Parāśara, Śakti's son, this formula. O king, I shall tell you also this great secret—the couple of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu, exclusive devotion (to) and seeking the refuge (of the two). There is no greater formula than the couple. I tell you the truth. In the worlds there is no practice superior to this. Formerly Brahmā told the truth, repeatedly (told) the truth that there is no other god than Viṣṇu who gives salvation to men. Service to him alone would be salvation, which would cut off (the fruits of) all acts.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Bearing the Marks of a Disc etc. Essential for a Brāhmaṇa

Dilīpa said:

1-3. O revered one, tell me all about (it) full of the nectar of devotion to Viṣṇu. Listening to (the account of) devotion to Viṣṇu, that brings happiness, I am not at all satisfied. O best sage, except the ocean of the nectar of devotion to Viṣṇu, what else is the refuge in the fearful forest of the mundane existence to men who are always tormented by the fires with huge flames in the form of the three torments? O great sage, tell (me) in detail the varieties of devotion to the highest soul that are constantly practised by the sages.

Vasiṣṭha said:

4-5. O lord of kings, you ask well about the means of emancipation of men from the worldly existence, viz. devotion to Viṣṇu, the highest lord, which always brings happiness. Formerly goddess Pārvatī asked the same great question to Śiva, worshipped by the world, on the peak of Kailāsa.

Pārvatī said:

6-10. O god of gods, Mahādeva, O killer of Tripura, O lord of gods, tell me about devotion to Viṣṇu, which gives salvation to all human beings. So also the different deities that are worshipped, the hymns, and the various ways of the worship, and the nature of that Viṣṇu, and his qualities like splendour, the nature of his heaven, reaching which (a devotee) does not return (to his world), and due to which the lord Viṣṇu brings about creation, maintenance and destruction. That is the great abode of Viṣṇu reaching which (men) do not return (to this world). With this or that act or means, sinful men, with their minds addicted to objects of senses, reach the highest place. Due to your love for me tell all that to me in detail.

Vasiṣṭha said:

11. Mahādeva, the killer of Tripura, thus asked by the great goddess, saluted Viṣṇu, and with great affection said (to her):

Rudra said:

12-17. Well, O great goddess, O you desiring the good of all people, you ask me well (to tell you) the excellent greatness of (Viṣṇu) the lord of Śrī. O Pārvatī, you are blessed; you have earned religious merit; you are Viṣṇu's devotee. O good one, I am always pleased with your (good) character, beauty and virtues. I shall, O Girijā, tell you about the best devotion (to Viṣṇu), the manner of (reciting) his hymns, and about his form. Viṣṇu, the ancient Vāsudeva is the truth. He is the highest soul, the highest Brahman, the highest light, and greater than the great. He is Acyuta, Puruṣa, Kṛṣṇa, the eternal one, the benevolent lord, the eternal and omnipresent one, the stable one, Rudra, the witness of everything, and the lord of created beings. He is the sacrifice, the lord of sacrifice, and actually the lord of the Veda. He is Hiraṇyagarbha, the sun, the lord creating and sustaining the worlds.

18-28. He is to be described by the letter A, is the lord, and the lord of Śrī, the Earth and Nīlā. He is the lord of immortality, and of that which grows with food. He has a thousand heads; he is the soul of all; he has a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. Having touched the earth on all sides, he has stood above it by ten fingers. He is Ananta, the lord of Lakṣmī, Ramā; he possesses qualities and is without them, and is great. He is the lord of all worlds, he has splendour, is omniscient, and is unlimited. O Pārvatī, I shall tell you as I can, the greatness of that Vāsudeva, the chief in the worlds, and the lord of the worlds. With Brahmā and the deities it is impossible for me to describe it, the meaning of all Upaniṣads determined in the Vedānta. I shall also tell you the kinds of his worship. Listen, I shall tell them separately. The marking with Viṣṇu's conch and disc is said to be the first (worship) of Viṣṇu. (Other varieties are:) putting on rectangular marks, accepting hymns of (i.e. holy to) him, worshipping (him), muttering, meditating (on him), recollecting his names; so also narration (of), listening to his (accounts), saluting (him), serving his feet; so also taking the water (flowing) from his feet, and taking food after offering it to him. (So also) serving those who belong to him, faith in the vow of Dvādaśī, planting the Tulasī (plant). (Thus) the devotion to Viṣṇu, the holder of the Śārṅga bow and the god of gods is said to be of

sixteen kinds for freedom from the bondage of the mundane existence. Viṣṇu is always venerable to all gods, so also to me, and especially to brāhmaṇas. Therefore, a brāhmaṇa should everyday duly worship Viṣṇu.

29-37. Having marks of his signs he doubtlessly reaches the feet (or the position) of the lord of Lakṣmī. A brāhmaṇa should have the marks of a conch and a disc at the roots of his arms, (and) for removing all sins the marks should be made after these are heated in fire. Having duly put on the mark of a disc or a conch and a disc or of the five weapons (of Viṣṇu), he should begin his religious duties. Having worn the mark of the disc heated in fire at the roots of his arms, he avoids the fearful city of Yama, and goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. All that worship, hymns, muttering (of hymns) of him who worships Viṣṇu without (having on his body) the mark of a disc perishes. The brāhmaṇa who having marked (his body) at the roots of arms with a disc heated in fire, (then) mutters the hymn, would obtain salvation. The best brāhmaṇa having put on the mark of Sudarśana disc heated in fire and having duly made offerings should appoint (a brāhmaṇa) for the rites. All the śrāddha (offered) by him who feeds (a brāhmaṇa) without the mark of Viṣṇu on his body, becomes fruitless, and his dead ancestors leave disappointed. One should honour at a śrāddha a brāhmaṇa having (on his body) the mark of Viṣṇu's disc, and should carefully avoid one without the mark of Viṣṇu's disc (on his body). One should present a cow, land, gold to him having a mark of the disc (of Viṣṇu on his body).

38-46. Whatever is given to (a brāhmaṇa) not having the mark of a disc (on his body) is given to a demon. Those who have marks made with a disc heated in fire at the roots of their arms, get freed from all sins, and go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. To him whose body is marked with a disc heated in fire, all holy places and sacrifices have come. There is no doubt about it. A brāhmaṇa, not having (the mark of) the disc (made) duly, would be unrefined. Nothing would come to him even if he performs a thousand sacrifices. A brāhmaṇa, having knowledge not easily obtained, but not (having the mark of) the disc made duly, is condemned among all people, and would fall from the status of a brāhmaṇa. As Viṣṇu, holding the conch and disc is worshipped

by the souls (i.e. men), similarly a brāhmaṇa, having (on his body) the marks of the disc etc. deserves to be honoured by all. A brāhmaṇa, even though he knows all the Vedas, or is proficient in all holy texts, would fall without having (i.e. if he does not have) (the mark of) the disc duly made (on his body); if he is without the mark or the marks of a conch or a disc, he should be put on a donkey and be driven out of the city. Vāsudeva Janārdana is untouched by the primordial matter (Prakṛti). O goddess, a brāhmaṇa having the mark of Viṣṇu's disc is just like that. Therefore, a man should have, at the roots of his arms, the (marks of) heated disc and conch of Viṣṇu, which burn the stream of sins (produced) due to the contact of matter.

47-50. He should have, at the roots of his arms, the marks made with heated disc and conch. Women and sūdras should always have those made with scented sandal (-paste). At the root of the arm of a brāhmaṇa the mark of the disc should be made with a heated (sign). Marks with heated (signs) must be duly made (on the body) of a brāhmaṇa. For the success in (rites prescribed by) the holy and the Smṛti texts, so also for being entitled to worshipping Viṣṇu, (the mark of) the disc should be duly had. For accomplishing the status of Viṣṇu, and for getting knowledge, a man should burn his body with (i.e. have marks of) heated conch and disc, after duly having offered oblationṣ into fire.

51-53. A brāhmaṇa should not mark his body with any other symbol than that of Viṣṇu—with other symbols than the conch, disc, mace, sword and the Śārṅga (bow) of Viṣṇu. He should burn his body with marks (made with Viṣṇu's symbols). He, whose body is burnt with (i.e. has) other marks, is not entitled to (performing) rites. One should avoid a brāhmaṇa not having the disc (-mark) from a distance. In the world one should not look at a brāhmaṇa who is not a devotee of Viṣṇu as (one does not look at) a cāṇḍāla. Viṣṇu's devotee, even if he is outside the castes, purifies the three worlds.

54-59. Therefore, O you of a charming face, brāhmaṇas should duly have marks (on their bodies). Brāhmaṇas (with their bodies marked) with Viṣṇu's disc are refined and noble for acquiring mastery of hymns, knowledge and for salvation. Brāhmaṇas without (marks of) Viṣṇu's disc are not refined. As

it is urged by the holy texts, especially brāhmaṇas, living in all stages of life, should duly have (the mark of) Viṣṇu's disc. Those who know the Vedas consider that a brāhmaṇa should have (the mark of) Sudarśana on his right arm, and (that of) the conch on the left. The wearing of (the mark of) the disc etc. is told in the Mahopaniṣad (the great Upaniṣad texts); so also in the Sāman (Veda), Yajur (Veda) and the Ṛg (Veda), O you of a beautiful face. O Viṣṇu, the other ancients have the marks of your pure lotus, disc for crossing the ocean of existence, at the roots of their arms. Others have other marks of you.

60-64. The extensive disc is known as Carāṇa. Pavitra is an old and auspicious word. Burnt by the disc they would cross the ocean of sins. Viṣṇu's disc is the lord of the hymns (brāhmaṇa-spatyam?) and has always pervaded the world. Those whose bodies are not burnt (with it) do not go to the highest position. Those whose bodies are burnt with (it) go to the highest position. Know from me the names of Viṣṇu's disc in succession: Pavitra, Carāṇa, Nemi, Sudarśana, Haricakra, Sahasrāra (having a thousand spokes), Prākṛtaghna (killer of the mean), Lokadvāra (a gate to the good world), Mahaujasa (very bright). Purify us with the Brahmanhood, pure and burnt in fire. Purify us with that Pavitra, having flames of you, O Agni.

65-69. May the Pāvamānya (hymns) purify me with the thousand-edged disc with which they always protect themselves. The disc of the Creator is bright with metal plates and golden. We knowing the hymn purify it (already) purified by it. The unaging disc with the felly is the eye of the noble one. Having put it on gods reached a high position. Therefore, (the marks of) the weapons should be duly put on particularly by brāhmaṇas, especially by Viṣṇu's devotees. The noble one of a pure heart, who having the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra (perpendicular marks of sandal on the forehead) and the mark of the disc, meditates on Viṣṇu's position, by means of singing the hymn always reaches (god Viṣṇu) higher than the highest always remaining in his heart.

70-74. Those devotees of Viṣṇu, having stuck to (i.e. round) their necks the garland of Tulasī or lotuses or a rosary, having the marks of conch or disc at the roots of their arms, or those having the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra (the vertical lines) on their foreheads, quickly purify the world. Beings are not sorry for those who pre-

serve (but) do not properly carry (the mark of) the extensive disc of the lord of heaven. Those who carry the disc very firm(-ly marked) with (the proper) rite on their arm(s), quickly occupy, by means of their lustre, a high place in the sky. He who has at the root(s) of his arms the disc mark of Viṣṇu, the highest soul (made) by heating (the disc) in the sacrificial fire, crosses the great ocean of the mundane existence, and goes to the pure world of the highest lord. A man should make at the roots of his arms the marks with the heated discs etc. He should also get such marks put on (the bodies of) his wife, children, servants and beasts etc.

75-80. O you of an excellent face, all holy texts tell this. In the history (books) and the Purāṇas the same thing is told. The mark of devotion to Viṣṇu is said to be of two kinds: external and internal. The external (mark) is (produced) by means of a conch, a disc etc. The internal (one) is freedom from attachment. One having similarity between the external and the internal is said to belong to Viṣṇu. Therefore, the disc etc. are said to be the first (external) mark pertaining to Viṣṇu. The internal (mark) is realising the soul after being free from the faults due to Cupid (i.e. passion of love). So also showing compassion to all beings, tranquility and absence of greed for the objects of senses. So also having no attachment for sons, wife etc.; and delight in the study of Yoga; serving the highest lord by means of undistracted application to devotion. Therefore, marking with (Viṣṇu's) weapons like the disc is said to pertain to Viṣṇu. Vaiṣṇavatva (the status of belonging to Viṣṇu) cannot be had without the marks of the disc etc.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

The Efficacy of Ūrdhvapuṇḍra

Śaṅkara said:

1-4. O you of an auspicious appearance, I shall tell you the greatness of the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra (vertical Vaiṣṇava mark on the

forehead). The best brāhmaṇa would be free from the bond of the worldly existence just on having it. Within the large and very charming space in the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra, Viṣṇu, god of gods, is seated with Lakṣmī. Therefore, the body of him, on which there would be the mark, is the clean, auspicious temple of the lord. That devotee of Viṣṇu, who has the mark made with white clay, has bathed at all holy places, is prepared for all sacrifices.

5-8. The brāhmaṇa having the mark is honoured among all people, (and) getting into an excellent aeroplane, goes to the highest place of Viṣṇu. The best brāhmaṇa should put on the mark thrice (a day), for purification of all sins, and for obtaining the fruit of performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity. (A man) seeing one having the mark, is freed from all sins. By saluting him devoutly he would obtain the fruit of all (kinds of) charity. The dead ancestors of him who will feed a brāhmaṇa having the mark are undoubtedly pleased for crores of kalpas.

9-14. O you of an auspicious face, he who, having the mark, performs a śrāddha, would obtain, for crores of kalpas, the fruit of the śrāddha (performed) at Gayā. The religious merit of the sacrifices, gifts, penance, muttering (of hymns), sacrificial rites etc. of one having the mark is endless. All the sacrifices performed, wells dug, and other charitable acts done by him who does any act without having the mark, are useless. That human body which is without the mark should not be seen at all. It would be like a cremation ground. All the rites etc. which a man without the mark would do, are taken (away) by demons; and he goes down to hell. A brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas, should have the mark with white clay. The wise one should never have it in an oblique manner even in a misery.

15-18. Brāhmaṇas should have the mark. The mark of kṣatriyas should be round; that of vaiśyas should be strip-like; that of śūdras should have three lines. The mark should be made with clay; the round one with musk; the strip-like one with sandal; and the three-lined one with sacred ash. The vertical mark is recommended for all. It is not prohibited. A kṣatriya etc. also, if he is Viṣṇu's devotee should have it. Brāhmaṇas are not to have the oblique or the strip-like mark. And they are not to worship any other (deity) than Viṣṇu, the highest lord.

19-23. O goddess, if a brāhmaṇa, learned and born in a noble family has put on (the mark of) sacred ash, one should avoid such a brāhmaṇa, as a pot in which liquor is left as the remnant. The mark of three lines is the practice for those who are śūdras and like śūdras. There is no doubt that a brāhmaṇa having the mark of three lines, falls. The very noble ones, interested in the good of all living beings, should have a puṇḍra with a gap like the shape of Viṣṇu's foot. A man should have the mark in accordance with the precept, resembling the foot of Viṣṇu and having a gap in its centre; for that is Viṣṇu's temple. He should have the mark which is good, pleasing, has the shape of a staff, good sides, which is very charming, very beautiful, and which has a gap at the centre.

24-27. Therefore, O you of an auspicious appearance, brāhmaṇas and women should always have the mark which has a gap, has the shape of a staff, and is very beautiful. In the large and very beautiful gap at the centre of the vertical mark, Viṣṇu is seated with Lakṣmī. That mean brāhmaṇa who would have a gapless vertical mark, expels Viṣṇu along with Lakṣmī seated there. There is no doubt that there always is a dog's foot on the foreheads of those mean brāhmaṇas who have a gapless vertical mark.

28-40. Therefore, in order to attain the same world as of Viṣṇu, a brāhmaṇa should always have a mark with a gap, with turmeric, and having auspiciousness. For securing absorption into Viṣṇu one should, with great devotion, bring the clay from the pool on the Veṅkaṭa mountain, and make the vertical mark (with it). A devoted person should bring the clay from the root of Tulasī of (i.e. dear to) Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and should make the vertical mark (with it). Viṣṇu is pleased with him. Or the best brāhmaṇa, having brought the pleasing clay from the auspicious, charming pool (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu at Dvārāvātī, should make the mark (with it) in order to secure all desired objects. He who, having brought with great devotion, clay from the banks of Gaṅgā, makes the mark with it, would obtain the fruit of all sacrifices. Due to having the mark (with) sandal, turmeric, so also (with) ash from the sacred fire one is said to control everything. He should bring the clay from that place which is sacred to Viṣṇu. One should get the clay from the top of a mountain, the bank of a river, the root of a bilva (tree), a reservoir of water, the coast of a sea, an anthill,

especially from a place sacred to Viṣṇu, and from the place where the water used for Viṣṇu's bath always flows, for having the mark. A man, taking clay with water flowing from Viṣṇu's feet, and having puṇḍra marks on the limbs of his body at Śrīraṅga, Venkāṭagiri, Śrīkūrma, the auspicious Dvārakā, Prayāga, Narasiṃha mountain, Varāha, a Tulasī-grove would get absorption into Viṣṇu. For having the mark clay should be taken from that place wherefrom the noble devotees of Viṣṇu take it. A dark mark is said to cause peace. So also a red one is said to bring about control. They say that a yellow one leads to riches. The white one leads to salvation and is auspicious.

41-50. They say that a round, oblique, gapless, short, long, protracted, thin, crooked, ugly mark, one with its top closed or with its root cut off, with a line missing, inauspicious, rough, fixed, one that is not drawn with the finger, not having fragrance, or inadequate is unfortunate. One should draw it with clay beginning with the root of the nose. Starting it from the middle of the eye-brows, he should have a gap in it. The gap should be of the measure of two fingers, and the sides of the size of a finger. With white clay he should draw a better and auspicious mark. He should meditate upon Keśava (as staying) on his forehead. (He should meditate) upon Nārāyaṇa (as staying) in his belly, Mādhava (as staying) in his chest, and Govinda (as staying) in his throat. (He should meditate) upon Viṣṇu (as staying) in the right side of his belly and Madhusūdana (as staying) in his right arm. (He should meditate) upon Trivikrama (as staying) in (the right side of) his neck, and Vāmana (as staying) in his left side. (He should meditate) upon Śrīdhara (as staying) in his left arm, and Hṛṣīkeśa in (the left side of) his neck. (He should meditate) upon Padmanābha (as staying) in his back, and place Dāmodara in the lower part of his spine. And with the water for washing it (he should meditate) upon Vāsudeva (as present) in his head. He should draw the mark of the measure of four fingers on his forehead, both the arms, on both (the sides) of the back, and on the neck. On the belly and near its sides a long one of the measure of ten fingers is recommended. On the arms and chest a mark of the measure of eight fingers is recommended. Thus a brāhmaṇa should always have twelve marks.

51-59. He should, after meditating upon those images with

their respective hymns, have the marks (on those respective limbs of his body). In the gap he should have (i.e. put) auspicious turmeric. They say, kṣatriyas should have four marks and vaiśyas should have two. One mark is laid down for women and śūdras. He should have four marks on the forehead, on his chest, and on the arms. Two are laid down for the forehead and the chest and one for the place where the hair is separated. Of all the marks, the vertical one is said to be the first (that should be put) on the forehead. As laid down, it should be had in the order of the forehead first. One should have the images of Vāsudeva etc. in the four vertical marks. In two he should have the two (images of) Govinda and Kṛṣṇa and one of Nārāyaṇa. O Girijā, I have thus told (you) the manner in which the puṇḍra is had. The triad of one resembling the aśvattha-leaf, the reed-leaf, or the lotus-leaf, is said to be 'Mohana'. A pure, great devotee of Viṣṇu, should, in case of a controversy, have a vertical mark of the shape of a staff. Those, the roots of whose arms are marked with Sudarśana, so also all of whose limbs are marked with the vertical puṇḍra, who have lotus garlands and rosaries, protect the people from contact with heaps of sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSIX

The Meaning of the Mantra (Formula)

Śaṅkara said:

1-5. At (the time of) a nyāsa or worship, one should resort to Viṣṇu's formula (mantra). The highest position is not had by means of a formula not sacred to Viṣṇu. If the former couple of sacred names (i.e. the one mentioned above) is imparted by one who is a non-Vaiṣṇava, then one should again receive it from a follower of Viṣṇu. Even if a man has studied a thousand branches (of the holy texts), even if he was initiated into all (kinds of) sacrifices, even if he is born in a good family, he should not be a preceptor if he is not a follower of Viṣṇu. That follower of Viṣṇu who properly imparts the two sacred names, should be

known as the preceptor, tearing off the bond of the mundane existence. A brāhmaṇa should, after resorting to a preceptor, live (with him) for a year. The preceptor, knowing his behaviour, should impart him the formula.

6-9. Having first done the sacraments as burning his body (i.e. putting sectarian marks on it), he should then utter the formula, after burning, putting the sectarian mark and giving a name (to him). Then he should teach his disciple of a pure heart. The rite of burning with (i.e. putting marks like) the (heated) disc (etc.) is called tāpa (or burning). The sectarian mark is said to be vertical and the name (accepted by) the Vaiṣṇava sect is pronounced. Then in accordance with the rule (about the mantra) the teacher should teach the formula to the disciple. (He should teach him) nyāsa, the eight-syllabled or any other formula sacred to Viṣṇu. O you of an auspicious face, here nyāsa is of a high value to the followers of Viṣṇu.

10-12. Therefore, for them nyāsa is said to be superior. A brāhmaṇa highly devoted to nyāsa is said to be the best. There is no greater mantra than a nyāsa. I am telling you the truth. Nyāsa and the couple of mantras are synonyms for devotion. Learn it from me. After having instruction in the two, he should practise all rites. He who is not entitled to both does not deserve to perform all rites.

13-16. Therefore, the best brāhmaṇa, having studied the two, should study the eight-syllabled formula properly. The formula is said to be eight-syllabled due to the inclusion of (the syllable) Om. The wise say that that is a sacred formula which naturally has Om at its beginning. Except at the beginning of all formulas Om is not naturally there. One should use it before (i.e. at the beginning of) all formulas. O you of an auspicious face, the sacred syllable Om is Brahman. It is the chief of all formulas. One should use it at the commencement of all formulas.

17-21. At the root-formula Om is naturally settled. The first (syllable) is *Om*, having one letter. Then is (the word) *namaḥ* having two letters. Then in proper order are the five letters *Nārāyaṇāya*. Thus the formula, accomplishing all objects, should be known to be eight-syllabled. It removes all sorrows; it is glorious; it contains all formulas; it is auspicious. Its seer is Nārāyaṇa, and (he) himself, the lord of Śrī, is its deity. Its metre

is the divine Gāyatrī and origin is Om. The power of the formula is goddess Śrī who is never-failing. The first foot is said to be the letter *Om*; the second to be *Namaḥ*, and the third to be *Nārāyaṇāya*. Thus the three feet are told.

22-26. The letters *a*, *u*, and *m* form the syllable *Om*, which is Brahman's word, and is of the nature of the three Vedas. Viṣṇu is expressed by the letter *a*, Śrī by the letter *u*; the letter *m* is the servant of these two, and is said to be the twentyfifth (letter). It is said by the wise that *a* expresses Viṣṇu's form. The sages say that *u* expresses the form of the goddess Śrī. The letter *m* expresses the soul, the puruṣa, the twentyfifth (principle of the Sāṃkhyas). The elements are expressed by the class of letters beginning with *ka*; and the senses are denoted by the class of letters beginning with *ca*. The class of letters beginning with *ṭa* and that beginning with *ta* denote knowledge, so also the letters like *dha* (indicate the same). The mind is expressed by the letter *pa* only; and ego by the letter *pha*.

27-30. Mahat (i.e. Intellect) and Prakṛti (Primordial Matter) (the principles enunciated in the Sāṃkhya System) are (respectively) expressed by the letters *ba* and *bha*. The soul is said to be the letter *ma* and is said to be the twentyfifth (principle). It is different from the body, the senses, the mind, the vital breath; and has no other means. He is the remnant of the lord, is denoted by *ma* and is sentient. Some say that *ma* indicates just the emphasis. According to them the principle of Śrī is expressed by the letter *va* (*ma*?) only. As the sun's lustre does not go away from him, so Lakṣmī does not go away from him. Viṣṇu, the ocean of auspicious qualities, is expressed by the letter *ā*.

31-36. The lord of Śrī is the remnant of all souls, is the seed (i.e. source) of the world, and the highest person. He is the author and the sustainer of the world, the lord, and people's kin. (Lakṣmī) always controls the worlds, does not go away from Viṣṇu. She is mother of the entire world and Viṣṇu's charming wife. Here (i.e. in the mantra) the letter *u* expresses Śrī, who is the support of the world. The wise say that the letter *ma* expresses the soul, the servant of the two (i.e. Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī). He is the support of knowledge, has knowledge as his quality, is sentient, and is beyond Prakṛti. He is not insentient; he is without any modification; is uniform in nature and has (no other form than)

his own form. He is subtle, eternal, pervading, of the nature of intellect and joy, is of the nature of ego, immutable, the soul, of different forms, and eternal. He cannot be burnt, cannot be cut off, cannot be made wet, cannot be dried, and is indestructible; he is (thus) endowed with such qualities and is an effect of the highest (soul).

37-42. The letter *ma* expresses the individual soul, always dependent. He is the servant of Viṣṇu only and of none else. Thus is determined his servitude to be mediocre. O sinless one, the meaning of *Om* should be known like this. I have explained it (to you). O auspicious one, the exposition of *Om* (is done) by means of the remnant of the meaning, the formula(?). In this world, he who is the servant of another, does not get freedom. Therefore, with (the help of) the mind one should turn away Mahat and Ahaṁkāra (i.e. Intellect and Ego). That act which is done by the knowledge of one's means, is also prohibited. The letter *ma* is (i.e. stands for) ego, and the letter *na* prohibits it. Therefore, with his mind only he gets freedom from the ego. Every accomplishment is due to the mind. Otherwise he would perish. Whatever is with the mind is said to be the ego.

43-46. One having egotism has absolutely no happiness. He whose mind is deluded by egotism sinks in the blinding darkness. Therefore, his freedom through mind is not prohibited. He is dependent upon the lord and lives under his influence. Therefore, the sentient is not the author of the means. The mobile and the immobile exist due to the will of the highest lord. Therefore, he would completely give up the application of his own power. Due to the lord's power there is nothing that is not obtained by him.

47-53. Having placed the burden (i.e. the responsibility) on that lord of Lakṣmī, he should do acts of (i.e. sacred to) him only. The highest soul, Viṣṇu, is the master. I always belong to him. His mind should be employed according to the desire of that lord only. Thus it is noble when egotism and sense of mineness are abandoned by the mind. In the mundane existence the sense of mineness is the root of the bondage due to the deeds. Therefore, a wise man should avoid Mahat (Intellect) and Ahaṁkāra (ego) with (the help of) the mind. (Now) O you auspicious Girijā, I shall explain (to you) the word *Nārāyaṇa*. *Nārā* is the assemblage of the souls. This Puruṣa (*Nārāyaṇa*) is their refuge. And they

are his abode; therefore he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa*. The entire world—the sentient and insentient objects—is heard, is seen. He, who always remains after pervading it, is said to be *Nārāyaṇa*. The groups of all men are said to be *Nārā*. He is their refuge and support. Therefore, he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa*. The wise know the principles produced from *Nara* (i.e. the Supreme Spirit) as *nārā*.

54-59. They alone are his abode. Therefore, he is called *Nārāyaṇa*, by whom the world, after devouring it even at the end of the kalpa, is supported, and by whom it is again created. Therefore he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa*. The entire world consisting of the mobile and the immobile is called *Nārā*. To it he is connected; therefore he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa*. The *Nārā*—the host of men—is his abode or refuge. Therefore, he is always called *Nārāyaṇa* by the sages; from him spring the worlds, as the massive foam in the ocean. Since they again merge into him, therefore, he is said to be *Nārāyaṇa*. He is (residing) at the eternal position, is eternal, and is always free and alone enjoys; he is the lord of the entire world. Therefore, he is called *Nārāyaṇa*. *Nārāyaṇa* is the highest Brahman. *Nārāyaṇa* is the highest principle.

60-64. *Nārāyaṇa* has remained after pervading whatever is seen or heard within and without this world. Hari, *Nārāyaṇa*, Acyuta is the Supreme soul with the sins destroyed. He resides within all beings. He is divine, always (all) alone, and is eternal. He is the seer and is what is to be seen. He is the listener and is what is listened to also. He is the one that touches and is also what is touched. He meditates and is what is meditated upon. He is the speaker and what is spoken. He is the knower and what is known. He is the sentient and insentient world. All that is said to be Hari, the lord of Śrī, *Nārāyaṇa*. He, the Supreme Being, has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. Having pervaded all the worlds he stands above them by (the measure of) ten fingers.

65-69. All that was and will be is *Nārāyaṇa* Hari. And he is the lord of immortality and the Virāt; the Supreme Being (grows beyond) by the means of food. He alone is the Supreme Being, Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, Acyuta, Hari, Hiraṇmaya, and the lord; he is immortal, eternal, auspicious (Śiva). He is the master of the entire world, is the lord of all people, and the master. He is Hiraṇyagarbha, the Sun, is Ananta (the endless) and the great

god. The word *Bhagavat*, so also the word *Puruṣa* and the word *Nirupādhi* stand for Vāsudeva, the soul of all. The god, the lord Viṣṇu, the highest soul, the friend of the world, the only ruler of the movable and the immovable is the greatest refuge of the ascetics.

70-73. That one who is naturally merged into the sound uttered at the beginning of the Veda and who is settled in the Ved-ānta (i.e. the Upaniṣads), who is the greatest, is the great god. That one, viz. Viṣṇu, who is (indicated by) the letter *a*, the one who is Nārāyaṇa Hari, is the eternal Supreme Being, the highest soul, the great lord. Sages use the word *Īśvara* (i.e. the lord) also for him in whom wonderful glory exists. Unconditional lordship exists in Viṣṇu. The ancient words of Veda have described him as the soul, the lord. Therefore, in Vāsudeva the great lordship exists.

74-88. Due to his splendour he is *Tripād* (literally, having three feet). He is the lord of sport. He, the soul of all, has two kinds of grandeurs and glory. He who is the lord of Śrī, Bhū and Nīlā is called the lord. Therefore, mastery over all exists in Vāsudeva. He is the lord of sacrifice, is the sacrifice, the enjoyer of sacrifice, the performer of sacrifice, the lord, the enjoyer of sacrifice, the Puruṣa (i.e. the deity) of sacrifice. He alone is the highest lord. He is the lord of sacrifice. He is the enjoyer of the oblations made to gods and all offerings to the dead ancestors. He is immutable. He, Hari, is the lord here. All goblins and demons go away from his vicinity. He, Viṣṇu, who became Virāt and Hari, is himself the highest lord, who pleases the three worlds. With him as the complete oblation gods performed a sacrifice. Those who have a double row of teeth are born from that sacrifice. From that sacrifice with all the oblations sprang *ṛks*, *sāmans*. From it sprang horses, cows, men etc. The entire world consisting of the mobile and the immobile sprang from the body of the Supreme Being consisting of everything. The castes were his face, arms, thighs and feet in due order. From his feet the earth came up and the heaven from his head. From his mind the moon was produced, and the sun from his eye. Fire with a thousand eyes (sprang) from his mouth, and the ever-moving wind from his breath. From his navel came up Brahmā, the sky, the movable and immovable world. Since the entire world came up from the eternal Viṣṇu, therefore, Viṣṇu full of all, is called Nārā-

yaṇa. Hari, having thus created the world again devours it, as a spider does the web produced from its saliva. Since, having curbed Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Yama and Varuṇa, he subdues them, therefore, he is called Hari. This ancient Supreme Being having put the world in his belly, sleeps in the coating of (his) Māyā, which has become an ocean. (In the beginning) here this Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Acyuta was alone.

89-93. Brahmā, Rudra, gods, great sages, this heaven, this earth, the moon, the sun, the stars, the world, the (cosmic) egg covered by Mahat (were) not there. O auspicious one, since the entire world was held by that Hari (in his belly) and was again created at the time of creation, therefore he is said to be Nārāyaṇa. O Pārvatī, service to him is described in the formula by the dative case. This entire world, beginning with Brahmā, is his slave. Knowing the meaning to be like this one should then use the formula. O you of an excellent face, without knowing the meaning of the formula, one would not get success, so also enjoyment, devotion and salvation.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSEVEN

The Description of the Vibhūti of Tripād

Pārvatī said:

1-2. Tell me in detail, the importance of the meaning and the words of the sacred formula, so also the lord's *vibhūti* (divine properties) and his qualities. O lord of all gods, properly tell me all about that highest abode of Viṣṇu, and about the kinds of his *vyūhas* (divine manifestations).

The lord said:

3-7. O goddess, listen. I shall explain to you the nature of the highest soul; so also the *vibhūti* and group of qualities of that Viṣṇu. That great, Supreme Being who is mentioned as Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, is the lord of the worlds, and the eternal highest soul. The lord has hands and feet on all sides, has eyes on all

sides. Having all worlds and great abodes in it (i.e. his body) he stands above the minds of men. The lord of Lakṣmī, Puruṣotama, has thus a multiple nature. For enjoyment with the goddess he takes up divine and auspicious forms. His is a large body. His form is like that of fire. Viṣṇu took to the form of a youth and a boy. He enjoyed with Lakṣmī, the mother of the worlds, as the Moon with rays (producing) nectar (enjoys with) his moonlight.

8-13. This (lord) of the goddess of the world is a young boy, ever young. Having handsomeness like that of a crore of Cupids he remains at the highest place. For his enjoyment there is the highest sky; for his sport the entire world. The two kinds of Viṣṇu's vibhūti are due to his enjoyment and sport. He always remains enjoying. Sometime he withdraws his sport. Due to his having a (special) power, he has both enjoyment and sport. The pervading with his third step is done in the highest abode. One step of him was here also. His vibhūti with the third step is perpetual, (while) the step (on the earth) is non-perpetual. That eternal auspicious form of the lord has stayed in the highest abode. It is infallible, eternal, divine, and has always resorted to youth. It is always enjoying the goddess Lakṣmī and is surrounded by Lakṣmī and the earth. This Lakṣmī of Viṣṇu, the mother of the world, is eternal and imperishable.

14-21. O you of an auspicious face, as Viṣṇu is omnipresent so is Lakṣmī. This ever auspicious wife of Viṣṇu rules over the world. She has hands and feet on all sides. She has eyes and heads on all sides. This Nārāyaṇī, the mother of the world, is the resort of the entire world. The entire immobile and mobile world has resorted to (i.e. depends upon) her glance. The existence and the dissolution of the world is due to her opening and closing (her) eyes. This great Lakṣmī is the first of all. She has three constituents (viz. sattva, rajas and tamas). She is the greatest goddess. She of a visible and invisible form, remains after having pervaded everything. The great goddess having seen the entire universe void, filled that entire (universe) with her own lustre. That Lakṣmī is the Earth only, well-known as goddess Nīlā. Being the support of the world, she has resorted to the form of the earth. She herself would be of the form of Nīlā due to her liquid form of the nature of water etc. She has obtained

the form of Lakṣmī. She is of the nature of wealth and speech. Thus, she, the goddess of the world, has resorted to Viṣṇu. O you of an auspicious face, all the varieties of knowledge would be (i.e. are) her forms.

22-23. Everything that has a beautiful form is said to be her body only. It remains in women as beauty, good character and behaviour, and good fortune (in the form of having their husbands alive). O Girijā, her beauty is at the head (i.e. top of the beauty) of all women. By means of the glance of her, of a strong vision, Brahmā, Śiva, Indra the lord of heaven, the Moon, the Sun, Kubera, Yama, Agni obtain ample affluence.

24-28. He who, after getting up in the morning would recite these auspicious names of her, viz. Lakṣmī, Śrī, Kamalā, Vidyā, Mātā, Viṣṇupriyā (dear to Viṣṇu), Satī, Padmālayā (having a lotus as her abode), Padmahastā (having a lotus in her hand), Padmākṣī (lotus-eyed), Lokasundarī, Bhūtānām Īśvarī (She who controls the beings), Nityā, Sahyā (literally, bearable), Sarvagatā (omnipresent), Śubhā (auspicious), Viṣṇupatnī, Mahādevī, Kṣīrodatanayā (daughter of the Milky Ocean), Ramā, Anantā (endless), Lokamātā (the mother of the world), Bhū, Nilā, Sarvasukhapradā (giving all pleasures), Rukmiṇī, so also Sītā, Śubhā (auspicious), Sarvavedavatī (possessing all Vedas), Satī, Sarasvatī, Gaurī, Śānti, Svāhā (the oblations offered to gods), Svadhā (the oblations offered to dead ancestors), Rati, Nārāyaṇī, Viṣṇu's eternal beautiful wife never leaving him, obtains wealth and faultless riches and grains.

29-37. I here invoke Śrī who has golden complexion, who is attractive, who has a golden and silver chaplet, who is moon-like, full of gold, Lakṣmī, who does not go away from Viṣṇu, who is perceptible through her fragrance, who is haughty, always nourished, who is the goddess of wealth, who controls all beings. The great goddess thus praised in Ṛgveda gave all the pleasure of affluence to gods like Śiva. This ancient wife of Viṣṇu controls this world. The entire mobile and immobile world resorts to (i.e. depends upon) her glances. He, the indestructible, immutable Supreme Being, on whose chest the goddess like Agni's lustre, rests, is actually the lord of all. He is the affluent Nārāyaṇa, the ocean of the quality of love. He is the lord, is good-tempered, amiable, omniscient and all-powerful.

His desires are always fully gratified; he is a natural friend and companion. He is the ocean of the nectar of compassion. He is the shelter of men. He is the giver of heaven, salvation and happiness to his devotees. He is the mine of pity. I shall fully do service to that Viṣṇu. In all conditions like time and place the form of the lord of Kamalā is well-established. A man would easily obtain service to Viṣṇu.

38-42. Having thus known the meaning of the sacred formula, a man should properly practise devotion to him. All this immobile and mobile world is under his control. Lord Śrīmat Nārāyaṇa is the lord, the master of the worlds. He is the mother, the father, the son, the kinsman, the abode, the refuge and the shelter. The lord of Śrī has auspicious qualities; he gives the fruits of all desires. He is the lord of the world, who is described as qualityless in the holy texts. He is said to be so in the sense that he is devoid of Prakṛti-born qualities associated with what should be abandoned. The falseness of the display of which is (indicated) by passages found in Vedānta, i.e. all that is seen, consists in its being transient. In this case also, the Prakṛti-born form of the (cosmic) egg itself is perishable.

43-48. In the same way the transitoriness of the Prakṛti-born forms is explained. The meaning is: O great goddess, the Prakṛti has come up for the play of Viṣṇu, the god of gods, entitled to sport. This egg (i.e. cosmos) having Prakṛti as its source is charming as it is complete with the four and ten worlds, oceans with islands, four kinds of beings and mountains with very lofty peaks. It is endowed with qualities more than ten; it is covered with seven covers. By means of that time only which moves in the form of (the measures of time like) kalā,¹ kāṣṭhā,² the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world would be (i.e. take place). A day of Brahmā is of the duration of four thousand yugas. As many years' (duration) is a night of Brahmā, whose birth is not known. When the end of Brahmā comes, he would be destroying everything.

49-51. The worlds existing in the (cosmic) egg are burnt by the destructive fire at the end of the world. Then all the souls are

1. Kalā: A division of time variously computed as one minute, 48 seconds, or 8 seconds.

2. Kāṣṭhā: A measure of time, 1/30 kalā.

put into the Prakṛti (i.e. the personified will) of Viṣṇu. The cover of the egg, the beings, are merged into the primordial matter. That primordial matter is the support of the entire world, and has resorted to Viṣṇu. By means of her the lord always brings about the creation and destruction of the world. The lord has created the illusion in the form of the world for his sport.

52-54. She (called) Avidyā (ignorance), Prakṛti (primordial matter), Māyā (illusion), Guṇatrayamayī (consisting of the three constituents, viz. sattva, rajas and tamas), Sanātani (the ancient one) is ever the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction. This Yoganidrā (Viṣṇu's sleep at the end of a yuga), the great illusion, the Prakṛti having the three constituents, unmanifest, Pradhāna is the sport of Viṣṇu that does not change. Due to Prakṛti only the creation and destruction of the world would always take place. The place of Prakṛti beyond calculation is imperishable, dense darkness.

55-59. On the boundary on the side above is Virajā; on the lower side the ancient one is limitless. She in her gross and subtle condition has subdued the entire world. Creation and destruction are said to be the two states of expansion and contraction of her. Thus all beings are within Prakṛti. Then all this great world within Prakṛti is void. Thus the excellent form of (his) vibhūti is of the form of Prakṛti. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, listen to the vibhūti of the Tripād (liberally, having three feet or steps). The river Virajā is between Pradhāna and the highest heaven. She, the auspicious one, is caused to flow with the water produced by the sweat of the Vedāṅgas. At the other side of her, in the highest heaven is the ancient vibhūti, viz. Tripād (i.e. Viṣṇu).

60-63. (The nature of the highest place of Viṣṇu is:) immortal, eternal, continual, endless, the highest position, pure, full of sattva (i.e. goodness), divine, immutable and Brahman's place. It is unchanging and has the lustre equal to that of many crores of suns. It is full of the Vedas, is pure, and free from creation and destruction. It is beyond calculation, unaging, continual, free from wakefulness and sleep etc. It is golden; it gives salvation; it gives bliss and happiness. It is without similarity or excess (i.e. nothing is equal or superior to it). It is without a beginning or

an end. It is auspicious. It is wonderful due to lustre; is charming; is always the ocean of joy.

64-67. Viṣṇu's highest place is endowed with these and other qualities. The sun, or the moon, or the fire does not illumine it. That is the highest place of Viṣṇu, after going to which (beings) do not return (to the earth). That is Viṣṇu's highest abode, which is eternal, continual and fixed. Even for hundreds of crores of kalpas Viṣṇu's place cannot be described by me, or by Brahmā, or by hosts of best sages. O dear one, the unfallen lord stays at that place; one may or may not know him. It is immutable; it is a mystery (even) to the Vedas (or it is a secret of the Vedas); in it all gods were seated. There is none who can describe it. What can one do with a ṛc? Those who know it are these, seated here.

68-75. O goddess, the wise ones always see that highest abode of Viṣṇu, which is indestructible, eternal, divine, and is like an expanded eye. It is not impossible for deities like Brahmā, Rudra to enter it. The best meditating sages see it through knowledge, the path of the holy texts. I, Brahmā, gods and great sages do not understand the significance of all the Upaniṣads. On understanding it I shall tell it, O you of a good vow. At that highest place of Viṣṇu, called good and auspicious, cows with many horns and very happy created beings live. They say here is the abode of Viṣṇu, dressed as a cowherd. With the cows and cowherds of pleasant appellations the great abode shines. It has the complexion of the sun. The unfalling lustre, viz. Viṣṇu's place is beyond darkness. It is Brahmā's prop. That is a pure, good ancient world. At this highest position, the eternal place, in which the vulgar do not find a place, the two, young Śrī and the ancient (Viṣṇu), being watchful, stayed.

76-80. Bhū and Nīlā, dear to Viṣṇu, are the two sisters from there. Here the old Sādhyas, and all the ancient gods dwell. Those of an auspicious appearance, and great ones sought out heaven. There the learned watchful brāhmaṇas kindle (the fire). The wise brāhmaṇas, desiring its contact, go to that place. That highest place of Viṣṇu is called Mokṣa (liberation). Those free from bondage obtain (i.e. reach) that happy place. Reaching it they do not come back (i.e. are not reborn). Therefore, it is called

Mokṣa (liberation). Mokṣa is the highest place (state); it is divine, immortal, the abode of Viṣṇu; it is indestructible; it is the highest abode; it is Vaikuṇṭha, the eternal place. It is nitya (eternal), the highest heaven, the best and the sanātana (ancient). These are the synonymns of the highest abode of Viṣṇu. I shall (now) explain in detail the form of the vibhūti of that Tripād.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

Description of the Highest Heaven etc.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-6. The worlds of the vibhūti of Tripād are said to be innumerable. All they are made of pure sattva, and are called bliss and happiness. All they are eternal, free from change, and void of attachment etc. that are worthy of being abandoned. All are golden, pure, and have the lustre of crores of suns. They are full of all Vedas, are divine, and free from lust and anger. They are resorted to by those who take joy only in devotion to the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. They are completely happy due to continuous chanting of the Sāmans. All are of the nature of the five Upaniṣads and have the lustre of the Vedas. All of them are covered with divine men and women full of the Vedas. They are adorned with lakes having water in the form of only the flavour of the Vedas. They have the immobile objects in the form of the holy texts, the codes of law and the Purāṇas. It is not possible for me to describe the full expanse of (these) worlds.

7-13. Only the distance between Virajā and the highest heaven is said (to be covered by them). That place should be enjoyed by those who resort to the unmanifest Brahman. That absolute position which gives joy and happiness due to the experience of one's own self is called *Niśśreyas*, *Nirvāṇa*, *Kaivalya* and *Mokṣa*. Those who are nourished by the happiness due to their interest in devoutly serving the lotus-like feet of the lord of Śrī, and whose intellect is small, desire mokṣa, void of happiness. (But) the high-souled, noble ones who serve the feet of the lord go to

that highest abode of Viṣṇu which gives pleasure (derived) from Brahman. That place of Viṣṇu (called) Vaikuṇṭha is crowded with diverse communities. It is covered with ramparts, splendid rooms and great mansions. In it is a divine city called Ayodhyā. It is covered with ramparts rich in gems, gold and pictures, and with portals. It has four gates and is covered with jewelled principal gates. It is protected by door-keepers like Caṇḍa and Kumuda. At the eastern gate there are Caṇḍa and Pracaṇḍa, and at the western there are Bhadra and Subhadraka.

14-18. Jaya and Vijaya are in the west, and Dhātṛ and Vidhātṛ are at the northern (gate). The other doorkeepers are: Kumuda, Kumudākṣa. Puṇḍarika and Vāmana. (So also) Śaṅkukarṇa, Sarvanetra, Sumukha, Supraṭiṣṭhita. These are said to be the regents of the quarters in this city, O you of an auspicious face. It is covered with crores of rows of houses resembling fire (brightness). It is endowed with eternal divine women and men, who have mounted (i.e. stepped into) youth. In the centre of the city there is the charming harem of the god. It is possessed of jewelled ramparts, and adorned with jewelled arched doorways. It has many splendid rooms, principal mansions, and palaces. On all sides it is adorned with bevvies of divine celestial nymphs and ladies.

19-24. In the centre is an open hall with a high royal place. It is furnished with a thousand pillars (decked) with rubies, is full of gems and is beautiful. It is full of divine pearls and is adorned with chanting of Sāmans. At its centre is a charming, beautiful throne full of all Vedas. It is always surrounded by deities like Dharma (i.e. Righteousness), full of the Vedas, and by Piety, Knowledge, Great Affluence and Detachment having shining bodies. It is also surrounded by Ṛg, Yajus, Sāman and Atharvan (Vedas) in (due) order, and in a bodily form. Śakti (i.e. power), Ādhāraśakti (i.e. supporting power), Cicchakti (i.e. power of mind) always auspicious, so also the powers of the deities like Dharma are called Śakti. In the centre of it live the rays of Fire, the Sun, and the Moon. So also (there live) Kūrma, the king of serpents, Vainateya (i.e. Garuḍa) and the lord of the triad (of the Vedas). All the Vedas and the hymns have resorted to the condition of a seat?

25. The divine seat, full of all syllables is known as the seat

of practice in abstract meditation. At its centre is an eight-petaled lotus, bright like the rising sun.

26-39a. In it in a bright pericarp the Supreme Being, the lord of gods, is seated with the goddess, O you of a beautiful appearance. He is dark like the petal of a blue lotus. He has the light like that of a crore of suns. He is a young boy, is glossy (or affectionate) and is covered with (i.e. has) delicate limbs. He resembles a full-blown red lotus. He has delicate, lotus-like feet. His eyes are like the full-blown lotuses; is marked with a couple of fine, creeper-like (arched) eye-brows. His nose is good; he is endowed with good cheeks; he has good ears and a lotus-like face. He has teeth resembling pearls. His coral-like lips have a smile on them. He resembles the full moon; his lotus-like face has a charming smile on it. He shines with ear-rings resembling the colour of the young sun. He is adorned with very glossy, dark and curly hair. His hair is tied into a braid having (the flowers of) mandāra and pārijātaka. He is adorned with the Kaustubha (jewel) resembling the rising, morning sun. He shines with a conch-like neck to which garlands and golden wreaths are attached. He shines with very high, large shoulders resembling those of a lion. He is adorned with four plump, round and long arms. He is adorned with rings, bracelets and armlets. His large chest is adorned with good ornaments like the Kaustubha, resembling crores of young suns. He is adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He has a lovely navel which is the place of origin of the Creator. He is endowed with (i.e. has put on) a soft yellow garment resembling the morning sunshine. His feet are beautiful due to various gems. He shines with two bracelets. He has a row of nails resembling the moon with the moonlight. Acyuta is the treasure of the handsomeness and beauty of a crore of Cupids. He (i.e. his body) is smeared with divine sandal. He is adorned with a divine garland. He shines with his raised arms that have held the conch and the disc. So also (he shines) with the other two hands granting boons.

39b-46. On his left thigh is seated goddess Mahālakṣmī, the great deity. She has a golden complexion and is deer-eyed. She has (put on) a wreath of gold and silver. She is endowed with all (auspicious) marks; and her body has (just) the commencement

of youth (i.e. the body is youthful). She has (put on) jewelled ear-rings. Her hair is dark and curly. Her body is smeared with divine sandal, and she shines with divine flowers. Her fine hair is decked with flowers of mandāra, ketakī and jasmine; her eyebrows are good; her nose is fine; her buttocks are good (i.e. plump); her breasts are plump and raised. She resembles the full moon. Her lotus-like face has a charming smile on it. She is adorned with ear-rings resembling the colour of the young sun. Her complexion resembles gold purified with fire. Her ornaments are made of gold purified by fire. She is endowed with four hands. She is adorned with a golden lotus. She is abounding in various beautiful gems. She is also adorned with necklaces, armlets, bracelets and rings. She shines with a couple of big lotuses held in both her hands. Her hands are graced with golden ornaments called citrons.

47-50. In this way the lord, the great god, always shines in the highest heaven with Mahālakṣmī never leaving him. On his two sides are seated the auspicious Dharaṇī and Nīlā on an auspicious seat. And on the tips of the petals in the eight directions are seated the Śaktis (i.e. the powers embodied) like Vimalā. Vimalā, Utkarṣiṇī, Jñānā, Kriyā, Yogā, so also Prahvī, Satyā and Īśānā, are the (eight) powers of the highest soul. Endowed with all (auspicious) marks, they, holding divine chowries, having moon-like lustre, delight their lord, Acyuta.

51-54. (There are also) bebies of celestial nymphs, and five hundred women. They live in the harem and are adorned with all ornaments. All they have lotuses in their hands, and have lustre like that of crores of fires. They are endowed with all (auspicious) marks, and have faces resembling the moon. The king, the Highest Being, surrounded by them shines. He is also surrounded by Ananta, Garuḍa, and other principal gods like Kārtikeya. He is also surrounded by other servants, eternally liberated. The highest Being, fond of enjoyments and affluence, delights with Ramā.

55-57. O auspicious Girijā, in this way the lord of Vaikuṇṭha shines in the highest place. I shall explain to you his vyūhas (manifestations) and worlds. In the east of the Vaikuṇṭhaloka is the abode of Viṣṇu. In the southeast is Lakṣmī's abode. In the

south is Saṁkarṣaṇa's abode. In the southwest is (the abode) of Sarasvatī. In the west is the abode of Pradyumna. In the northwest is the place of Rati. The land of Aniruddha is in the north.

58. In the northeast is the Śānti-loka. This is the first covering. Then there are twentyfour worlds in a sequence beginning with Keśava.

59-65. The second covering of Vaikuṇṭha is called Śubha. The third auspicious covering consists of the worlds of Matsya, Kūrma, etc. The fourth auspicious covering has the worlds Satya, Acyuta, Ananta, Durgā, Viṣvaksena, Gajānana, Śaṁkha, Padma, Nidhi. In the great directions are the worlds of Ṛg, Yajus, Sāman and Atharvan. So also of Sāvitrī, Garuḍa, Dharma and Sacrifice. The fifth covering is said to be inexhaustible and full of all Speech. So also (there are) the conch, the disc, the mace, the lotus, the sword, the bow, the plough also, and the pestle. The worlds are (thus) equipped with all weapons and missiles. The sixth indestructible covering is said to be consisting of hymns and missiles. Then (there are those) of Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirṛti, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Soma, Īśāna. The seventh is said to be (occupied) by the sages. The Sādhyas, the hosts of Maruts, the Viśvedevas, all are eternal (residents) in the highest abode. So also are other gods.

66-71a. In the material world they are the transient gods. The holy text says: 'The great ones sought out the heaven.' Thus the highest place shines with those liberated, eternal ones fond of enjoyment. The powerful lord shines with the divine queens. The sun does not illumine it; nor does the moon, nor does the fire. Having reached it, the ascetics of acute vows do not return (to the earth). Those who are devoted to the formula consisting of two (divine names) only go to that immutable (place). (It is) not (reached) by means of Vedas, sacrifices, study, gifts, auspicious vows, austerities accompanied by fasts, and other expedients. That eternal, ancient place is to be reached by means of the formula of a couple of names only, so also by means of concentrated devotion or submission.

Pārvati said:

71b-73. O lord, you have well explained the nature of heaven. How did he dwell in the highest heaven, in the whole territory? For what purpose did he dwell (there)? What is the pur-

pose of (his) sport? How did the lord, the highest god, living in the world consisting of pure sattva live with his vibhūti mixed with rajas and tamas?

Rudra said:

74-75. In his Tripād-vibhūti the glorious highest lord, living with the goddess, and always having his sole enjoyment, is delighted. That great illusion, Prakṛti, the resort of the world, having joined the palms of her hands, extolled the highest god.

Mahāmāyā (the Great Illusion) said:

76-90. Salutation to you, the dwelling-place of the three worlds. Salutation to you of the form of the universe. Salutation to you, the ancient one. Salutation to you, the cause of the origin of the world. Salutation to (you) the lord of Śrī, Bhū, Līlā; to Nārāyaṇa. Salutation to you the glorious one; to Viṣṇu, having the Śārṅga (bow). Salutation to you of the form of all gods, to Viṣṇu, to the triumphant one; to you of a thousand forms, and to you Ananta. Repeated salutations to Acyuta, the one having no modification, and of a pure, good form, and having a form that has no beginning, middle or end. Salutation to you, Hiraṇyagarbha, Yajña (i.e. Sacrifice), to the highest soul, to the soul of all beings, and to the refuge of all beings. Salutation to Brahman, to Light, to you of the form of the universe, to you of pure feet, to the supreme soul, the highest (being). Salutation to you, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Rudra, the prop of all beings, to Hayagrīva, to the blazing Kāla (i.e. Death), to Viṣṇu. Salutation to you, O man (i.e. the chief deity) of sacrifice, of the nature of the oblations made to deities and dead ancestors. Salutation to the lord of beings, to the Sun of auspicious] lustre, to Agni, enjoying oblations offered to gods, and to him, the soul (or of the nature) of sacrifice. Salutation to the procreator, to the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction. Salutation to him who is to be known by the Upaniṣads, and of the nature of four souls. Salutation to you, Brahmā, Viṣṇu. Salutation to Śaṅkara (literally, doing good) also. Salutation to you having the three qualities and the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction. Salutation to you the qualityless one, living in the hearts of all. Salutation to that Viṣṇu, the unmanifest, watching

the worlds. Salutation to Nārāyaṇa, the lord of Śrī, of the form of six qualities, to him full of unending qualities, and the giver of all objects. Salutation to Vāsudeva having the form of five states. Salutation to you having the five and nine different vyūhas (manifestations). Salutation to Yajña-varāha; repeated salutations to Govinda, to the unchanging one, to the pure one, and to the adversary of what is fit to be abandoned. Salutation to you, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Narasimha. Salutation to you, Keśava, remover of the affliction of the worlds.

91-96. You, Viṣṇu, are the refuge of all the worlds. O lord of the god of gods, be pleased for the good of all worlds. All the sentient beings, having no support and shelter, stay in me. They are bodiless, formless and without all senses. They are without the practices of religious austerities, and always experience misery. O Keśava, please give them worlds and bodies. O omniscient one, create as before the vibhūti (glory) of your sport. O great lord, see, the entire sentient and insentient, mobile and immobile (world) is deluded by me for (your) sport. O Viṣṇu, create with me the material egg. Having put into the mundane existence, piety and impiety, pleasure, pain, and resorting to me, please indulge in sport. Do not tarry.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

97-101. The highest lord, thus addressed by the deity Māyā, entered her, and started creating the world. He who is called Prakṛti-Puruṣa (Matter and Lord), here is Acyuta. He alone is lord Viṣṇu. He entered the Prakṛti. In the Prakṛti he created Brahmā and (other) beings, resorting to Mahat (i.e. intellect). From this Mahat, Ahaṁkāra (Ego) sprang up. From that Ahaṁkāra, the triad of the constituents (guṇas) came up. From the three constituents the creator of the universe produced the subtle elements. At that moment only the gross elements sprang up from the subtle elements. From Brahman, of the nature of the three constituents, Omkāra (i.e. the syllable Om) first came up.

102-107. Vāyu (i.e. air) sprang from Ākāśa (i.e. ether); from Vāyu, Agni (i.e. fire) came up. From Agni, water sprang up; and from water the earth is said to have sprung up. The elements—ether and others—were created one after another. Their qualities—sound, touch, colour, taste and odour (were

produced). The great lord, having created and taken the guṇas one after another, and having mixed them up, created the very great egg of the world and those that merged there, which are fourteen in number. In it Viṣṇu created gods like Brahmā, divinities, lower animals, human beings and four kinds of immobile (objects). Then in him having lotus-like eyes he created the great creation. There, the former (souls) remaining in Prakṛti, are born from him in the stocks of gods etc. in accordance with their former deeds.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

A Description of Viṣṇu's Vyūhas

Pārvati said:

1. Tell me in detail about the excellent creation of gods. How were the ancient ones like Brahmā, the best in heaven, were born? Tell me also in detail about the incarnations of the lord.

Rudra said:

2-7. Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth were created in due succession. Brahmā created the unfathomable ocean of water among them. In this which had become an ocean, Viṣṇu, taking all the beings, slept the sleep at the end of a yuga, on a leaf of a fig-tree in the water that was his Māyā. Desiring to create the world, he had the sleep at the end of a yuga. Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) enjoyed for a long time with that Māyā. On her he generated the excellent Time. So also the divisions of Time like Kalā, Kāṣṭhā, and of the form of a fortnight, a month etc. At that time the lotus in the form of Viṣṇu's navel, which was of the shape of a bud, began to expand. The very bright one was the origin of the world. There the very intelligent Brahmā sprang up. He, desiring to create the world, and impelled by the quality of rajas, praised the highest god having his sleep at the end of the yuga.

Brahmā said:

8-15. Salutation to you, Viṣṇu, the cause of creation, maintenance, and destruction, to you adorned with the ornament of the world, to you the affluent one and of the form of the universe. Salutation to god Brahmanya (i.e. the creator), beneficial to cows and brāhmaṇas and beneficial to the world; repeated salutations to Kṛṣṇa, to Govinda. Salutation to (you) of the form of Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti) and Time, to the Highest Being, the god. Salutation to (you) of the form of the visible world and not having the form of it. Repeated salutations to Nārāyaṇa, Viśva, the lord of the universe, to the lord of Śrī, Bhū, Nīlā, to Brahman, the highest soul. Salutation to Vāsudeva, of the form of the universe and having the Śārṅga bow, to the lord of the triad (of the Vedas), to Hari, of the form of the lord of the universe. Salutation to you, perfect with endless auspicious qualities. When you, full of the world, sleep, the entire world sleeps. O lord of the world, in the visible world, everything mobile and immobile is covered (by you). You alone are the cause, the agent, and the effect due to the three constituents (viz. sattva, rajas, tamas). You alone are the creator, the one who meditates, and the maker. You remaining in the pure sattva (quality) keep awake. Whence can you have sleep? O god, worlds, the ancient ones, have abided in you.

Śiva said:

16-19. Thus addressed by Brahmā, the highest god Viṣṇu, freed from his sleep at the end of the yuga, got up from that bed. The inconceivable Acyuta, the lord of the worlds, having controlled his sleep at the end of the yuga, commenced creating the world at that moment. Having thought, the Highest Being then created the entire world. Then the lord created in the lotus of his navel all the worlds, the golden egg lying in the water, the seven islands limited by oceans and having land and mountains, with the frying pan (like) egg.

20-24. The lord, Viṣṇu, took his place in the egg. Then with his mind devoted to the supreme spirit, Brahmā meditated upon Viṣṇu. At the end of the meditation a drop of perspiration was produced from his forehead. That drop, of the shape of a bubble, in a moment fell on the earth. O you of an excel-

lent face, I, having three eyes, a trident, and adorned with the crown of the matted hair, was born from that bubble. With modesty I asked the lord of gods: "What shall I do?" Then god Viṣṇu, with delight, thus spoke to me: "O Rudra, you will bring about a fierce-looking destruction of the world, (after) actually being (my) portion, viz. Saṁkarṣaṇa, O you of an excellent face."

25-29. O goddess, from that Nārāyaṇa, I, the fearful one, was born. Having entrusted me with the destruction (of the world), Viṣṇu just again produced from his eyes the moon and the sun, that remove darkness. From his ears he produced Vāyu and directions, and Indra and Agni from his mouth. The lotus-eyed one produced Varuṇa (and) Mitra from his nostrils, and all gods with the Sādhyas and hosts of Maruts from his arms. (He produced) gems and herbs from all the pores of his skin. On (i.e. from) his skin (he produced) mountains, oceans and beasts like cows. Brāhmaṇa was created from his face, and kṣatriya from his arms. Vaiśya sprang up from his thighs and śūdra from his feet.

30-39. Having thus created the entire world, remaining insentient, the lord of the universe remained in it in a universal form. As without the power of that Viṣṇu it did not have winking, therefore, the ancient Viṣṇu alone is the life of the entire world. He alone, the highest soul, being of an unmanifest nature settled down. Brahmā himself proceeds with creation, maintenance and destruction. That ancient Vāsudeva is full of six qualities. From himself having the qualities (of sattva, rajas and tamas) he made his form, the world, into four. The lord of the form of Pradyumna is endowed with all grandeur. He having obtained the position of the inner controller of the lords of creation, time, and people, properly brings about the creation. Then to the high-souled one he gave the Vedas along with the Itihāsaś. Brahmā, the grandsire of the world, the portion of Pradyumna, (thus) born of the portion, brings about the creation and maintenance of the world. Lord Aniruddha, endowed with power and lustre, and having got the position of the inner controller of Manus, kings, time and people looks after the maintenance. Lord Saṁkarṣaṇa, Mahā Viṣṇu, endowed with knowledge and power, after assuming the position of

the inner controller of time, all beings, Rudra and Yama destroys the world.

40-44. Thus the state of the inner-controllershship of self consists in his being the innermost soul. Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Narasimha, Vāmana, Rāma, Paraśurāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki are the ten Vibhavas (incarnations) of Brahman, the highest soul. The group of six qualities is said to exist in Nṛsimha, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The highest state of the god is like one lamp being produced (i.e. lighted) from another lamp. O auspicious Girijā, that is the state of this Viṣṇu. Listen. The highest heaven Vaikuṇṭha, the excellent Viṣṇuloka, his own form Śvetadvīpa, the excellent Milky Ocean are said to be the four-fold Vyūha (manifestation of god) by the great sages.

45-50. The auspicious origin of Vaikuṇṭha is in the covering of water. It is (bright) like a crore of fires. All that is imperishable like Dharma. It is resorted to by fragrant trees like mandāra and fires. It is full of many gems, is divine, and contains crores of aeroplanes. That which is said to be the highest abode has characteristics like those. In that excellent city of Vaikuṇṭha, bright with various jewels there is a charming, excellent abode called Devajayārāma, which has four doors and has golden ramparts and arched doorways. It is guarded by doorkeepers like Caṇḍa and Kumuda and others. It is filled with divine residences full of various jewels. On all sides it is extended up to five thousand billion yojanas. It is filled with crores of mansions as lofty as thousand yojanas.

51-58. It is adorned with divine men and women who have entered youth. The women and men here look splendid with all good marks. They resemble Śrī Viṣṇu in form, and are adorned with all ornaments. They are covered with divine garlands and garments, and are adorned with divine sandal (paste). They, accomplished with eight syllables of the formula (mantra), through devotion for the lord of gods, of sixteen kinds, rejoice (there), O you naturally charming one. Entering his place, they rejoice as liked by their mind. Having gone into it, and remaining with Viṣṇu, they never return. With their souls intact, the auspicious ones in the company of Viṣṇu, the wise ones, always obtain happiness like that of him. (Those) ones of auspicious hearts having here and there entered Viṣṇu's worlds, again ob-

tain heaven, like the beings living in heaven. Like Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Saṁkarṣaṇa and others they are also born in Satyaloka according to their desire. Then by that (path) only they go to that eternal, highest place. The devotees of Viṣṇu do not have the bondage due to acts and birth.

59-66. The wise say that being Viṣṇu's servant is liberation. Being bound by the lord of gods is not described as a bondage. Viṣṇu's servants are free from all bonds and from blemishes. All worlds up to that of Brahmā are characterized by returning (i.e. one has to come back to the earth after residing there for some time). They are marked by karmabandha (bondage due to acts), have friends like (i.e. are accompanied by) misery, cause, fear, result in great exertion, and cause the destruction of birth, O goddess. The enjoyment of pleasures by men is (just) like food mixed with poison. The deities, getting angry on seeing men with (the effects of) their (good) deeds exhausted, drop them into the mundane existence, having the bondage due to deeds. Therefore, O goddess, the pleasures in heaven cause trouble in many ways. A meditating sage should avoid it which is transient, fraudulent and mixed with misery. He should always remember Viṣṇu, the medicine destroying the mass of all miseries. Merely by the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) name they obtain the highest position. Therefore, O Gaurī, a wise man should desire (to go to) the heaven of Viṣṇu. With undistracted devotion he should worship the lord, the ocean of pity. There is no doubt that he having all knowledge and virtues does protect him.

67-80. Therefore, having muttered the very pious, auspicious formula of eight syllables, he obtains Viṣṇu's world, giving all desired objects. The glorious Viṣṇu, seated on the jeweled couch (bright) like the rays of a thousand suns, (placed) in a divine hall, shone. The glorious Viṣṇu is seated on a divine lotus-seat, (placed on) a divine golden seat, which is held by Śaktis supporting it, which is full of many jewels, which has many colours; the seat is on the eight-petalled lotus, auspicious like the eight letters of the formula, having the auspicious mystical letter of Lakṣmī, and having the lustre like that of crores of young suns. To his right side is the world's mother, Hiraṇmayī (full of gold). She is holding the divine chowries. She is adorned with divine garlands. With her hands she has held a

pot of jewels, a citron, and a golden lotus. To his right is goddess Pṛthivī (the Earth), bright like the petals of a blue lotus. She is having various ornaments and is adorned with beautiful garments. In her upper hands she has held a couple of beautiful red lotuses. With the other two hands the goddess has held a couple of vessels of corn. Holding divine chowries, the Śāktis like Vimalā who are graced with all (good) marks, are seated on the tips of the petals. Among them is seated glorious Acyuta, Hari. He is adorned with hands having divine ornaments like the conch, the disc, the mace and the lotus, and ornaments like armlets and necklaces. He shines with ear-rings like the sun rising in the morning. The lord, enjoying (himself), served by the eternal gods mentioned before, lives in the eternal city of Vaikuṇṭha in the Satya (world). The rich, eight-syllabled formula takes the wise siddhas and never others to that Viṣṇu's world. O you of an excellent face, I have thus described to you the first Vyūha.

81-86. O you of a good vow, I shall explain to you the second world of Viṣṇu. This world of Viṣṇu is known as eternal and is said to be the best among the worlds. That large, meritorious, pure, auspicious world, full of goodness shines like a thousand mid-day suns (shining) simultaneously. Even at the end of the kalpa that very great world would not merge (into Brahman). It is not possible for me or the gods like Brahmā to see it. On all sides the whole of it is full of the groves of the desire-yielding trees. It is endowed with oblong lakes full of nectar-like water. It is graced with divine lotuses full of gold and jewels. It is covered with crores of divine ornaments resembling lightning. It is graced continually with Sāmans, cooings of cuckoos etc. and with trees and flowers carrying fragrance.

87-90. It is covered by divine women and men aged less than sixteen, rich with the grace of all (good) marks, and almost divine ornaments. Women, with their delighted husbands worship Lakṣmī's lord in charming regions in that land. They always obtain the happiness fit to be obtained through his grace. They sing the great deeds of Kṛṣṇa, giving great joy. Very beautiful, auspicious women, having lotus-like eyes, lotus-like feet, resembling Lakṣmī, having divine garlands and garments sport (there).

91-96. Men, holding conches, discs, maces and lotuses,

adorned with ornaments, having garlands, wearing yellow garments, are there. Due to mutual touch the pleasure of devotion for Viṣṇu and delight of the men and women sporting there, grow day by day. In it is the charming and graced harem of Viṣṇu. It is endowed with sandal, agaru-sandal, camphor, saffron and water. It is all around decorated with many flowers and halls. In it, on a divine, beautiful and soft bed which is covered with a bright cover, which is on the lotus-seat, and which is under the shade of the desire-yielding tree, and which has the covers of flowers, rich in the beauty of divine fragrance, the ancient Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, is seated with goddess Lakṣmī.

97-107. He is like crores of moons. He is adorned with divine ornaments. His face is adorned with a pair of soft nostrils of a fine complexion. He shines with glossy, large and beautiful cheeks. He has dark and curly hair. His eyes resemble petals of a red lotus. He has put flowers of mandāra, ketakī, jasmine and white lotuses on his head. His lips are like glossy bimba-fruits. His lotus-like face has a beautiful smile on it. He shines with rows of teeth that shine like priceless pearls. His body is smeared with haricandana. He is having a mark made with musk. He has lovely elevated shoulders and four long arms. He has beautiful sprout-like hands resembling the japā-flower. He has his broad chest adorned with Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha. He is adorned with very beautiful divine wreaths full of pearls. He is covered with a yellow garment like (the light of) the early morning sun and the moonlight. He is adorned with lotus leaves along with anklets decked with rubies. He is adorned with rows of nails like the moon without a spot. His feet and lotus-like hands are soft like red lotuses and fair. He is adorned with a couple of arms having a conch and a disc. With the other two he has clung Lakṣmī's body to his chest. With her he shines like a cloud to which lightning has clung. His couple of auspicious and soft feet is like gold purified by fire. Here the ancient Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, sports.

108-117a. (Lakṣmī is) like gold purified by fire. She is adorned with all ornaments. She is adorned with very glistening and curved sapphires like the row of the digits of the moon. She is adorned with the divine flowers of mandāra and pārijāta. The ends of her hair are beautified by ear-ornaments, and resemble

bees. With her stout and raised breasts she presses Viṣṇu's chest. She is adorned with ornaments like armlets and necklaces. She, the beautiful wife of the lord of all worlds, is always full of youth (i.e. she is ever young). There she eternally sports with the lord of the worlds. That Vāsudeva only, attracting the minds of all beings, and giving the desired objects to men, plays in this entire world. Around him are the eight powers—the eight bodies of Lakṣmī. (They are) Ramā, Rukmiṇī, Sītā, Padmā, Padmālayā, Śivā, Sulakṣaṇā and Suśīlā; they protect that place (lit. world) with weapons like conches, discs, maces, lotuses and śārṅgas (bows), and with lotus-like arrays formed around. Thus, O you of an auspicious appearance, I have properly and in brief described to you the form of the second (Vyūha). It is not possible to describe it in detail. Those who mutter the twelve-syllabled formula giving pleasure always obtain (this) eternal, auspicious, indestructible (world).

117b-123. The world of Viṣṇu can never be obtained by means of Vedic studies, sacrifices, vows and fasting, except by serving (Viṣṇu). Therefore, a devotee should worship Viṣṇu with an undistracted mind. He obtains the highest divine power, freeing him (self) from the bondage of (i.e. due to) his deeds. O goddess, the second, indestructible Vyūha is said to be like this. O Pārvaṭī, listen. I shall describe to you the third great Vyūha. O you very intelligent one, on the northern shore of the ocean is the Śvetadvīpa. There Viṣṇu stays to allow his view to the meditating sages like the noble Sanaka. Sanaka, Sananda, the third, viz. Sanātana, so also Sanatkumāra, Jātas, Voḍhu, Pañcaśikha—these very bright meditating sages are the sons of Brahmā. They are detached from all enjoyments, are pure, and are always of pure qualities. They enjoy only the flavour of the pleasure due to seeing the lord.

124-133. Viṣṇu dwells there in the vicinity so that Nara, Nārāyaṇa, etc. who reside in the Śvetadvīpa, should (be able to) see him. In the Śvetadvīpa, resembling crores of suns, bright due to being full of various jewels, resorted to by great meditating sages, and free from fear, there are charming parks (having trees) like pārijāta. (The place is) crowded with santāna-creepers, adorned with sandal-trees containing blooming white and blue lotuses, and reservoirs of water. In it is an auspicious,

charming city called Airāvati. It shines with many divine halls full of various jewels. It is occupied by divine women and men, and full of many mansions. In it is a harem crowded with jewelled trees. It is covered with many lofty mansions, resembling the young sun. In it is a pavilion which is divine, which is graced with gems and gold, and made fragrant with the fragrance of sandal, agaru-sandal, camphor and saffron. It is adorned with canopies rich in beauty with various flowers. It is crowded with celestial damsels, and graced with the chanting of Sāmans. At the centre there is a throne bright like the sun or fire. In it there is an eight-petalled lotus like another orb of the moon. In it, in the pericarp, is seated Viṣṇu. He is like pure gold, and is adorned with a necklace of pearl.

134-138. He has four powerful hands holding a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. He is graced with a necklace, armlets, bracelets and rings. He has lovely feet resembling golden lotuses. He is graced with rows of white nails like santānaka (flowers). He is adorned with youth proper for the age and form of (a lad of) sixteen years. He is graced with an upright, fragrant mark (Ūrdhvapuṇḍra) made with saffron, and the parting line of hair. He is well covered with a white garment resembling the foam of nectar that was churned (out of the ocean). He is graced with white ear-rings made of pearls. He, whose body fascinates the world, is seated on the lotus-seat.

139-145. On his left lap is seated the goddess of a divine form. She, Lakṣmī, is worthy of him in character, good qualities etc. She resembles lotus-filaments, is graced with the advent of youth, is endowed with all (good) marks, and has ornaments of gold purified in fire. She has put on a divine garland and garment; her hair is dark and curly. She, shining with four arms, is adorned with armlets. She shines with pearl-necklaces; her hair is graced with mandāra (flowers). Her nostrils are soft; she is graced with rows of bright teeth. She has put on the mark of musk on her forehead. The tip of her nose is graced with pearls. She has stout and raised breasts like golden pitchers. Her body is smeared with divine saffron. She is graced with a divine garland. The goddess holds in her lotus-like hands a vessel containing garments, a citron, a mirror, a golden lotus. Around Viṣṇu there are these Śaktis (powers) of her, resembling her:

146-150. *Īsā, Vāsyā, Mahādevī, Jāhnavī, Kamalālayā, Sāvitrī, Sarvagā, Padmā* are said to be (her) *Śaktis*. *Sraddhā, Medhā, Dhṛti, Prajñā, Dhāraṇā, and Śānti*, (so also) *Śruti, Smṛti, Dhṛti, Medhā, Vṛddhi, Buddhi, Maniṣiṇī*, are said to be *Lakṣmī's* maids, doing all (pieces of) work. The deities like *Ananta* and *Garuḍa* are the usual servants. The eternal deities like the *Sādhya*s, the hosts of *Maruts*, pleased with enjoyments obtained through his (her?) favour, serve him (her?) in the palaces, mansions, groves and cities. The eternal ones avoiding what should be abandoned and what is fruitless, always and continually play there.

151-153. Those who, full of faith, constantly mutter *Viṣṇu's* formula, those who are engaged in the *Dvādaśī-vow*, go to his immutable position. O *Girijā*, the ancient world of *Viṣṇu* cannot be reached by means of *Vedas*, gifts, sacrifices or even by vows. The place of *Viṣṇu* can be reached by men with undistracted devotion. Therefore, one should always worship *Viṣṇu* with undistracted devotion.

154-155. One should narrate (his account), (should utter) just his name, should meditate upon him, should always mutter his formula, should devoutly offer oblations to, and propitiate the omnipresent one giving all desired objects. O you of beautiful buttocks (i.e. beautiful one), I have told you about the third *Vyūha* and nature of the highest soul as described by the ancient ones.

156-168. Hereafter I shall explain (to you) the excellent fourth *Vyūha*. To protect the gods, he, resembling crores of moons, lies on the extensive, auspicious bed of *Ananta*, in the Milky Ocean adorned by *Indra*, and covered by youths like *Indra*. *Padmanābha, Acyuta, Hari* is seated on a divine seat. He resembles a dark cloud. His eyes are large like lotus-leaves. He is graced with a crown resembling a crore of suns. He shines with two divine ear-rings, bright with various jewels. He is covered with a yellow garment resembling the early morning sun or the moonlight. He is graced with the palms of his hands and soles of his feet resembling bright red lotuses. He is graced with necklaces, armlets, bracelets and rings. He is adorned with hands having the conch, disc, mace, *Śārṅga* (bow) and sword. He is graced with the desire-yielding trees rich in good flowers, fruits

and branches. He is graced with the navel-lotus (the place) of the birth and death (i.e. the origin and destruction) of the universe. His body is smeared with yellow sandal. He is adorned with all ornaments. He has tied his very glossy, dark, curly hair into a braid with divine, charming flowers of mandāra, pārijāta etc. He is graced with a soft, high nose and a pair of high shoulders and knees. He is graced with feet having anklets and having gems and corals. He is graced with rows of nails like the spotless moon. His lotus-like face has lips resembling the aśoka-flowers. He is beautified with rows of teeth bright like priceless pearls. He is graced with a smiling face resembling the full moon. He has entered youth. He is glorious. He is bright with tender limbs. He is the refuge of all the people and gives the fruits to all the people.

169-175. The goddess is worthy of him in qualities like beauty, character etc. She resembles gold purified by fire, and has ornaments of gold purified by fire. She is young; has a beautiful form; she is endowed with charm, (good) character and qualities. She has covered herself with a white garment resembling the form of the Milky Ocean. Her hair is decked with the flowers of mandāra, ketakī and jasmine. She has the mark of musk on her forehead. The parting of her hair is graced with a gem. She has the beauty of many complexions. She is adorned with ear-ornaments. She smiles beautifully with her red lips having the light like the coral. She is well graced with glossy hair resembling intoxicated bees. Her waist is slender. Her eyes are large. Her breasts are stout and raised. She has four charming hands. She is adorned with all ornaments. The goddess has held a couple of auspicious golden lotuses in her raised hands. She has remained closely embracing her lord with the other two (hands). With her glances she is constantly looking at the gods.

176-180. O Pārvati, the gods constantly looked at by the goddess are fortunate. These gods, siddhas, cāraṇas, kin-nars, remaining in the hall, and with their eyes full of the tears of joy constantly sing to the goddess. The lord of gods, being praised by the gods like Brahmā, Rudra harassed by the demons, granted fearlessness to the gods. Hari, the lord of all gods, having granted fearlessness to gods, started killing the demons for the protection of the world. O you sinless one, I

have thus explained to you Viṣṇu's fourth Vyūha. O you of an excellent face, what else do you desire to hear? I shall tell it. You are fortunate; you are blessed. You are a devotee of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTY

The Fish Incarnation of Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O venerable one, please tell me duly taking what form the lord of gods, Viṣṇu, killed the demons. O Śiva, tell me in detail the grandeur of the forms (i.e. incarnations) of the Fish, the Tortoise of (i.e. taken by) the Greatest (lord).

Mahādeva said:

3-11. O goddess, listen with an alert mind. I shall tell (you) the grandeur of Viṣṇu and the nature of his incarnations of the Fish, the Tortoise etc. As from one lamp another is produced (i.e. lighted), so would be the forms of the highest lord. The grand incarnations of the god are said to be auspicious and of various forms. There are also images of the highest lord that are worshipped. Brahmā, due to his being the Creator, is the universal lord and a great joy. Bhṛgu, Marīci, Atri, Dakṣa, and Kardama, so also Pulastya, Pulaha, Giriśa and Kratu are said to be the nine lords, in succession, of the created beings. Venerable Marīci generated Kaśyapa. O you of an auspicious appearance, Kaśyapa had four wives: (They were:) Aditi, Diti, Kadru and Vinatā also. Aditi gave birth to gods of shining appearance. Diti (gave birth) to demonic sons who were Tāmasa by nature. Some very great demons were: Śambūka, Hayagrīva, and the very mighty Hiraṇyākṣa; so also Hiraṇyakaśipu, Jambha, Maya and others. Makara, of a very severe penance, and very powerful, went to Brahmā's world.

12-14. The powerful one, having duped Brahmā, seized the Vedas. Having seized the holy texts he entered the great ocean. Then the whole world became a void, and religious practices got

mixed. There were no studies. There was no offering made to deities. The practices of the castes and the stages of human life were ignored. Then god Brahmā, surrounded by hosts of all gods, went to the Milky Ocean, and seeking refuge of god (Viṣṇu), praised him.

Brahmā said:

15-23a. Favour me, O god, O lord, O you seated on the serpent-couch, O lord of all gods, O soul of all gods, O you full of Vedas, O Acyuta. You are the first seed of the world-tree. In the middle (i.e. in its maintenance) you are superior to all. In the end (i.e. at the time of its destruction) you are Śiva. You move according to your will. You alone sustain the ancient world of the form of sentience. You are the unmanifest, the origin of the elements, the Pradhāna (i.e. the Primordial Matter) and the immutable Puruṣa. You, the Highest Lord, are the original, middle and the final form of the world. You, the Highest Being, are the refuge of all worlds. You are the origin of the beings. You are a great being. You are the cause of the group of the elements. You, possessing a soul and resorting to Ahaṁkāra, are divided into three. You are the origin and the end. You are the great Vāyu (air) that moves everywhere. You are, and you are not, the origin. You are fire, the treasure of lustres. You, the great lord, are the water, the life of all worlds. O you highly intelligent one, you are the earth, the support of the moving. You are the supporter of the earth. You are the rivers, the ocean, and you alone are the origin of everything. You are the divine sage; you are all the beings, O Highest Being. People urged by you only indulge in good or bad (acts).

23b-25. The Vedas, assaulted by the demon, have entered the great ocean. This entire world—immovable and movable—has the Vedas as its support. The Vedas alone are the limits on all sides of all (religious) practices. The gods are eternally satisfied with the Vedas. Therefore, O Keśava, please bring (back) the Vedas.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

26-31. Viṣṇu, the highest lord, thus addressed by Brahmā, resorted to the Fish-form and entered the great ocean. Resorting

to the form of a crocodile, he, honoured by the gods, killed that very fearful demon, after tearing him with the tip of his mouth. Having killed him, and taken all the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, the Upāṅgas, he, of a great lustre, gave them to that Brahmā. The Vedas seized by the demon, were mixed up with one another. The intelligent lord, of the form of Vyāsa, made them distinct. By Vyāsa, the noble one, the Vedas were separated. Thus, he, with his Fish incarnation, protected all deities. Oh! at that time Lakṣmī's lord made the world free from affliction by giving (back) the Vedas. He, the venerable Vāsudeva, Hari, full of all gods, being extolled by groups of gods and siddhas, and with his feet worshipped by the meditating sages, vanished.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYONE

Durvāsas Curses Indra

Śrī Rudra said:

1-5. O dear one, I shall duly explain to you that grandeur of the Fish (incarnation) of Viṣṇu, that is saluted by all people. Listen with a concentrated mind. The very lustrous son of Atri, well known as Durvāsas, is wrathful, agitates all the world, and has (practised) severe penance. He, my portion, the brāhmaṇa sage, always causing fear to all, and the treasure of penance went to the Himālayan surface (i.e. region). He, worshipped by kinnara women, lived there for a year. (Then) the sage, desiring to see Indra, went to heaven. At that time he, of a great lustre, saw Śacī's lord, the great god, mounted on an elephant and being honoured by all gods.

6-9. Seeing that, that Durvāsas, having a severe penance (to his credit), with his mind delighted and full of modesty, gave him the garland of pārijāta (flowers). The lord of the deities, received that garland, and placing it on the head of (his) elephant, went to Nandana (garden). The intoxicated elephant, took the garland with his trunk, pressed it and threw it on the ground. Then that

Durvāsas of a great lustre got angry, and with the fire of his anger ablaze, cursed Indra.

Durvāsas said:

10. Since endowed with the entire prosperity of the three worlds, you are slighting me, therefore, the prosperity of the three worlds will surely be destroyed.

Rudra said:

11-18. Indra thus cursed went back to his city. Then Śrī, the mother of the worlds, vanished in a moment. When Lakṣmī vanished, the three worlds vanished. When she, to whose glance the entire world of the immovable and movable resorts, vanished, everything perished. All gods like Brahmā, gandharvas, yakṣas, kinnaras, fiends, demons, serpents, men and goblins, beasts, birds, insects, all immovable and movable objects, all of them were not looked at by Lakṣmī, that mother of the world. All of them were reduced to poverty and experienced misery. Gods, oppressed by hunger and thirst, and being dispirited, cried. Clouds did not shower. All reservoirs of water were dry. All the trees became dry, and were without flowers and fruits. Then gods, along with fiends, demons and goblins, being oppressed by hunger and thirst, went to Brahmā of unlimited vigour, and said to him, the grandsire, the lord of the god of gods and born in a lotus:

The gods said:

19-21a. O venerable one, the three worlds are oppressed by hunger and thirst. No oblations are offered into fire to a deity. The (three worlds) are without all religious practices. All gods, demons and human beings, oppressed by hunger and thirst, have sought the shelter of you, the protector, the lord of all worlds. O lord of gods, please protect the creatures oppressed by hunger and thirst.

Rudra said:

21b-22a. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) them he who respected others and who was the grandsire of all worlds, being very much pleased, spoke to them all:

Brahmā said:

22b-27. Listen, O all gods, demons, gandharvas and men. All this has come to (us) due to Indra's misdeed. This great, fearful fire of universal destruction has come up. O gods, since that very high-minded Durvāsas became angry, all the three worlds perished due to his anger. The silly one, with his mind full of anger, and excited by anger, has said: "Let the three worlds and Lakṣmī, disappear." Due to his curse goddess Lakṣmī, dear to Viṣṇu, the mother and the supporter of the worlds, the great goddess, disappeared. The mother of the worlds, due to being looked at by whose glance the worlds become happy, did not look at (i.e. cared for) the worlds experiencing misery.

28-32. Therefore, all of us will go to Viṣṇu, the excellent one, staying in the Milky Ocean, and will worship the eternal god. When the lord of gods is pleased, this world will be happy.

Deciding like this in his mind, Brahmā, accompanied by hosts of gods, went to the Milky Ocean with sages like Bhṛgu. On the northern coast of the Milky Ocean, the deities like Brahmā, Rudra etc. worshipped Viṣṇu according to rules laid down for worshipping the god. Muttering the eight-syllabled formula, and the Puruṣa-sūkta, and meditating on him with undistracted minds, they offered oblations to the highest god. They praised him with divine hymns and saluted him in various ways.

33-36. Then the venerable one, being pleased and being praised by great sages, stood within the sight of all gods (i.e. appeared before them). Seeing the mighty lord of all worlds, who was full of all gods, who had mounted upon Garuḍa, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace, who had worn a yellow garment, who had four arms, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who had Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha (marks) on his chest, who was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers, who was graced with a crown, a necklace, armlets and anklets, they praised him with shouts of victory and continually saluted him.

37-38. The revered one kindly said to all the deities: "I am a giver of boons. O gods, choose a boon." Thus he spoke (to them). Hearing these words, all gods led by Brahmā and with the palms of their hands joined, said these words to the god:

The gods said:

39-40. O venerable one, now all these three worlds, along with gods, demons and human beings, are afflicted by hunger and thirst. Therefore, O Viṣṇu, we have sought your shelter. Protect all this world. None else would ever be able (to protect it).

Rudra said:

41. Acyuta, the highest lord, thus addressed by all deities, thought and spoke to these gods led by Brahmā, these words :

The lord said:

42-46. Due to the curse of the son of the sage Atri Lakṣmī disappeared. The world will be endowed with grandeur due to her looking at it with (i.e. casting) her glance. Therefore, O gods, all of you led by Śiva and Brahmā, extract the Mandara mountain, and put it into the Milky Ocean. O gods, making the Mandara mountain encircled by the king of serpents, the churning rod, churn with the (help of) the fiends, gandharvas and demons, the Ocean. Then Lakṣmī will appear for the protection of the world. There is no doubt that you, looked at by her, will be very lucky. Concealed (in the Ocean) in the form of a tortoise I myself shall hold the (Mandara) mountain, and entering with my strength into all gods (I shall make them) stronger.

Rudra said:

47-48. O you of lotus-like eyes, when all the deities were thus addressed by Viṣṇu, they, led by Brahmā, spoke to the lord of gods: "Well, well." Being praised by best gods, and saluted by all the worlds, venerable, glorious Acyuta, the prop and the god of all, looking equally everywhere, vanished.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

The Rise of Goddess Lakṣmī

Śaṅkara said:

1-6. Then all the hosts of gods and the very powerful demons extracted the Mandara mountain and put it into the Milky Ocean. Then the powerful lord Viṣṇu, the creator of the beings, and of unlimited valour, supported, in the form of a tortoise, the mountain. The eternal, immutable, omniscient one, whose body has no beginning, middle or end, who is of a universal form, who is the lord of the worlds fit to be worshipped, supported the excellent mountain with one arm only. Then all gods and demons churned the Ocean, after encircling the Mandara mountain with the lord of serpents. Then when the Milky Ocean was being churned by the very powerful deities for generating (i.e. taking out) Lakṣmī, all the great sages fasted, observed restrictions and also muttered Śrisūkta.

7-10. The divine excellent brāhmaṇas recited (the hymn Viṣṇu-) Sahasranāma. All the sages who desired to mutter (the formula of) Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu, fasted on the Ekādaśī day of the bright fortnight when the great ocean was being churned and muttered the excellent Śrī-hymn. The topmost brāhmaṇas, the best sages meditated upon and worshipped (the deity). Then at that time when the great ocean was being churned, at first there came up the very strong Kālakūṭa poison which was very painful, very fierce, and which was like the fire of universal destruction.

11-15. Seeing (it), all gods and demons, being frightened, fled away. O you of beautiful eyes, then seeing the best gods frightened and fleeing away, I said to them: "O you all hosts of gods, do not be afraid of the poison. I shall drink this strong poison, Kālakūṭa." Thus addressed by me, all the gods, led by Indra and bowing, very much praised me with the words 'Well, Well'. On seeing the strong poison, like a cloud, having come up I meditated in my heart upon the eagle-bannered god Viṣṇu, resembling the rising sun and holding a conch, a disc, and a mace.

16-21. Having meditated (i.e. when I meditated) with a concentrated mind upon that lord along with Śrī and Bhūmi, having

earrings of gold purified by fire, remover of all miseries, and on my having muttered the great hymn of the name and form (of Viṣṇu) along with Mahālakṣmī, all that poison, which was very fierce, which was the first one, which was fearful to all, which was (capable of) destroying all the worlds, was digested (by me) due to the three names of Viṣṇu, the omnipresent one. He who, being restrained, would devoutly mutter the three names of Viṣṇu, viz. Acyuta, Ananta, Govinda, beginning with Praṇava (i.e. Om) and (also) ending with Om, has no fear of death, so also the great fear due to poison, disease and fire. The wise, restrained one, who would mutter the great hymn—the three names—does not have fear of Death; then from where else (can he have it)? Thus with (the muttering of) the three names I drank that poison.

22-24a. Then the gods, pleased and very much amazed, praised me. Having saluted me the gods again churned the Milky Ocean. O beautiful lady, when the ocean was being churned by me and the gods, Jyeṣṭhā Devī, covered with gems, wreaths and garments came up. When the goddess came up, she said: “What should I do?” Then all the hosts of gods repeatedly said to the goddess:

Gods said:

24b-32. We give you the place in the charming interior of the house of those where quarrel takes place. Having inauspicious (qualities), live there. Giving misery and poverty to them who, being liars, always speak harsh words, and who of impure hearts, sleep in the evening, stay in their house. There is no doubt that you will always stay at that place where there will be potsherds, hair, ash, bones, fire of the chaff or charcoal. O you inauspicious one, always live, along with Kali, in that house which is marked by potsherds, bones, ash, hair etc. O great goddess, resort to him who, the stupid one, very much covered with sin, sips water without cleaning his feet. People cleaning their teeth with chaff, charcoal, potsherd, stone, sand, (a piece of) garment, (or of) hide, will be (i.e. are) mean. O goddess, causing poverty, always live in the house of those who eat sesamum, flesh of animals struck with a poisoned weapon, kaliṅga, pot-herb, garlic, mushrooms, viḍ-varāha, bilva, kośātaki-fruit, bottle-gourd, and onions.

Rudra said:

33-45. Having thus ordered Jyeṣṭhā, dear to Kali, all the gods, well-composed, again churned the Milky Ocean. O you of an auspicious face, then goddess Vāruṇī came up. Ananta, the lord of serpents, took her of beautiful eyes. Then Surā (spirituous liquor), adorned with all ornaments, came up. She graced with all (auspicious) marks became the wife of Garuḍa. Then bebies of celestial nymphs and divine and very strong gandharvas endowed with handsomeness and engaged in sweet singing, came up. Then Airāvata came up. Then the horse Uccaiṣravas came up. Then came up Dhanvantari, Pārijāta and Surabhi giving all desired objects. Indra with a pleased mind accepted all these. Then in the morning when the sun rose on the Dvādaśī day, and when the Ocean was again churned by gods led by Indra, Śrī, Mahālakṣmī, the auspicious goddess of all the worlds, being praised by great sages with pleasing faces, came up. She resembled a crore of young suns, and was adorned with golden armlets. She was seated on a golden lotus and was graced with all (auspicious) marks. Her eyes were large like lotus-petals. Her hair was dark and curly. Her body was smeared with divine sandal. She was adorned with divine flowers. She had (put on) all divine ornaments decked with various jewels. Her waist was slender. She was the mother of the world. Her breasts were stout and raised. She had four hands. Her eyes were large. Her face was like the full moon. She held with her lotus-like hands adorned with all ornaments, a pot of jewels, citron, and an auspicious couple of golden lotuses. On her bosom she wore a garland of unfaded lotuses. They saw that great goddess, desiring the good of all worlds.

46-54. Seeing her, the controller of all beings, the mother having a lotus-garland, Nārāyaṇī, world's mother, having a place in the heart of Viṣṇu, all the deities were pleased. In heaven groups of gods beat drums strongly. The sylvan deities continuously showered flowers. The chief gandharvas sang and bebies of celestial damsels danced. So also auspicious breezes blew. The sun was very bright. The fires burnt noiselessly; the ten directions were bright. Then from the Milky Ocean the Moon came up. He, Soma (i.e. the Moon), the brother of the mother (Lakṣmī), was pleasant. The Moon, the lord of the stars, became the maternal

uncle of the world. Then Tulasī, Viṣṇu's wife, purifying the world, and the mother of the world came up for the worship of Viṣṇu. Then all the gods, with their minds pleased and all desires fulfilled, put (back) the (Mandara) mountain as before (in its own place), and led by Śiva and Brahmā, approached the mother (i.e. Lakṣmī). Having praised her with the (hymn Viṣṇu-) sahasra-nāma, they recited the text of the Śrīsūkta. Then, O goddess, she, being pleased, said to all gods:

Śrī said:

55a. O best gods, ask for a boon. Well-being to you. I am a giver of boons.

Rudra said:

55b. With their figures bent and palms of their hands joined, the gods said to Lakṣmī:

The gods said:

56-59a. O Kamalā, O goddess, O you dear to all gods, be pleased. Always rest on Viṣṇu's chest. Never go away (from there). O goddess, always look after the three worlds. O highest goddess, you, to whose glances the entire immovable and movable world resorts, are eternal. Gods, looked at (with favour) by you, are powerful. You are the mother of gods like Rudra. (Their) splendour is due to your glance. We desire this, O goddess. Salutation to you, O mother of the world.

Rudra said:

59b-62a. Thus addressed by all deities, the great goddess, the mother of the world, the one dear to Viṣṇu, said to the gods: "Let it be so." Then Viṣṇu, lord of Śrī, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, manifested himself as before in the Milky Ocean. Then the gods, having saluted Viṣṇu, praised him. All the auspicious (gods) with their faces delighted and with the palms of their hands joined said:

The gods said:

62b-63a. O lord of all, accept the goddess Lakṣmī, never leaving you, as your dear queen for the protection of the world.

Rudra said:

63b-70. Having said like this, all gods led by Brahmā and along with the sages, and with their eyes full of tears of joy, placed the goddess and the god, adorned with divine garments, divine wreath and various jewels, on a divine seat, full of various jewels and resembling the young sun, and worshipped Viṣṇu seated with Lakṣmī. They also worshipped the goddess with sandal, incense, lights, and offerings of eatables full of nectar, and with extraordinary fruits. Goddess Tulasī, delicate and auspicious, came up from the nectar. With that they properly worshipped Lakṣmī's couple of feet. Gods overcome with tears full of joy, having gone round him, keeping him to their right, three times, and having saluted him, praised him with eulogies. Then venerable Viṣṇu was pleased. With Lakṣmī, the lord gave them boons desired (by them). Then gods, men and others were very much delighted. They were purified by Lakṣmī's glances. They had profuse grains and wealth. Being extremely healthy, they obtained great happiness.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

Ekādaśī as a Day of Fast

Śiva said:

1. Then for the good of all the world the lord along with the goddess, delighted in heart, spoke to the gods and great sages:

The lord said:

2-8a. O all sages and deities having great power, listen. Ekādaśī is very meritorious and destroys all calamities. You have observed it as a day of fast in order to see Lakṣmī. Dvādaśī, dear to me, is always more meritorious than that. Since today all those men who observe a fast on the previous (i.e. Ekādaśī) day, and who, when the sun has risen on the Dvādaśī (day), worship with great faith and devotion me along with Lakṣmī and Tulasī,

are freed from bondage and reach my position. Those men who do not worship me, the Highest Being, on Dvādaśī, are sinners, and are deluded by my Māyā. My Māyā, difficult to cross, throws the sinners, the most sinful ones, bound by objects of senses, averse to my worship and going (i.e. fated to go) to hell, into the continuous mundane existence.

Rudra said:

8b-11. Speaking like this, the lord, the highest soul, the ancient one, being praised by the sages, went to Lakṣmī's place. The highest lord, along with goddess Lakṣmī of large eyes, remained near (the gods) on the bed of Śeṣa in a hall resembling the sun in the Milky Ocean for appearing before the gods. Then all the hosts of gods, devoutly worshipping the ancient Tortoise-form (of the lord), praised him with delighted minds. Then lord Viṣṇu, of the form of Tortoise, was pleased.

The lord said:

12a. O best gods, ask for a boon that is in your mind.

Rudra said:

12b-13a. Then all the hosts of gods, with their minds full of joy, and joining the palms of their hands, said to Viṣṇu of the form of Tortoise:

The gods said:

13b-14a. O you very powerful one, O lord of gods, to help Śeṣa and the quarter-elephants, please sustain the earth having seven islands.

Rudra said:

14b-19. Saying, "Let it be so", the lord, the creator of the worlds, with his mind pleased, sustained the earth covered by the seven islands. Then gods with gandharvas, fiends, demons and human beings, permitted by the great sages, went to their respective world. O you of an excellent complexion, since then all gods led by Brahmā, so also siddhas, human beings, meditating saints, best sages, honouring Viṣṇu's order devoutly fasted on the Ekādaśī (day) and duly worshipped Viṣṇu on the Dvādaśī

(day). O you beautiful one, I have told you all about the origin of goddess (Lakṣmī); so also about the splendour of Viṣṇu in his Tortoise-form. What else do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

How to Observe the Vow of Dvādaśī

Pārvatī said:

1-2. O lord, I desire to hear about the rule about Dvādaśī, and about (how) the worship of Viṣṇu should be done on that (day). O great lord, due to your love for me (i.e. since you love me), tell me in detail the power of Ekādaśī that removes all sins of men.

Mahādeva said:

3-8. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you the rule about Dvādaśī. Merely by (one's) remembering it, Viṣṇu would be pleased. Men fasting on Ekādaśī when it has come, are freed from all sins, and reach the highest position of Viṣṇu. By worshipping Viṣṇu on Dvādaśī all the sin (of one) committed knowingly or unknowingly perishes in a moment. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Vājapeya sacrifices do not equal even a sixteenth part of Ekādaśī-fast. The excellent Dvādaśī (vow) gives merit, wealth, desired objects and salvation also. It fulfils all desires of men. O you of beautiful eyes, there is nothing else that saves (one) from sins like Ekādaśī. There is no other vow like that of Ekādaśī.

9-16. He who, ignoring Ekādaśī, would observe some other vow, asks for begging after abandoning great kingdom which is in his hand. O dear one, all the sin that is committed with the eleven (sensory and motor) organs would perish by means of a fast on the Ekādaśī (day). O you of an excellent face, the Purāṇas repeatedly announce: "One should not eat, one should not eat, when the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu has come." O you of an excellent complexion, there are always

certain articles of food prohibited for the castes and stages of life. The more so on the Ekādaśī of the bright half and the dark half (of a month). There is no doubt that the Ekādaśī-fast should be observed. If the anniversary day of the death of one's mother and father is on the day on which Ekādaśī falls, the presents should be given on the Dvādaśī day, but never on the Ekādaśī day. Dead ancestors and gods do not eat censured food. On an Ekādaśī day one should not eat, should never drink liquor, should not hurt a brāhmaṇa. These three (sins) are said to be equal (in gravity). Therefore, on a pure (i.e. unmixed) Ekādaśī (day), one should observe a fast. In the three conditions, with speech, body and deeds, an effort should be made (for observing a fast).

17-24. Ekādaśī mixed with Daśamī should be carefully avoided. (If Daśamī continues) at the time of dawn (on the Ekādaśī day), it (i.e. the Ekādaśī) would be mixed with Daśamī. Leaving it (i.e. that Ekādaśī day) he should, without (further) thought, observe a fast on the pure (i.e. unmixed) Dvādaśī. O goddess, if a part of Ekādaśī continues at the sunrise on the Trayodaśī day, then Dvādaśī remains on that day also. At dawn he should perform all rites. Even if a part of Dvādaśī is there, breaking the fast (on that day) is recommended. In this case one should ignore even a pure Ekādaśī. There is no doubt about it. Even if a part of the Ekādaśī continues on the Dvādaśī, when the sun has risen, one should ignore the entire Ekādaśī (on the previous day) and observe a fast on that (Dvādaśī) day. Having decided the rite like this, one should observe a fast on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. Avoiding four meals, one in the evening of the first day, another in the morning of the last (i.e. the third) day, and two on the middle (i.e. the second) day, one should observe a fast. On the Daśamī day he should eat once (only), avoid (sexual) union with his wife, sleep on the ground, and should remain pure on the next day.

25-32. With his body smeared with (the pulp of) the dhātrī-fruit, he should bathe and offer the sandhyā (prayer). Intent on (observing) a fast, he should worship Viṣṇu at night. A devotee of Viṣṇu should not see, talk with or touch a heretic, one doing a prohibited act, a fallen person or a cāṇḍāla. A brāhmaṇa who is not devoted to Viṣṇu is called a heretic. One who has given up

the tuft of hair on the crown of the head and the sacred thread is said to be one remaining (i.e. persisting) in (doing) prohibited acts. One having (committed) major and minor sins is said to be fallen. One belonging to the lowest caste is said to be *śvapaca*. This proper decision is taken by the Vedas. Having worshipped the lord of gods, one should keep awake. With sandal, flowers, lights, garments, ornaments, auspicious mutterings, hymns, salutations, one should devoutly worship (Viṣṇu) at night. Then in the morning having bathed according to the proper rule with water mixed with Tulasī, and having gratified the dead ancestors and deities, one should worship Viṣṇu, the lord of the world along with Lakṣmī, with tender Tulasī-leaves, and fragrant flowers. Then one hundred and eight times he should wave lights (before Viṣṇu's idol).

33-39. To both of them (i.e. Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī) he should offer a garland made of lotuses. He should also offer them incense, light, articles of food and tām̐būla. One should offer (them) charming food of rice boiled in milk along with sugar, and should offer a tām̐būla with camphor. He should devoutly salute (them) while going round them. One hundred and eight times he should offer oblations into fire with ghee, offering rice boiled in milk with the recital of every ṛc, with (the recital of) the Puruṣa-sūkta and Lakṣmī-sūkta. He should feed the brāhmaṇas, and controlled in speech he himself should also eat. He should pass that great day by the recital of the Purāṇas etc. That night he, observing celibacy, should sleep on the ground. That lord of Kamalā, being thus worshipped on the Dvādaśī day, is pleased in a moment, and the lord certainly gives all desired objects. O goddess, I have thus told you the excellent vow of Dvādaśī. What else do you desire to hear? I shall tell that to you.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

*The Birth of Heretics**Śrī Pārvati said:*

1-2b. O lord, you told me that one should avoid conversation with heretics, and that it is more censurable than (talking to) a cāṇḍāla. (Tell me) of what kind they are said to be, and with what signs they are marked.

Rudra said:

2c-12a. Those who, deluded by ignorance, describe any other deity as being superior to Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, are said to be heretics. Those who use skulls, apply ash, use bones, have non-Vedic marks, have matted hair and bark-garments though they do not belong to the hermit-stage of life are (said to be) heretics. Those brāhmaṇas who are without such marks dear to Viṣṇu as conches, discs, ūrdhvapuṇḍra (upright sectarian marks on the forehead) are said to be heretics. That brāhmaṇa who does not follow the practices laid down in the holy texts and codes of laws should be known as a heretic and is condemned among all people. Those that have no devotion for the lord are said to be heretics. He who is free in all acts (i.e. performs all acts as he likes) and offers oblations into fire and gives gifts directed to deities (other than) Viṣṇu, the enjoyer of the fruit of all sacrifices and the deity of the brāhmaṇas, and who independently does all great acts laid down in the Vedas, should be known as a heretic. He who looks upon god Viṣṇu as equal to other deities like Brahmā, Rudra, would always be (called) a heretic. That brāhmaṇa who, in the three conditions, does not recognise Viṣṇu by means of speech, body and acts, would be a heretic. What is the use of saying much in this regard? Those brāhmaṇas who are not devotees of Viṣṇu, should never be asked (any question), should never be talked to and should never be seen.

Pārvati said:

12b-15a. O lord, O best of gods, I am asking (you) a secret. Through love for me tell it. There is a great doubt. The holy texts have condemned wearing (i.e. using) skulls, (applying) ash and

(wearing) hide. You wear (i.e. use) them. (Then), O god, for what purpose is it condemned? O lord of gods, O you highly intelligent one, through fickleness of (i.e. natural to) women I am asking it. It may be that due to your great power what is told ought not to be done by you. (But) you have not formerly told me in detail what ought not to be done. Therefore, O lord, please pardon me my question.

Vasiṣṭha said:

15b-17a. Thus by the goddess Śiva was asked in a lonely place, free from people. He told her the great secret, viz. whatever he did.

Śiva said:

17b-21a. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you that secret which is very wonderful. O goddess, you should not speak what I have told you among people. O you of a good vow, I shall tell it to you since your body is not separate from mine. In the age of Svāyambhuva (Manu) in olden times there were great demons like Namuci, who were very powerful, very valorous, very strong and great heroes. All of them were devoted to Viṣṇu, were pure, and free from all sins. They followed the practices (laid down) in the triad of the Vedas. All gods, being frustrated, led by Indra, and overcome by fear, approached Viṣṇu and sought his shelter.

Gods said:

21b-22a. O Keśava, you alone can conquer these great demons who cannot be conquered by all gods, and who have washed off their sins with penance.

Mahādeva said:

22b-25. Hearing these frightful words of the gods, Viṣṇu, Puruṣottama, consoled those regents of the quarters, and said to me:

The lord said:

O Rudra, O you of mighty arms, O you best god, for deluding the enemies of gods prepare a course of conduct to be followed by

heretics. Narrate to them the dark Purāṇas (i.e. Purāṇas that will take them astray). O you very intelligent one, also fashion confusing holy texts. There will be brāhmaṇas and great sages who have given themselves away to me.

26-33. Approaching them through devotion for me, tell the vicious ones: Kaṇāda, Gautama, Śakti, Upamanyu, Jaimini, Kapila, Durvāsas, Mṛkaṇḍu, Bṛhaspati, Bhārgava and Jāmadagnya are the ten (?) vicious sages. Desiring to do the good of the world, approach them with your power of suggestion (bhāva-śakti?). By your power increased in viciousness infused into them they will be vicious in a moment. There is no doubt about it. Those brāhmaṇas with greater viciousness caused by you, will narrate the vicious Purāṇas and doctrines in the three worlds. O god, you yourself, wearing the marks like a skull, hide, ash, bones, fully delude the people in the three worlds. So also you, Śiva, prepare the Pāśupata order with its divisions like Kaṅkāla, Śaiva, Pāṣaṇḍa and Mahāśaiva; so also properly prepare the doctrine having no particular marks and outside the Vedic fold. All the mean men will wear ash, bones etc. and will be insensible. The vicious ones will describe you as the highest (god).

34-36a. Taking to their doctrine all the ancient demons will be averse to me in a moment. There is no doubt (about it). O very powerful Rudra, in my incarnations I too shall worship you in every age to delude the vicious ones. Having upheld this doctrine, they will undoubtedly fall.

Mahādeva said:

36b-37. O you beautiful one, having heard what Viṣṇu had said, I, though having a very large mouth (i.e. though a good speaker) became helpless then. Then having saluted the highest god, I said:

38-43. “O god, if I do what you have said on the earth, it will certainly lead to my destruction. O Viṣṇu, it is possible for me to carry out this mission. Your command is not to be disobeyed. This is very painful.” O goddess, when I spoke like this, Viṣṇu, having again cheered me up, said: “Let this not lead to your destruction. Do as I order you for the good of the deities. O best god, I shall also tell you about the means for your livelihood.” Then with compassion he gave me his thousand names

(i.e. the hymn called *Viṣṇusahasranāma*): “Installing me in your heart, mutter my indestructible formula. The very great, six-syllabled formula is said to be Brahman, the emancipating one. Those who worship me with devotion obtain salvation. There is no doubt about this.

44-46. (Salutation to) him dark like the petal of a blue lotus, having eyes like lotus-petals, holding a conch, a disc, and the Śārṅga bow, and adorned with all ornaments. (To him) having put on a yellow garment, having four arms, the dear lord of Jānakī. ‘Salutation to Śrī Rāma’: this excellent formula should be muttered. It removes all sins, and gives salvation even to sinners. Muttering this formula everyday you will be free from blemishes.

47-51a. All that sin produced in you due to having (applied) ash and having bones, has all become auspicious due to the auspicious utterance of my formula. O best god, being gratified I shall destroy all sin. O you of a good vow, devotion to other god than me will not come up. Worship me, the lord, the Supreme Being, mentally in your heart. Obey my order. Due to my love, all this will be auspicious for you.” Having thus ordered me, O goddess, he dismissed the hosts of gods. The gods, dismissed by him went to their own abodes. Then gods, led by Indra, requested me.

Indra and others said:

51b. O god, quickly do that beneficial act as told by Viṣṇu now.

Mahādeva said:

52-56. O auspicious one, for the good of the gods, I took to the way of the heretics, and had skulls, hides, ash and bones. O auspicious one, as told by Viṣṇu, I prepared the vicious Purāṇas and the heretic Śaiva doctrines. O sinless one, having entered through my power, Gautama and other brāhmaṇas I proclaimed the texts outside the Vedic fold. Resorting to this doctrine, all the wicked demons became averse to the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), and were enveloped in viciousness. Applying ash to their bodies, covered with (i.e. having) very severe penance, they worshipped me only with flesh, blood and sandal.

57-64. On receiving from me grants of boons, they were haughty with pride and power. They were very much attached to objects of senses, and were full of lust and anger. They, void of goodness and powerless, were then defeated by the hosts of gods. Fallen from all righteous paths, they will go to a mean position in (due) time. Those who, bereft of righteous paths, move on the earth by resorting to this doctrine of mine, always see (i.e. go to) hell. O goddess, (this) my course, that is censured, is thus (followed by me) (only) for the good of the gods. Following Viṣṇu's order I have (applied) ash and (use) bones. O goddess, this is an external mark intended for deluding the foes. In the heart however, I, always meditating upon god Viṣṇu, just mutter that emancipating formula, telling about Brahman. It is like the (hymn) Sahasranāma of Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa. O auspicious one, constantly muttering the great six-syllabled formula which increased the Raghu-race, we constantly obtain that Brahman which is filled with the nectar of constant joy, which is permanent happiness. O you of an auspicious face, I have told you all this that you had asked. What else do you desire to hear? Ask me that with affection.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

Characterization of Various Texts and Doctrines as Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa

Pārvati said:

1. O sinless one, tell me about the vicious texts which were composed by the brāhmaṇas bereft of devotion to the lord. O lord of gods, tell me their names in a sequence.

Rudra said:

2-4. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you about the vicious texts in a sequence. By merely remembering them even the wise ones would be deluded, First I myself proclaimed the Śaiva, Pāśupata (texts) etc. Hear about the ones which were proclaimed

by the brāhmaṇas into whom my power had entered, after that: Kaṇāda proclaimed the great Vaiśeṣika text.

5-7. Similarly Gautama (proclaimed the doctrine of) Nyāya, and Kapila (proclaimed) Sāṃkhya. Dhiṣaṇa (Bṛhaspati) in the same way (proclaimed) the much censured Cārvāka (doctrine); Viṣṇu of the form of Buddha proclaimed the false Buddhist doctrine and those of the naked and wearing dark blue garments for the destruction of the demons. The doctrine of Māyā (illusion) is a wicked doctrine and said to be pseudo-Buddhist. I myself, of the form of a brāhmaṇa, proclaimed it in Kali (age).

8-12. It shows the meaninglessness of the words of the holy texts and is condemned in the world. In this (doctrine) only the giving up of one's own duties is expounded. And that is said to be religiousness by those who have fallen from all duties. I have propounded the identity of the Highest Lord and the (individual) soul. I stated this Brahman's nature to be qualityless. O goddess, I myself have conceived, for the destruction of the worlds, and for deluding the world in this Kali age, the great doctrine resembling the purport of the Vedas, (but) non-Vedic due to the principle of Māyā (illusion) (present in it). By my order formerly Jaimini propounded the great doctrine of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, stating godlessness and making the Veda meaningless.

13-17. O Girijā, know from me the vicious doctrines. I shall also narrate the names of the vicious Purāṇas* in succession: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, so also Bhāgavata. So also Nāradiya and Mārkaṇḍeya as the seventh. Āgneya is said to be the eighth, and Bhaviṣya to be the ninth. Brahmavaivarta is said to be the tenth, and Liṅga to be eleventh. Vārāha is said to be the twelfth and Vāmana the thirteenth. Kaurma is said to be the fourteenth and Mātsya the fifteenth. Gāruḍa is said to be the sixteenth, and Skānda to be the seventeenth. The eighteenth is Brahmāṇḍa. (These are) the Purāṇas in succession.

18-22a. Know from me that Mātsya, Kaurma, Laiṅga, Śaiva, so also Skānda and Āgneya are tāmasa (vicious). O you of

*The immediately following list is not actually that of the vicious Purāṇas but of the Purāṇas in general. The vicious six Purāṇas follow this list of eighteen Purāṇas. The word 'tāmasa' in this verse is not appropriately used. (Ed.)

an auspicious appearance, the Purāṇas, viz. Vaiṣṇava, Nāradiya, so also the auspicious Bhāgavata, similarly Gāruḍa, Pādma, Vārāha should be known to be sātṭvika (or virtuous). Know from me that Brahmāṇḍa, Brahmavaivarta, Mārkaṇḍeya, Bhaviṣya, Vāmana and Brāhma are rājasa (endowed with the quality of passion). The sātṭvika ones are said to give salvation and are always auspicious. Similarly, O goddess, the tāmasa are said to be the cause of (i.e. lead one to) hell.

22b-27. Similarly Smṛtis endowed with the three qualities are proclaimed by the sages. O you of an auspicious appearance, they are sātṭvika, rājasa and tāmasa. Vāsiṣṭha, Hārīta, Vyāsa, Pārāśara, Bhāradvāja and Kāśyapa are said to sātṭvika, giving (i.e. leading to) salvation and auspicious. Yājñavalkya Ātreya, so also Taittira, Dākṣa and Kātyāyana and Vaiṣṇava are rājasa, giving (i.e. leading to) heaven, and auspicious. Gautama, Bārhaspatya, Sāmivarta, Yama, Sāṃkhya and Auśanasa are said to be tāmasa, and giving (i.e. leading to) hell. What is the use of talking much in the case of the Purāṇas and the Smṛtis also? The tāmasa do lead to hell. A wise one should avoid them. As the occasion has come, I have told you all the auspicious doctrines. Listen. I shall tell you about the nature of the remaining birth (i.e. of the other incarnations) of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

The Boar Incarnation of Viṣṇu

Śrī Rudra said:

1-3. Kāśyapa's two sons, Hiraṇyaka and Hiraṇyākṣa were very powerful. They, the two sons of Diti, were great warriors and the lords of the demons. In Śvetadvīpa they were with Viṣṇu (as his doorkeepers) named Jaya and Vijaya. O goddess, (once) the two very powerful ones prevented the greatest meditating sages who were eager to see Viṣṇu. The two best, very powerful gods, the doorkeepers were cursed by them.

Sanaka and others said:

4a. O servants of the god, leave (this place) and be gone to the earth.

Rudra said:

4b-6a. Having cursed them like this, the best sages remained there. The god (Viṣṇu) having come to know the affair called them (i.e. the sages) and the two (doorkeepers) also, to whom, after they had stood, the lord, the cause of the beings, said:

The lord said:

6b-8a. O you very powerful ones, you have done a great wrong to the noble (sages). O doorkeepers, you cannot pass it over. If you desire to have seven existences, then you will be my sinless devotees. If you want to remain as my enemy, then you will have three existences.

Rudra said:

8b. Thus addressed, the very powerful Jaya and Vijaya said to the highest god:

Jaya and Vijaya said:

9-10a. O you who respect others, we can't go to (and live on) the earth for a long time. Therefore, know that we shall go to (i.e. have) those existences causing enmity (for you). O god, killed by you only, we shall come near you.

Rudra said:

10b-14. Having spoken like this, the two very powerful doorkeepers were born from the womb of Diti, (the wife of) Kaśyapa. Hiranyakaśipu was the elder and Hiranyākṣa the younger. Both of them were well-known in the world. Both were very powerful and haughty due to their might. That Hiranyākṣa of an immeasurable body and very haughty removed, with his thousands of arms, the earth along with mountains, oceans, islands, and all living beings. Having removed it out and put it on his head he entered the lower world. Then all the hosts of gods, afflicted by fear, cried.

15-19. They sought the shelter of Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu. Then

knowing that wonder, he, Viṣṇu, the holder of a conch, a disc, and a mace, took up the Boar-form, existing everywhere and having no beginning, middle or end. The highest lord full of everything, having hands and feet on all sides, having large fangs and arms, struck the demon with one fang. The mean son of Diti, with his huge body pounded, died. Seeing the earth fallen (from the demon's head), he lifted it with his fang, and putting it on Śeṣa's head as before, took up the form of a Tortoise.* Seeing great Viṣṇu of the form of the hog, all deities and sages, with their bodies bowed with devotion, praised him.

The gods said:

20-25. Salutation to Yajñavarāha. Salutation to you of a hundred arms. Salutation to the god of gods. Salutation to you, the omnipresent. Salutation to you of an abiding form, to you of the form of all sacrifices. Salutation to you (of the form of the divisions of time like) kalā, kāṣṭhā and nimeṣa, to you of the form of time. Salutation to you, the soul of beings. Salutation to you having the Ṛgveda as your body. Salutation to you, the soul of the gods. Salutation to you, the Sāmaveda. Salutation to you, Omkāra. Salutation to you of the form of the Yajurveda, so also of the form of the ṛc and full of the four Vedas. Salutation to you of the (four) Vedas, the Vedāṅgas and the Upāṅgas. Salutation to you Govinda, having no beginning or end. Salutation to you knowing the Vedas, and having a peculiar form. Salutation to you the lord of Śrī, Bhū, Līlā and the father of the world.

Rudra said:

26-29. Having thus praised god Viṣṇu, the lord of the soul, and of the form of the boar, they worshipped him with sandal, flowers etc. He, being properly worshipped by the gods, gave them a boon desired (by them). Viṣṇu who (i.e. whose praise) was being joyfully sung by the gandharvas and celestial nymphs, and being praised by the great sages, vanished there only. A devoted man who, having got up in the morning, praises (the

*This is rather confusing. As is well known, Viṣṇu assumed the form of a tortoise in the second incarnation to give support to the mountain Mandara which served as a churning rod for gods who wanted to acquire Amṛta from the Milky Ocean. (Ed.)

lord) with these (hymns), gets a desired (piece of) land, full of corn and fruits for a long time. I have told you this splendour of the Boar (incarnation) of Viṣṇu. In the same way I shall describe (his) Nārasimha (incarnation). Listen, O you of an excellent face.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

The Emergence of Nṛsimha

Rudra said:

1-2. Having learnt that his brother was killed, the great demon Hiraṇyakaśipu practised a penance near Meru (dedicating it) to me. O auspicious one, he, the very powerful one, eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, muttering the five-syllabled formula, worshipped me for thousands of divine years.

3. Then with a pleased mind, I said to the great demon: “O demon, ask for the boon that is in your mind.” Then the demon spoke to me, who was pleased, O you of an auspicious face:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

4-5. Grant me exemption from death from gods, demons, human beings, gandharvas, serpents, fiends, beasts, birds, animals, noble siddhas and yakṣas, vidyādharas, so also kinnaras, so also all diseases, weapons, all principal sages.

Rudra said:

6-14. O you of a pleasing appearance, I said to the demon: “Let it be so.” The very powerful demon, having got the great boon from me, conquered Indra and gods and became the lord of the three worlds; and he himself forcibly took all portions of sacrifices. Gods, vanquished by him, did not find a protector. All gandharvas, gods, demons, yakṣas, nāgas, siddhas and sādhyas were under his control. The very mighty king of the demons married, according to proper rites, Uttānapāda’s daughter named Kalyāṇī. O you auspicious one, from her was born the

very lustrous Prahlāda, the king of the demons. Even while (he was) in (his mother's) womb, he was attached to Viṣṇu. He, of a delighted mind, never knew anyone else except the lord of gods in all conditions and deeds (done) with his mind, speech and body. The humble and very intelligent one stayed in his preceptor's house at a (proper) time. Having studied all the Vedas and various sacred texts, the demon's son sometime came along with his preceptor to his father and saluted him with humility. The lord of the demons, having embraced his son of auspicious marks with his arms, and having put him who was much amazed, on his lap, said these (words to him):

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

15. O Prahlāda, you stayed in your preceptor's house for a long time. O you of a good vow, tell me the knowledge given to you by your preceptor.

Rudra said:

16. Thus asked by his father, Prahlāda, a born devotee of Viṣṇu, affectionately spoke words removing sins to the lord of demons:

Prahlāda said:

17. After having saluted Viṣṇu, the Highest Being, the lord, who is the aim of all Upaniṣads, I shall tell you.

Rudra said:

18-20. The lord of demons, having thus heard Viṣṇu's praise, was amazed. He angrily said to the preceptor: "What have you taught my son? O you wicked one, why did you teach my son such praise of Viṣṇu, a stupid thing not fit to be done by a brāhmaṇa? O mean brāhmaṇa, due to your favour (only) this my son has told me the praise of my enemy, which is not fit to be heard."

21-24. Speaking like this and looking around, the demon-king, in a fit of anger, said to a demon: "Bind this mean brāhmaṇa." Hearing these words of the king, he bound (Śukra,) Bhṛṅgu's son. Seeing his preceptor being bound, Prahlāda, to whom brāhmaṇas were dear, said to his father: "O father, my

perceptor did not teach me this. I have learnt it through the favour of Viṣṇu, the speaker, the seer. The lord is omnipresent. Viṣṇu alone is the imperishable agent, the controller of all human beings. Therefore, O lord, This brāhmaṇa, my preceptor, who is innocent, should be released.”

Rudra said:

25-29. Having heard the words of his son, Hiraṇyakaśipu then let the brāhmaṇa free, and with amazement said to his son: “O son, why do you thus go astray (influenced) by the brāhmaṇa’s words? Who is Viṣṇu? What is his form? Where does this Viṣṇu stay? Since I am the lord in the world, the master of the three worlds, honour me only. Abandon this Viṣṇu, our enemy, difficult to be overpowered. Or worship lord Śaṅkara, god Śiva, Rudra, the father of the worlds, the chief of gods, giving all splendour. After putting on the mark of three lines on your forehead with ash worship Mahādeva worshipped by demons, in the manner as told in the Pāśupata sect.

Rudra said:

30-32. Hearing these words of the lord of the demons, the priest of the demons said: “O glorious one, do like this only as your father tells. Abandon (our) enemy, Kaiṭabha’s enemy, and worship the three-eyed (god, i.e. Śiva). There is no greater god than Śiva, who gives everything to men. Your father also became the lord (of demons) because of his favour only.”

Rudra said:

33. Hearing these words of them, Prahlāda, a born devotee of Viṣṇu, said:

34-42. “O greatest ones, since the world is deluded by the Māyā of the lord, even brāhmaṇas knowing Vedānta and honoured among all the people, being proud, speak like this through fickleness. Nārāyaṇa is the highest Brahman. Nārāyaṇa is the highest truth. Nārāyaṇa is the highest meditator and the highest meditation. He is the refuge of the entire world. Acyuta is the eternal good. Eternal Vāsudeva is the sustainer, the creator of the world. The Highest Being is all this. Everything depends upon

him. His body is all golden. He is eternal. His eyes are like lotuses. He is the lord of Śrī, Bhū and Līlā. He is pleasing, spotless and of an auspicious body. He alone created the two lords, Brahmā and Śiva, the two best gods. Brahmā and Śiva act by honouring (i.e. according to) his order only. The wind blows through his fear. The sun rises through his fear. Through his fear run fire, the moon and death as the fifth. The highest, divine god Nārāyaṇa Viṣṇu was alone there (in the beginning). Brahmā was not there; Indra was not there; Śiva was not there; the sun and the moon were not there. The heaven and the earth were not there; nor were the stars and the gods there. The wise men always see the highest abode of that Viṣṇu.

43-51a. O best brāhmaṇas, having ignored the significance of all Upaniṣads, why do you talk like this through attachment or greed before me? Abandoning that Viṣṇu, the god protecting all, and the god of all, how can I, resorting to heresy, worship Śiva? The noble meditating sages like Sanaka meditated upon Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Lakṣmī, the god of gods, Ananta, the Highest Being, dark like the petals of a blue lotus, having large eyes like lotus-leaves, with his chest marked with Śrīvatsa, adorned with all ornaments, always a youth, the lord of all, eternal joy, and giver of pleasures, whom the hosts of gods like Brahmā, Śiva, Indra and others worship, with half a glance of whose wife, gods like Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Varuṇa, Yama, Soma and (Kubera) the lord of wealth, are looked at. Merely by recollecting his name, even sinful living beings quickly obtain salvation, very difficult to be secured (even) by Brahmā and others. That lord of Śrī alone is always the protector of even the gods. I shall worship only that Viṣṇu united with Lakṣmī. With great ease only I shall reach that highest place of Viṣṇu.”

Rudra said:

51b. Hearing these words of him, Hiraṇyakaśipu, full of anger, burnt like another fire. Looking at the demons around him, he, in a fit of anger, spoke like this:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

52-54. By my order kill sinful Prahlāda highly devoted to

worshipping my enemy, with multitudes of fierce weapons. His protector Viṣṇu alone will protect him through love. Today only I would see (if) his being protected by Viṣṇu is effective.

Rudra said:

55-59. Then by the order of the lord of demons, the demons, with weapons raised, stood round the son of the lord of demons to kill him. Prahlāda too, meditating upon Viṣṇu in the lotus of his heart, and muttering the eight-syllabled formula, stood like another mountain. On all sides the heroes struck him with lances, iron clubs and śaktis. O you auspicious one, due to Viṣṇu's inviolable power, Prahlāda's body very much became adamant due to remembering Viṣṇu. Then the great missiles of the enemies of gods, having reached his body, and being cut off, fell down on the ground like blue lotuses, O auspicious one. The demons were not able to pierce (i.e. hurt) his body even slightly.

60-67. The soldiers, being amazed and with their faces hung down, stood near the king. Seeing his very powerful son of that kind, the demon-king being very much amazed and full of anger, wrathfully ordered all the very poisonous, fearful snakes like Vāsuki: "Eat him (up)." Then the very powerful, very fierce snakes, with their mouths blazing, ate (i.e. started eating) the very powerful (Prahāda). They, full of poison, bit the devotee of (Viṣṇu) the Garuḍa-bannered one. The (snakes) that subsisted on air became poisonless and had their teeth cut off. With their limbs cut off by a thousand sons of Vinatā, and very much afflicted and vomiting profuse blood, they ran into all directions. Seeing the great snakes (reduced to a condition) like that, the angry lord of the demons then ordered the very much intoxicated quarter-elephants. The quarter-elephants, haughty with rut, ordered by that king, surrounded him, and struck him hard with their very large tusks. Then the tusks of the quarter-elephants, with their roots cut off, fell on the ground.

68-73. The elephants, rendered tuskless, and overcome by fear, fled. Seeing the great elephants (fleeing) the mighty lord of demons got angry. And burning a great fire, he threw it at his son. Fire, seeing Prahlāda, dear to Viṣṇu, did not burn the wise one. Fire became very cool. Seeing the boy not being burnt, the king, who was very much amazed, gave him, good to all beings,

terrible poison. Due to the power of that Viṣṇu, the poison become nectar. Poison, due to one's offering (oneself) to that god, becomes nectar. Having thus deluded his son by means of such fierce and very terrible means, and seeing that he could not be killed, the king of demons, being full of amazement spoke mildly to his son :

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

74-78. You have properly described before me Viṣṇu's greatness. He is called Viṣṇu because (he stands) pervading all worlds. He who is the omnipresent god is alone the highest god. Actually show me his omnipresence. Having carefully and properly seen the splendour of qualities like supremacy, power, lustre, knowledge, heroism, strength, excellent form of him the highest one, I shall honour Viṣṇu from among the gods. There is no match for my power among the gods. O you who honour (others), as a result of grant of a boon from Śiva I have obtained immunity from death among all living beings and invincibility for living beings. Viṣṇu would receive the title of lord after having vanquished me with power and might.

Rudra said:

79. Hearing these words of him, Prahlāda, being amazed, spoke. He, of a good vow, told about the glory of Viṣṇu to the demon.

Prahlāda said:

80-84. Since that Nārāyaṇa, the glorious one, the highest soul, the ancient one lives in all beings, he is called Vāsudeva. He, the sustainer of the world, is called Viṣṇu. Nothing other than him is the immobile and the mobile. The sentient objects everywhere are Viṣṇu only and none else. The heaven he has pervaded himself with three steps and the pervasion with one step is wonderful(?). That Viṣṇu, having a disc and a mace in his hands, and wearing a yellow garment, is seen by meditating sages through devotion and never without it. Viṣṇu cannot be seen through anger or jealousy. Having pervaded (everything) among gods, lower animals, immobile objects, living beings and among all small and great (objects), he dwells.

Rudra said:

85-87. Hearing these words of Prahāda, that excellent demon, with his eyes red due to anger, reproaching his son repeatedly, said to him:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

If that Viṣṇu is omnipresent and the Highest Being, then actually show him to me. What is the use of much nonsensical talk?

Mahādeva said:

Speaking like this, Hiraṇyakaśipu struck a pillar of the palace with his hand, and said these (words) to Prahāda:

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

88. If Viṣṇu would be (i.e. is) omnipresent, then show him (to me) in this (pillar). Otherwise I shall kill you, uttering false words.

Rudra said:

89-93. Speaking like this, the lord of the demons, suddenly drew out his sword, and angrily threw it at Prahāda's chest to kill him. At that moment, a great sound was heard from the pillar. The interior of the sky was as it were broken with sounds of the destructive fire. Due to that big sound, striking the ears of the demons, all fell on the ground like trees with their roots cut off. The frightened demons thought that the three worlds were inundated. Then great Viṣṇu, of a great lustre, came out of the pillar. He made a very fearful sound, resembling (the one) at the time of the destruction of the world. Due to that great sound stars fell on the ground.

94-97. Having assumed the body of Nṛsiṃha, Viṣṇu manifested (himself) there only. He was covered with the lustre of crores of suns and fires. In his face he resembled a lion, and in (the other parts of) the body he had a human figure. His mouth was fierce due to fangs, and was raised up to the sky with his throbbing tongue. The ends of his hair were surrounded by flames. The lord had eyes like burning firebrands. Covered by a thousand long arms, full of all weapons, he appeared like (moun-

tain) Meru, with many trees having branches. He had worn a garland of divine flowers, and was decorated with divine ornaments.

98-107. To destroy all demons he remained in the form of a man-lion. Seeing very powerful, terrible-looking man-lion, the lord of demons, with his eyelashes burnt and body afflicted, fell (down). Then Prahlāda, seeing Viṣṇu like a man-lion, saluted Viṣṇu with the words 'Victory (to you).' On the limbs of that high-souled man-lion he saw worlds, seas, islands, gods, gandharvas, human beings; a thousand cosmic eggs were seen on the tip of his mane. Similarly in his eyes were seen the moon, the sun etc. In his eyes (were seen) gods Aśvinas, directions and intermediate directions. On his forehead (were seen) Brahmā and Rudra; in his nose (were seen) the sky and air. In his mouth Indra and Agni (were seen). On his tongue Sarasvatī (was seen). On his fangs (were seen) lions, tigers, śarabhas (i.e. the fabulous eight-legged animals), and great serpents. On his throat was seen Meru, and great mountains (were seen) on his shoulders. On the arms of the noble one (were seen) gods, lower animals and human beings. The atmosphere (was seen) in his navel, and the earth (was seen) on his feet. On his hair all herbs (were seen). On the rows of his nails trees (were seen). In his breaths, Vedas with Aṅgas and Upāṅgas (were seen). On all his limbs (were seen) Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, hosts of Maruts, gandharvas and celestial nymphs.

108-114. Thus were seen the splendours of the highest soul. The son of the lord of demons, seeing Viṣṇu having Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha (worn) on his chest, adorned with a garland of woodflowers, endowed with weapons like a conch, a disc, a mace, a sword, the Śārṅga (bow), the goal of all Upaniṣads, had his body sprinkled with tears of joy and repeatedly saluted him. The lord of demons, who was under the influence of (i.e. in the clutches of) death, seeing Viṣṇu, and raising his sword, ran to Nṛsimha to fight with him. Then all the very powerful demons who had regained consciousness, took their own weapons, and hurriedly struck Viṣṇu. The weapons were reduced to ash on (reaching) the body of Viṣṇu, as straws thrown into fire (are burnt) in various ways. At that time Viṣṇu, seeing the armies of the demons, burnt them with his bright mane which was arranged with lines of

flames. The demons were very much burnt by the fire coming out of Nṛsimha's mane.

115-123. All the attendants (were thus burnt). The army had none left in it. Seeing that army, except Prahlāda with his followers, reduced to ash, the lord of demons angrily drew out his sword and moved (towards Viṣṇu). The lord of gods seized the lord of demons with a sword in his hand with one arm, and dropped him down, as a stormy wind (knocks down) a branch. Nṛsimha, taking the huge-bodied (demon), fallen on the ground, placed him on his lap. He saw Viṣṇu's face. At that time the sin due to censuring Viṣṇu, and due to the blemish of not being a devotee of Viṣṇu, was reduced to ash merely by Viṣṇu's touch. Then Nṛsimha tore off the huge body of the lord of demons with his sharp, hard nails resembling the thunderbolt. The lord of demons, with his soul purified, and with his heart torn off with the nails, actually saw the face of Viṣṇu, and being (thus) fortunate, gave up his life. Great Viṣṇu, having cut off his body into a hundred pieces, and drawn out his long entrails, put the dear ones round his neck (put them affectionately round his neck). Then all hosts of gods, sages having penance as their treasure, led by Brahmā and Rudra, slowly came there to praise (him). They were afraid to propitiate the blazing (Viṣṇu) having faces on all sides.

124-126. (Then) they brought before their mind the goddess, the mother, the supporter of the worlds, of a golden complexion, extremely beautiful (hariṇī)¹, and destroying all troubles. Having brought before their mind the auspicious Lakṣmī (wife) of Viṣṇu, always of a blameless body, with the hymns of the goddess (i.e. Lakṣmī), and devoutly saluted her, the eternal one, brought before their mind by them, that goddess, having four arms, large eyes, and adorned with all ornaments, appeared (there).

127-128. Seeing the beloved of the god of gods, who had put on silken garments, and a divine garland, all gods, with the palms of their hands joined, said to her: "Propitiate your husband. Act in such a way that the lord would give the three worlds immunity from fear."

1. Hariṇī—One of the four classes of women, also called 'Citriṇī', who is said to be a woman endowed with various talents and excellences. The four divisions into which writers on erotical science class women are: Padminī, Citriṇī, Śaṅkhinī, and Hastinī or Kariṇī.

Rudra said:

129-133. The goddess, thus addressed, suddenly went to her husband Viṣṇu and having bowed down before him and saluted him, said to him: “(Please) be pleased.” Seeing his own dear wife, Viṣṇu, the lord of all, gave up his anger due to the demon’s body, and in a moment became pleased. That ocean of pity, Viṣṇu, placing the goddess on his lap and embracing her, looked at the gods with eyes wet with the nectar of favour. Then there was a joyful agitation among them, praising him and saluting him, and seen by him with kind eyes. Then all the hosts of gods, with their minds full of joy, having saluted the god, the lord of the worlds, with the palms of their hands joined, said (to him):

The hosts of gods said:

134-135. O lord of the worlds, we are not able to see your very wonderful lustre, and your very wonderful form, marked with many arms and feet. We, all gods, are not able to see and put up with your very strong lustre that has filled the three worlds.

Mahādeva said:

136-146. Thus requested by the gods, the lord of gods withdrew that very fearful lustre, and became of a pleasing appearance, auspicious, resembling a crore of autumnal moons, having eyes like lotuses, resembling crores of flashes of lightning due to the mass of his mane full of nectar. The great lord was graced with four delicate, divine arms, endowed with divine armlets and bracelets full of various jewels, resembling the branches with fruits of the desire-yielding tree. The lord was decorated with lotus-like hands resembling japā-flowers. The man-lion was adorned with two raised hands holding a conch and a disc, and with other two granting boons and freedom from fear. His chest was (marked) with Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha; he was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He was also decorated with ear-rings resembling the rays of the rising sun. The man-lion, adorned with ornaments like necklaces, armlets, bracelets, shone with Lakṣmī sitting on the left (lap) of his body. The deities along with the great sages, seeing Lakṣmī and the man-lion, with their hearts full of joy, sprinkled them with tears of joy. They, plunged into the

ocean of joy, constantly saluted them. By offering divine flowers, they worshipped the lord of souls. Having sprinkled the ancient Nṛsimha with the nectar from jewelled pitchers full of nectar, having worshipped him with divine offerings of lights, they praised him with divine hymns, and repeatedly saluted him.

147-155. Then the lord of Lakṣmī, who was pleased, gave them boons desired by them. Then Viṣṇu, to whom his devotees are dear, along with all hosts of gods made the imperishable Prahlaḍa the king of all demons. Having cheered up Prahlaḍa, and having, with the best gods, consecrated him, he gave him the boons desired by him and faithful devotion. Then Nṛsimha, being praised by all hosts of gods, and his body scattered over with beautiful flowers, vanished there only. Then all the hosts of gods went to their respective abodes. And again, they, with their minds pleased, enjoyed the portions of sacrifices. Then the gods, along with gandharvas, became free from fear. When the great demon was killed, all were delighted only. Prahlaḍa, Viṣṇu's devotee, then righteously ruled over the kingdom. The best devotee of viṣṇu obtained the kingdom through Viṣṇu's grace. He having worshipped Nṛsimha with many sacrifices and gifts etc. obtained, at (the proper) time, Viṣṇu's eternal place, obtained by meditating sages. Those who everyday listen to Prahlaḍa's account, are all free from sins, and will obtain the highest state. O goddess, I have told you this grandeur of Viṣṇu as Nṛsimha. O goddess, listen to the remaining state of grandeur in due order.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

The Rise of Bali and Kaśyapa's Penance

Rudra said:

1-4. A son was born to Prahlaḍa, who was known as Virocana. His son, the large-armed one, was lord Bali, (like) fire. He was the best among those who knew the ways of the world; he was veracious; his senses were subdued; he was the dearest

devotee of Viṣṇu; he was always engaged in pious practices, and was pure. The very mighty one, having defeated all gods with Indra and hosts of Maruts, brought the three worlds under his control, and ruled. Without being tilled, the earth grew (corn). It gave much corn and many fruits. All cows were full-milking. Trees had fruits and flowers.

5-9. All men, free from sins, were engaged in their own duties. Free from torment they constantly worshipped Viṣṇu. In this way, Bali, the lord of the demons, ruled righteously. His servants, the gods like Indra, stood by him. Removing the pride of the might (of others) he enjoyed supremacy in the three worlds. Kaśyapa, seeing his son, deprived of his kingdom, and desiring his good, practised penance, along with his wife, in honour of Viṣṇu. Along with (his wife) Aditi, the pious one, took to the vow of (drinking) water (only). He worshipped Padmanābha, Viṣṇu, the lord of gods. Then for thousands of years he worshipped Viṣṇu.

10-13. The ancient one, with the goddess (Lakṣmī) appeared there only. He saw the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu), holding a conch, a disc, a mace, dark like the jewel sapphire, adorned with all ornaments, graced with a bright crown, armlets, necklaces, and ear-rings, with his chest brightened with Kaustubha, covered with a yellow garment, and seated on a great round seat with Lakṣmī. Seeing the lord of the worlds, the best brāhmaṇa, with his heart full of joy, and with his wife, saluted and praised him.

Kaśyapa said:

14-23. Repeated salutations to you, O lord of Lakṣmī, O omniscient one, O lord of the world, O soul of all, O lord of all gods, O creator and destroyer of the world; O you having no beginning, death or end, salutation to you having a body supporting the universe, having the body of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, and seeing everything; salutation to you, the soul of all; salutation to you, very subtle one, full of auspicious qualities; to you whose soul is fit to be meditated upon by the meditating sages; salutation to you the youthful boy, the lord of Śrī, Bhū, and Līlā; to you who are eternally free and the only pleasure; to you who dwell in the highest abode; salutation to you, O you of four characters; salutation to you, O you of four

forms; salutation to you having five conditions, and of the nature of five. You are always worshipped by the meditating sages, devoted to the five-natured one. You remain in the five sacraments of those who know the five principles. O Viṣṇu, your form superior to the five (forms) should always be known. O you of a complete form, the wise certainly know you in four ways. Your servants purify the entire world, your creation. In a moment you cause the freedom from the bond of the mundane existence of those brāhmaṇas, full of (the knowledge of) the three Vedas, devoted to their duties, and loving (your) devotees. Salutation to the supporter of the three worlds, the self-supporting one, and the soul of all. Salutation to you the supporter, the creator, the universe, of the form of the universe; to Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, Śārngin; to Viṣṇu, Jīṣṇu, of pure energy.

Mahādeva said:

24. The lord Janārdana who was thus properly being praised with such eulogies by the great sage, was pleased, and spoke with a grave voice:

The lord said:

25. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I, devoutly and properly worshipped by you, am pleased with you. Ask for a boon. Well-being to you. I shall do as desired by you.

Mahādeva said:

26. Then Kaśyapa, with his wife, thus spoke to Viṣṇu:

Kaśyapa said:

27-28. O lord of gods, being (born) as my son, do what is good to the gods. O god, Bali has forcibly conquered the three worlds. Being born as Indra's younger brother known as Upen-dra, and having, through your Māyā, vanquished Bali by whatever manner, give eternally the three worlds to Indra.

Mahādeva said:

29-31. Thus addressed by the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Kaśyapa), Viṣṇu said: "All right." Being praised by the gods, he vanished there only. In the meanwhile, the lord, the creator of beings,

came to the womb of Aditi, (the wife) of the noble Kaśyapa. At that time Bali, with (the help of) eight great sages commenced a long sacrificial session according to the rules.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTY

Viṣṇu Incarnates as Vāmana

Śrī Mahādeva said:

1-5a. Then at the end of a thousand years Aditi gave birth to Vāmana, Viṣṇu, Acyuta, Hari, the lord, who was the great lord of all the worlds, who had Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha on his chest, whose lustre was like that of the full moon, who was handsome, whose eyes were like lotuses, whose body was very short, who was dressed like a lad, who could be known by means of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who was marked with such signs as a girdle, a (piece of) deer-hide, and a staff. Seeing him of a great vigour, all deities led by Indra, along with great sages, praised and saluted him. Then the lord who was pleased, said to the best gods:

Vāmana said:

5b. O best gods, tell me what I should do today.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

6a. Then the gods who were delighted, spoke to that highest lord:

The gods said:

6b-7. O Madhusūdana, Bali's sacrifice is going on now. O lord, this is the time for the lord of demons not to turn down (any request). Having asked for the three worlds from him, (please) give them to us.

Śaṅkara said:

8-10. Thus addressed by all gods, Viṣṇu went to Bali, seated

at the place of the sacrifice along with eight sages. Seeing him having come as a guest, the king of demons suddenly got up. Seeing (as if) Viṣṇu himself had come as a guest, he, with a smile, seated him on a seat of flowers and properly honoured him. Having bowed before him and saluted him, he said in a faltering voice:

Bali said:

11-12. I am fortunate, I am blessed. My life is fruitful. O best brāhmaṇa, having honoured you, what dear to you, should I do? O best brāhmaṇa, I shall give you that for which you have come to me. O best among those who know the Vedas, speak quickly.

Śaṅkara said:

13a. Then with a delighted mind (Viṣṇu) spoke to the king:

Vāmana said:

13b-18. O best king, listen. I shall tell you the reason for my arrival. O lord of demons, O you who remove the pride (of others, or you who respect others), give me (that much piece of) land measured by my three steps, for an enclosed place for keeping the fire-vessel. I do not desire anything else. Of all gifts, the gift of (a piece of) land is the best. That king who gives even that much piece of land measured by his thumb, to a poor brāhmaṇa, would be the lord of the world. In this world there is no other gift like that (of a piece) of land. Both of them—he who receives (a piece of) land and he who gives (a piece of) land—are meritorious and, after death, go to heaven. Therefore, O great king, give me that much piece of land measured by my three steps. O king, do not hesitate to give such a small (piece of) land. O king, that will indeed be (tantamount to) the gift of the three worlds.

Śaṅkara said:

19-20. Then the king, with his face delighted, said, “All right.” He intended to make him the gift of land in the proper way. Seeing the king of demons, his priest, Uśanas, said to him (these) words, “O king, do not give him the land.”

Śukra said:

21-22. O king, this is Viṣṇu, the highest lord, who was requested by the gods. He has come here to take the entire earth after deceiving you. Therefore, land should not be given to the noble one. O king, by my word, give him some other object.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

23a. Then having laughed the king firmly said to his preceptor:

Bali said:

23b-25a. To please Viṣṇu, I have done all meritorious acts. Today I am fortunate that Viṣṇu himself has come (to me). Today I shall very happily give (even) my life to him. Therefore, I shall give him even the three worlds.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

25b-27a. Speaking like this, the king devoutly washed his feet and first (offering him) water, gave him the land in the proper manner. Taking him round, and having saluted him he gave him wealth as a present. With his heart delighted, he again said to the brāhmaṇa:

Bali said:

27b-28a. O brāhmaṇa, I am fortunate, I am blessed having given you land. O best brāhmaṇa, take this land as desired by you.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

28b-35. To the king Viṣṇu said: "Near you, in your presence, I shall get the land measured with my steps." Saying so, the highest lord abandoned his dwarfish form, and taking up the body of Viṣṇu, extending up to fifty crores (of yojanas) he seized the earth along with the seas and mountains, along with the oceans, islands, gods, demons and human beings. With one step of his body he crossed the entire earth. Then he said: "O best among the demon-kings, what do I do now?" It was the very powerful Trivikrama-form of the lord. It was good for the well-being of even the gods and the noble sages. It would not be possi-

ble even for Brahmā or Śiva to see it. O auspicious Girijā, having occupied the entire earth, that step became a hundred yojanas long. The ancient one gave the demon-king a divine sight. He showed him his Janārdana-form.

36-37. Seeing that universal form of the god, Bali, the lord of demons, got matchless joy, and was covered with tears of joy. Seeing the god, having saluted him, having praised him with eulogies, he, with his heart delighted, spoke in a faltering voice:

Bali said:

38. Seeing you, the highest god, I am fortunate, I am blessed. O highest lord, accept these three worlds.

Śrī Śaṅkara said:

39-48. Then Viṣṇu, Acyuta, the lord of all, spread up his other immutable foot along with stars and planets, and covering all gods, up to Brahmā's world. He was full of the foot of Acyuta, O you of an auspicious face. Then Brahmā, the grandsire, (seeing) that foot of the god of gods, which was marked with (the signs of) a disc, a lotus etc. saying, with his heart full of joy, "I am blessed," took his pot (of water), and with devotion washed the foot with the water from it. Due to Viṣṇu's majesty that water became inexhaustible. That pure holy water fell on the peak of Meru. For purifying the world it flowed in four streams: Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣu and Bhadrā in due order. Alakanandā is said to be (flowing) to the south of Meru in three streams; she, purifying the world, and having three streams is called Tripathagā. The auspicious river is called Mandākinī in heaven, Bhogavatī in nether world, and the speedy Gaṅgā in between (i.e. on the earth flowing) for purifying human beings. O you of an auspicious face, seeing her flowing over the Meru mountain, I held her on my head to purify myself. Having held (on my head) the auspicious water of Gaṅgā for a thousand divine years, I obtained bliss, and am adored in all worlds.

49-53. There is no doubt that he who would carry on his head the water of Gaṅgā rising from Viṣṇu's foot, or would drink it, would be respected by the world. He who would utter (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even from (a distance of) hundred yojanas, is freed from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. Then

king Bhagīratha and Gautama having a great penance (to his credit) worshipped me with penance and asked for Gaṅgā. O goddess, then I affectionately gave that auspicious best river Gaṅgā, (rising from the foot) of Viṣṇu to them for the good of the entire world. Since she was brought by Gautama, she was called Gautamī. Since she was chosen by king (Bhagīratha), she was known as Bhāgīrathī.

54-60. I have in course (of the narration) told you the excellent greatness of Gaṅgā. Then that glorious lord Nārāyaṇa loving his devotees, gave the auspicious nether world to Bali, the lord of demons. He made Bali the king of all the demons, serpents and the aquatic animals till the (final) inundation (of the earth). In the guise of a lad the immutable Viṣṇu, the killer of demons, the son of Kaśyapa, affectionately gave the worlds to Indra. Then gods with gandharvas and the very powerful sages praised Viṣṇu with divine eulogies and worshipped him. For them to see his form, he contracted it; and being honoured by them Viṣṇu vanished. Viṣṇu, the mighty one, thus protected Indra well. The lord of the three worlds (i.e. Indra) obtained the three worlds and great affluence. I have thus told you the account of the auspicious splendour of Viṣṇu's incarnation as Vāmana. The rest of the splendour I shall narrate in due order.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYONE

Paraśurāma's Story

The lord said:

1-3a. Bhṛgu's son was the great, best brāhmaṇa (named) Jamadagni. He had mastered all Vedas and Vedāṅgas and had practised a severe penance. O you beautiful lady, on the auspicious sandy bank of Gaṅgā the religious-minded one practised penance (in honour) of Indra for a thousand years. Then lord Indra, being pleased, said these (words):

Indra said:

3b. O best brāhmaṇa, ask for a boon that is (i.e. that you have) in your mind.

The lord said:

4a. Then the brāhmaṇa sage spoke to Indra who was pleased:

Jamadagni said:

4b. O god, give me (the desire-yielding cow) Surabhi always fulfilling one's desires.

The lord said:

5-8. Then Indra, the lord of gods, being pleased, gave him the divine Surabhi fulfilling all desires. That Jamadagni of a great penance (to his credit), having obtained Surabhi lived with great grandeur like another Indra. Jamadagni, of a great penance (to his credit) married in the proper manner, Reṇukā, Reṇuka's daughter. The pious-minded one for many years enjoyed with her as Indra with Paulomī, his auspicious queen.

9-17a. Then the very pious one, with a desire for having a son, performed a sacrifice. With (that) sacrifice he pleased god Indra. (Indra) Śacī's husband, being pleased, (promised) him a very strong, very powerful, mighty-armed son, tormentor of all enemies. Then in course of time the best brāhmaṇa generated a very strong and powerful son with a part of a portion of Viṣṇu and having all (good) marks, on Reṇukā, O you of a bright smile. When the very powerful son (was born), his grandfather joyfully gave him a name indicating Viṣṇu's portion. He gave him a very auspicious name (Paraśu-)Rāma. Being born from Jamadagni he was called Jāmadagnya. The best brāhmaṇa of the family of Bhṛgu grew. His thread ceremony was performed; he was proficient in all sciences and arts. To practise penance he went to the Śālagrāma mountain. There he saw the brāhmaṇa-sage Kaśyapa of unlimited splendour. The brāhmaṇa, Marīci's son, was full of delight with (i.e. on seeing) him. In the proper manner he gave him the indestructible formula of Viṣṇu.

17b-23. Having received the formula from Kaśyapa, the high-souled one, (Paraśu-)Rāma, muttering day and night the

great six-syllabled formula, worshipped the lord of Lakṣmī. That pious Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) meditating upon Viṣṇu having eyes like lotus-petals and the omniscient one, practised penance for many years. He, with senses subdued and speech controlled, and (practising) great penance, remained (there). The brāhmaṇa-sage Jamadagni remained on the auspicious bank of Gaṅgā. He performed pious acts according to the precepts like sacrifices and gifts. By the favour of Indra's cow his wealth was full. Sometime the king, the lord of Haihaya, surrounded by his entire army, having conquered all countries, reached the hermitage of Jamadagni, the son of Bhṛgu. Seeing the glorious, best sage, he saluted him.

24-29. The king, having asked the devout great sage about his well-being, gave him garments and ornaments. He too honoured the king that had come to his house. Having honoured according to the precept the king with *madhuparka** the sage fed the best king along with his army. The very intelligent son of Bhṛgu (i.e. Jamadagni) solicited Surabhi. She, the cow of plenty, produced food, drink etc. at that time. The best sage, of a great penance, gave the inexhaustible food, drink etc. produced by her to the king along with his army. Seeing that cow of plenty, the king was full of curiosity. The very wicked-minded (king) longed for the cow. The best king then begged Jamadagni for Surabhi.

Kārtavīrya said:

30. O brāhmaṇa, give me this tawny cow of plenty, giving all desired objects. O you of a good vow, I shall give you thousands of other cows.

The lord said:

31-32. Thus addressed by the king, Jamadagni of a great penance (to his credit) said (to him): "O king, this cow of plenty cannot be given to you by me. This one was protected by Indra, the god of gods. O king, how should the wealth of deities be given by me?"

33-36. The king, thus addressed, was then excited with

*A preparation of curd, clarified butter, water, honey and sugar offered to guests.

anger. He, surrounded by the entire army, seized the cow of plenty forcibly. Then, O you of an excellent complexion, the glorious cow of plenty became angry, and with her horns and soles of her hoofs struck his huge army. Then that goddess, the cow of plenty, having, in a short time, struck that army, vanished, and in a moment went near Indra. Then (Kārtavīrya) Arjuna, seeing his army struck, was overcome by anger. With his fist he struck Bhārgava, the best brāhmaṇa.

37-39. Being struck by him in many ways, he was weakened. The best brāhmaṇa suddenly fell on the ground and died. The lord of Haihaya, the wicked-minded one, having killed there the best sage, and surrounded by a great army entered his own city. Rāma Bhārgava worshipped the god of gods. Pleased by his worship Viṣṇu said:

God Viṣṇu said:

40-41. O child, with the penance of you of a controlled mind, I am pleased. O brāhmaṇa, I shall give you a very auspicious power. Possessed of my power, kill the wicked great kings for destroying those who cause a burden to the earth and for the good of the deities.

Mahādeva said:

42-44. Speaking like this, the god gave him an axe capable of killing the enemies, so also the great bow of Viṣṇu and many divine missiles. Lord Viṣṇu, having given (these) to Jamadagni, said: "O best brāhmaṇa, you, the killer of the enemy's soldiers, having killed many arrogant kings repeatedly, take this entire earth bound by the ocean. Full of piety and great heroism you protect it. In course of time, you will reach my position by my grace."

The lord said:

45-50a. Having said like this, and having given the brāhmaṇa a boon, the god vanished. Rāma also suddenly went to his father's hermitage. Seeing his father killed, Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) was filled with anger. He desired to make the earth, crowded with kings, clear of kṣatriyas. He went to the city of the king of Haihaya, which was full of kings. With his

body burning with anger, he, with his weapons raised, stood at the gate. The citizens of his city seeing that very powerful Jāmadagnya, with a blazing body, looked upon him as the destructive fire at the end of the world. Being afflicted by fear, all ran to the king, the lord of Haihaya. They praised him of great energy and equipped with all weapons. Hearing their words, the king with an amazed mind, said :

King of Haihaya said:

50b-51. Who is that forcibly standing at the gate of my city with weapons? Even Indra, or Yama, or Rudra, or Kubera, can never stand with weapons at the gate of my city.

Mahādeva said:

52-55. Saying so, the lord of kings impelled his very strong servants to see him, and the wicked one said to them: "Arrest him." Having gone, they saw at the gate a very strong hero burning like the destructive fire at the end of the world, and difficult to be seen due to his lustre. The mighty ones were not even able to look at him. From all sides they, desirous of seizing him, often went to him. Seeing all those servants of the lord of kings with weapons, the very powerful best brāhmaṇa, Jāmadagnya, said laughing:

Paraśurāma said:

56-57. O mean men, I, Rāma, the son of Bhārgava, have come (here). I shall kill all best kings for (i.e. as a revenge of) my father's murder. To my (dead) father I shall offer Kārtavīrya's blood mixed with sesamum-seeds, and shall offer the piṇḍa with his lotus-head.

Mahādeva said:

58-62. Thus addressed, the very powerful servants of the king struck him with arrows as fire with straws. Then the very brave Rāma of genuine valour was angry, and drawing the bow of Viṣṇu made the sound of the bow-string. With that great sound the three worlds were filled. Even gods were frightened. (Such) was the great wonder. Then the very strong Paraśurāma struck the very brave, very powerful servants with arrows resem-

bling fire. Having killed the servants of the glorious king, he stood like the destructive fire at the end of the world, deadly to all beings.

63-68. Hearing that his servants were killed in the battle by the intelligent (Paraśu-) Rāma, the brave king of Haihaya, with his eyes red with anger, went out with his army to the place where Bhārgava stood. Seeing him appearing deadly and blazing with his own lustre, all the men there, suspecting the destruction of human beings were frightened. Then a very fierce battle took place between Rāma and the kings, with fearful strokes of weapons and missiles, as between two showering clouds. Then Rāma, of a great lustre easily burnt the king's army in a moment with the missile of Viṣṇu. Then Rāma of unlimited valour cut off the thousand arms of the wicked Kārtavīrya with his sharp axe. The very brave king could not fight with (Paraśu-) Rāma in the battle.

69-74. The wicked-minded one lost his valour due to his own sin. The mighty son of Reṇukā, being angry, cut off his head, as mighty Indra did the peak of a big mountain, and he who was brave and angry, killed Sahasrabāhu and all the kings with his axe in the battle. Seeing Rāma, the very fearful one, all kings on the earth, struck by fear, ran away as elephants do on seeing a lion. The angry Rāma killed the kings even though they had fled due to the resentment against his father's murder, as the angry Garuḍa killed the serpents. The valorous Rāma made the entire (world) clear of the kṣatriyas, but protected (i.e. spared) only the very great family of Ikṣvāku, due to its being the family to which his maternal grandfather was related, and due to his mother's words.

75-78. Rāma, the destroyer of the families of kings, deprived the kings of the family of his maternal grandfather of their kingdoms, but did not kill them belonging to Manu's dynasty. But the brave one destroyed the families of all (other) kings. The brāhmaṇa, the mighty son of Jamadagni, having made the earth clear of the kṣatriyas, duly performed the great horse-sacrifice. He gave the earth with the seven islands to chief brāhmaṇas. That brave son of Jamadagni, having given the earth to the brāhmaṇas, went to the hermitage of Nara-Nārāyaṇa to practise penance.

79-81. O goddess, I have told you this account of the incar-

nation of lord (Viṣṇu), holder of the Śārṅga bow, who had entered Rāma with his power. Due to the entrance of the power this (form) of the noble one cannot be worshipped. The chief, noble, brāhmaṇas, the devotees of the lord, should worship the incarnations of (Dāśarathi) Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, perfect with virtues, worshipped by sages, and giving salvation to human beings.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTWO

The Story of Rāma

Rudra said:

1-3a. Formerly Svāyambhuva Manu muttered the great formula of twelve syllables at Naimiṣa on the pure, auspicious bank of Gomatī. For a thousand years he worshipped Lakṣmī's lord. Lord Viṣṇu said to him: "Choose a boon from me." Then Manu Svāyambhuva joyfully said to Viṣṇu:

Manu said:

3b-4a. O Viṣṇu, be born as my son in three existences, O lord of gods. I am worshipping you with a desire for a son.

Rudra said:

4b. Thus addressed, Lakṣmī's lord spoke with very good words:

Viṣṇu said:

5-7. O greatest king, whatever is desired (by you) in your mind will take place. I too have a great pleasure in being your son. O best king, when you will be born in the period having stability as its aim, I shall also be born as your son, O you of a good vow. O sinless one, in every age I shall be born of you for protecting the good, destroying the wicked and establishing righteousness.

Rudra said:

8-14. Having thus given him a boon, Viṣṇu vanished there only. From Manu Svāyambhuva he had the first birth. He was born as king Daśaratha in the Raghu-family formerly. The second birth was that of lord Vasudeva in the family of the Vṛṣṇis. He will be born as a brāhmaṇa in the town of Śambhala in the last two quarters of the Kali-age of the measure of a thousand divine years. Kausalyā was born as the wife of king Daśaratha. Devakī was known (to be born) to serve the Yadu-family. Deva-prabhā was born as the wife of a brāhmaṇa Harivrata. Thus they obtained the motherhood of Viṣṇu in three existences. O you of a good vow, I shall first tell you the account of Rāma, by just remembering whom even sinners get liberation. Hiraṇyaka and Hiraṇyākṣa, taking up second birth, will be born as the very strong Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvaṇa.

15-22. O you innocent one, pious Viśravas, a brāhmaṇa, was the son of Pulastya. His wife, a demon's daughter, was Viśālākṣī. She was the daughter of Sukeśī. And the demon Sumālin's daughter Kekasī (Kaikasī?) was his (another) wife of a firm vow. Being excessively full of lust, the slim, respectful lady of a charming appearance had sexual intercourse with the great sage in the evening. Due to her desire for sexual enjoyment in the evening two very powerful demons, Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa, known in the world, were born to her. A daughter, Śūrpanakhā of a deformed face was also born to her. After sometime Bibhīṣaṇa was born to her. He was of a good character, devoted to God, veracious, pious and pure. Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa were greatest like the Himālaya mountain. The two very much propitiated me with very severe penance. O goddess, that wicked Rāvaṇa worshipped me with just a wicked deed with his lotus-like heads. Then, I with my mind very much pleased said to him:

23-30. "Ask for a boon that is in your mind, O child." Then the wicked one said: "With a desire (i.e. as I have a desire) to conquer all worlds, let me not be killed by gods, demons or fiends." Then, O you of a beautiful face, I gave the wicked demon immunity from death from gods, demons or fiends. The very powerful demon, proud due to the grant of the boon, troubled the three worlds, gods, demons and fiends. Gods, troubled by him, full of fear, led by Brahmā, sought the shelter of god

(Viṣṇu), the lord of Lakṣmī. Understanding their anguish, the ancient one said, in order to grant them immunity from fear, to all gods led by Brahmā and Rudra :

The lord said:

I shall be born in the family of Raghu as the son of king Daśaratha. I shall kill the wicked Rāvaṇa with his relatives. Taking to a human body I shall kill the thorn (i.e. nuisance) to the deities. You too, born as monkeys due to Nandin's curse, help me, O best gandharvas and celestial nymphs.

Rudra said:

31-32. All deities, thus addressed by Viṣṇu, god of gods, were born on the earth after being turned into (i.e. as) monkeys. Bhārgava also gave the earth girt by the ocean. It was formerly given to the very noble Raghus by great sages.

33. There was Vaivasvata Manu's son, known as Ikṣvāku, the best among kings and very powerful, best among those who knew the ways of the world.

34-38. In his family was born the very brilliant and powerful king Daśaratha, king Aja's son, truthful, pure, and of a good character. The king protected the entire earth with valour. He installed all best kings on the kingdoms (i.e. thrones). That king married Kausalyā, king Kosala's daughter, beautiful in all limbs. His second wife was Sumitrā by name, Magadha king's daughter, of a bright smile. His third wife was Kekayī, having eyes like lotus-petals, and the daughter of Kekaya king.

39-44. With these three wives the Kākutstha king (i.e. Daśaratha) enjoyed while protecting the earth. There was a city named Ayodhyā situated on the bank of Sarayū. It was full of all jewels and wealth and grains. It possessed ramparts and town-gates. It had golden ramparts. It had excellent elephants and horses as Indra's city (had). In it lived the righteous king along with best sages and the noble brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha, his family priest. And he ruled over the kingdom in which the thorns (i.e. sources of nuisance) were destroyed. That city of Ayodhyā also was called holy, since the revered Supreme Being would be born in it. O auspicious one, the name of that city of the abode (of Viṣṇu) was great.

45-51. That is the highest place where revered Viṣṇu dwelt. There salvation, instantly cutting off (the bonds of) all acts, would take place. When Viṣṇu was born there, O you of an auspicious face, all men were delighted. That king (Daśaratha) having protected the entire earth, and longing for a son performed a sacrifice in honour of Viṣṇu (to propitiate) Hari, Acyuta. Worshipped with the sacrifice in his honour by him, Viṣṇu, the omnipresent king, the lord of Lakṣmī, giver of boons said. In the fire Viṣṇu of the form of sacrifice then appeared. He was like pure gold. He held a conch, a disc and a mace. He had put on white garments. He was glorious, and adorned with all ornaments. On his chest were Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha; he was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. His large eyes resembled lotus-petals, he had four arms, and was of a generous mind. The lord of Lakṣmī, with Lakṣmī seated on his left lap, appeared there. He who loved his devotees, said to the king: "I am the giver of boons (i.e. I shall grant you a boon)."

52-54a. Seeing him, the lord of all worlds, the king full of joy and with his mind full of delight, with his wife (wives?) saluted him. With the palms of his hands folded, and bowing down, he spoke words faltering due to joy. He said to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods: "Be my son." Then Viṣṇu, the lord, being pleased, said to the king:

Viṣṇu said:

54b-55. O best king, for the good of the gods and the earth, I shall be born (as your son), for the protection of the good, for killing the demons, for granting liberation to the worlds, and for establishing righteousness.

Mahādeva said:

56. Viṣṇu gave the king bright rice boiled in milk, kept in a golden pot and held in the hand of Lakṣmī.

Viṣṇu said:

57. O king, O you of a good vow, give this rice boiled in milk to your wives. On them will be born sons from my body.

Mahādeva said:

58-60. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu, being praised by all sages,

presented himself, and vanished in the same way. The very calm king, seeing the eldest and the youngest queen, divided the divine rice boiled in milk, and gave it to them. In the meanwhile his beautiful-eyed middle wife, longing for a son, came near him.

61-62. Seeing her, Kausalyā and Kekayī of a beautiful waist, gave half (the portion of) their divine rice boiled in milk to her. Eating that divine rice boiled in milk all the queens with beautiful waists, conceived and they, of a bright lustre, shone.

63-68. Then Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, wearing yellow garments and holding a conch, a disc, a mace in his hands, appeared in their dreams. In this charming time, O you of a bright smile, in the month of Caitra, in the bright half of the month, on the ninth day, when the Sun was in the Puṣya constellation, in the noon, and at a time when all Planets were auspicious, Kausalyā gave birth to a son, Viṣṇu, the lord of worlds, who was dark like lotus-leaves, who resembled crores of Cupids, whose eyes were large like lotus-petals, and was adorned with all ornaments. On his chest were Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha. He was graced with all ornaments. He shone with two ear-rings (bright) like the rising sun, resembled many suns, was covered with great lustre. He, the charming one, was born from the body of the highest lord, as one lamp is produced (i.e. lighted) from another lamp.

69-70. He was the lord of all worlds, who was fit to be meditated upon by all meditating sages, was ancient, the goal of all Upaniṣads, endless and the highest god. He was Viṣṇu, the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world, the protector of all beings, the lord full of all beings.

71-75. When the lord of the world was born, in heaven divine drums were sounded; the best gods sent down showers of flowers. Gods led by Brahmā, seated in aeroplanes, and along with sages and with their entire bodies overcome by joy, praised (him). The chiefs of gandharvas sang and bebies of celestial nymphs danced. Holy, auspicious breezes blew. The sun became very bright. The fires burnt (after being) subsided; the ten quarters were clear. Then the king joyfully seeing his son, the ancient (god Viṣṇu), performed through Vasiṣṭha, the ceremony to be performed at the birth of a child. Then revered Vasiṣṭha also gave him a charming name.

76-79. "This great lord is the 'ramaṇa' or lover of Śrī, living

in a lotus. Therefore, his ancient name Śrīrāma is settled.” It is equal to the thousand names of Viṣṇu (i.e. the hymn Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma) and gives salvation to human beings. Brought into existence by Viṣṇu, he is called Viṣṇu. The revered sage Vasiṣṭha, having named him, taken him round, having saluted him, having praised him with eulogies and having recited the thousand names (of Viṣṇu) for the good luck of the noble one, the very lustrous one, went from that most auspicious house.

80-82. Then the king gladly gave much wealth to chief brāhmaṇas. He also righteously caused to give the gift of a myriad of cows. The best of the Raghu dynasty gave a hundred thousand villages (to brāhmaṇas). With divine garments, and ornaments, and immeasurable wealth, he gratified the brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu.

83-87. Kausalyā with expanded hands saw him resembling a white lotus, having a lotus in his lotus-like hand. She saw, O you of an excellent face, (marks of) lotuses on his beautiful feet. On his body (she saw) (signs of) a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, a flag and garments etc.; on his chest (she saw) Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha along with a garland of wood-flowers. On his body she saw the entire world with gods, demons and human beings. The large-eyed (Kausalyā) saw the fourteen worlds on his smiling face. In the breath of the noble one she saw Vedas and Itihāsas (historical accounts). O you of an excellent complexion, on his buttocks (she saw) islands, oceans and mountains. In his navel (she saw) Brahmā and Śiva. In his ears (she saw) the bright quarters. In his eyes she saw fire and the sun and in his nose (she saw) the very speedy wind.

88. Seeing all his splendours, the goal of all the Upaniṣads, the beautiful (lady) was afraid, and having saluted him again and again, and with her eyes full of tears, she, with the palms of her hands folded, said (these) words:

Kausalyā said:

89. O lord of the god of gods, I am fortunate in having got you as my son, O master. O lord of the world, be pleased with me. Show towards me a son's affection.

The lord said:

90. Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma), the omnipresent one, thus addressed

by his mother, obtaining illusory manhood, cried due to his being a child.

91-93. Then queen Kausalyā of a beautiful waist and auspicious characteristics, joyfully embraced her son and gave him (i.e. fed him with) milk from her breast. The eternal one drank (sucked) milk from her breast as a child; the great lord, the sustainer of the world remained on his mother's lap. Citizens and countrymen, being delighted, celebrated a festival in that auspicious, charming region, giving all desired objects of men.

94-96. Bharata produced from the Pāñcajanya (conch of Viṣṇu) was born to Kaikeyī. Sumitrā gave birth to Lakṣmaṇa of auspicious signs. The glorious one also gave birth to Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies. Lakṣmaṇa, the killer of the enemy's heroes, was born with a portion of (the snake) Ananta. Śatrughna, of unlimited valour, was produced from Sudarśana. They all grew there in the family of Vaivasvata Manu.

97-98. The sons were properly taught by the very vigorous Vasiṣṭha. The princes studied the Vedas and were proficient in general knowledge. They knew the essential nature of all branches of knowledge, and were skilled in archery. They were very generous and they increased the joy of people.

99. The princes Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa formed a pair. Similarly Bharata and Śatrughna formed a pair.

100-104. Then Lakṣmī, the chief goddess of the worlds, who was beautiful, who resembled a crore of young suns, whose hands were like red lotuses, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who was adorned with all ornaments, who, the beautiful one, had worn on her bosom a garland of fresh flowers, was born in Janaka's house, at the opening of a furrow, at an auspicious moment in an auspicious field dug up by Indra's plough. Seeing that girl, auspicious and full of all Vedas, the lord of Mithilā took her out and nourished her as (his) child. The chief goddess, dear to the lord of worlds, grew in the charming house of Janaka for the protection of the entire world.

105-110. In the meanwhile, O goddess, the great sage, Kauśika, well known in the world, commenced the performance of a sacrifice in the established hermitage on the auspicious, meritorious bank of Bhāgīrathī. When that sacrifice of the brāhmaṇa proceeded, the demons of Rāvaṇa destroyed his sacrifice. Pious Kauśika,

having thought, desired to bring for the good of the world, Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) born in Raghu's family. Having gone to the charming city of Ayodhyā protected by (Daśaratha, the descendant of) Raghu, the best sage saw Daśaratha, the best king. The king of a great lustre too, having seen Kauśika, got up, and with the palms of his hands joined, saluted, along with his sons, the best sage.

111-112a. The descendant of Raghu, saying, "I am fortunate" honoured the best sage with proper rite after seating him on an excellent seat. Having taken himself round him, and saluted him, he said to him: "What do (i.e. should) I do?" Then Viśvāmitra, with great penance (to his credit), and with his mind delighted, said:

Viśvāmitra said:

112b-113. O king, give me Rāma for the protection of my sacrifice. In Rāma's vicinity (i.e. presence) may my sacrifice be fruitful. Therefore, O king, please give (me) Rāma for the protection of (my) sacrifice.

The lord said:

114-116. Hearing the words of the best sage, he, the best among the all-knowing ones, gave the best sage, Rāma with Lakṣmaṇa. Taking Rāma (with him), that best brāhmaṇa Viśvāmitra with great penance (to his credit), and being pleased, went to his hermitage. When the best descendant of Raghu went (with the sage), gods were delighted. The very lustrous ones sent down showers of flowers, and praised (him).

117-118. Then the very powerful Garuḍa, delighted in heart, came there unseen by beings, and having approached (the best descendant of) Raghu (i.e. Rāma), gave the two (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) two bows, two quivers, and two inexhaustible arrows. The bird also gave them divine missiles, weapons, and left.

119-123. The two heroes, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, were informed of the fierce-looking demoness moving in the forest by the noble Kauśika. O goddess, her name was Tāḍakā, and she was the wife of the demon Sunda. The two great heroes struck her with arrows discharged from their divine bows. Struck (with his arrow) by Rāma, the fierce-looking demoness gave up her

fierce form, and became one of a divine form. She was glowing with her body, was adorned with all ornaments; having saluted the two (best descendants of) Raghu, she went to Viṣṇu's world. Having killed her the celebrated and very lustrous Rāma entered, with the noble Lakṣmaṇa, the auspicious hermitage of Kauśika.

124-126. Then the delighted sages, having gone forth to meet the best of Raghus, seated him, and worshipped the highest soul with materials of worship etc. The best sage Kauśika, being initiated along with the sages properly commenced the excellent sacrifice. When the great sacrifice proceeded, a demon named Mārīca, along with his brother Subāhu, came there to create an obstacle.

127-129. Seeing the two fierce demons, Rāma, killer of his enemy's heroes, killed Subāhu, the lord of demons, with one arrow. With a great wind-missile, he caused Mārīca to fall into the ocean as wind causes a dry leaf (to fall down). That best demon, seeing the great valour of Rāma, put down his weapons and went to a great hermitage to practise penance.

130-132a. Viśvāmitra, of great lustre, worshipped Rāma there with a pleased mind after the great sacrifice was over. The best sage, having embraced the noble one who had side-locks on his temples, who was dark like a lotus-leaf, whose eyes were large like lotus-leaves, and having smelt his head, praised him.

132b-141. In the meanwhile, the lord of lords, king of Mithilā commenced, with the (help of) best sages, the Vājapeya sacrifice. To see it all sages of auspicious hearts led by Viśvāmitra went along with best of the Raghus (to Mithilā). With the lotus-like foot of that Rāma who was going (to Mithilā), the land was purified, and the great stone was approached. That Ahalyā too, who was formerly cursed by her husband Gautama, became auspicious by the touch of Rāma's foot. Then the best sages having reached the city of Mithilā with the two descendants of Raghu (viz. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) were delighted at heart. The very powerful king of Mithilā having seen the illustrious ones to have come, went forth to meet them and honoured them. (He saw) Rāma whose eyes were large like lotuses, who resembled a lotus-leaf (in complexion), who had put on a yellow garment, was gentle, had tender limbs and was bright, who, the excellent

one, had slighted Cupid with his handsomeness, who was endowed with all (good) marks, was decorated with all ornaments, who, the slender Viṣṇu, was born in the heart-lotus of the highest god, with the highest virtues like good character, as one lamp would be produced (i.e. lighted) from another. Seeing that Raghunātha, Janaka was delighted at heart.

142-145a. He looked upon Rāma, Daśaratha's son, just as the highest lord. Saying, "I am fortunate" he honoured the descendant of Kakutstha. He took that to be the favour of Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva. The lord thought to his mind to give him (in marriage) his daughter. Knowing the two to be sons from Raghu's family, the best king honoured them in accordance with Dharma with bright garments and ornaments. With honour like *madhuparka* he worshipped the sages.

145b-148. Then at the end of the sacrifice, the lotus-eyed Rāma broke the divine bow of Śiva and won Janaka's daughter. The lord of Mithilā, very much pleased with the great purchase-price in the form of (Rāma's) valour, gladly gave her (in marriage) to him, as formerly the great Ocean gave Lakṣmī to Viṣṇu. The lord of Mithilā sent a messenger to (Daśaratha) the descendant of Raghu. The pious one entered Mithilā with his two sons.

149-153. That best descendant of Raghu stayed along with the delighted Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, etc. in Janaka's charming city. The king properly honoured by king Janaka got Rāma married to the Earth's daughter (i.e. Sītā) at an auspicious time. The king got Urmilā, Janaka's daughter, married to Lakṣmaṇa, and the two daughters of good figures and having all (auspicious) marks, Māṇḍavī and Śrutakīrti to Bharata and Śatrughna respectively. Then having completed the nuptial rites the powerful, happy Daśaratha surrounded by citizens and (other) subjects started for Ayodhyā.

154-156. Receiving the wedding present, and honoured by the king of Mithilā, he, along with his sons, daughters-in-law, horses, elephants and attendants (left for Ayodhyā). On their way, the very strong and valorous son of Jamadagni, the destroyer of kings, taking an axe, like an angry lion desiring to fight, ran to the descendant of Kakutstha. Reaching Rāma, and seeing him, Bhārgava spoke (these) words:

Paraśurāma said:

157-159. O Rāma, Rāma of mighty arms, listen to my words. Having killed many very brave kings in battles, and having given the land to brāhmaṇas I went to practise penance. Having heard about your valour and power, I have come to fight with you. The Ikṣvākus born in the family of my maternal grandfather are not to be killed by me. Having heard (i.e. when I hear) about the valour of a kṣatriya and his power, I cannot bear it.

160-162. O prince, you broke the fierce bow of Śiva difficult to be assailed. Therefore, O best of Raghus, O liberal one, fight with me. O you who curb your enemies, this is Viṣṇu's bow which is like that (bow of Śiva). Fix (an arrow to it). Then I am vanquished (by you) with your valour. Or abandon your weapons before me, the powerful one. If you are afraid in your heart, then submit to me, O Kākutstha.

The lord said:

163-166. Kākutstha (i.e. Rāma), the brave one, thus addressed by Paraśurāma, took his bow and the power too of him (given to him) by Viṣṇu. Deprived of that power, that brave Paraśurāma became powerless and lustreless like a brāhmaṇa deprived of (holy) acts. Seeing Paraśurāma lustreless, the best kings repeatedly praised Rāma (with the words): "Well (done), well (done)." Rāma having easily raised the bow and fixed the arrow to it, spoke to Paraśurāma, who was amazed:

Rāma said:

167. O brāhmaṇa, what should I do to you with this best arrow? Do (i.e. should) I cut off this world, the nether (world) or heaven, or should I destroy your penance?

The lord said:

168. Bhārgava, seeing that very fierce arrow of Rāma and knowing him to be the highest self, was delighted, and said to Rāma:

Paraśurāma said:

169-176. O Rāma, Rāma of mighty arms, I did not know you to be the ancient (soul). Today only I knew you by means

of your virtues like valour. You are actually the first, highest soul. You are the highest Brahman. You are the highest, the immutable one. You are Ananta (the endless one), great Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, higher than the highest. You are Nārāyaṇa. You are the lord of Śrī. You are full of the three (Vedas). You are the Time (or Death). You are the entire world. You yourself are the one called *A*. You are the creator, the supporter and the destroyer. You are the highest lord. You are inconceivable; you are of the form of a great being; you are a great hymn. You are the highest being having four, six, five qualities. You are the sacrifice. You are the *vaṣatkāra* (i.e. exclamation used on making an oblation). You are the *Om* consisting of the three (Vedas). You are of a manifest and an unmanifest form. You possess qualities. You are qualityless and the highest one. I am unable to praise you who are beyond the scope of even the Vedas. O lord, you, the absolute one (should) please forgive me my rash behaviour towards you. Having conquered, due to your power, all princes and having given the earth to the brāhmaṇas, I obtain peace due to your favour only.

The lord said:

177-185. Having spoken like this, Paraśurāma of a great penance (to his credit) having gone round and saluted Rāma, the protector of the world, offered the heaven merited by having performed one hundred sacrifices to that missile. Rāma of a great lustre, then saluted the great sage. He duly worshipped him with water for washing his feet, materials of worship and water for being sipped. Paraśurāma, of a great penance (to his credit), honoured by him went to the hermitage of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, for practising penance. And the mighty king Daśaratha, along with his sons and wives, entered his own city at an auspicious moment. Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna, having approached their wives, amused themselves with their minds delighted. Rāma, the pious one amused himself with Sītā for twelve years, like Viṣṇu amusing himself with Lakṣmī. At that time only king Daśaratha affectionately desired to bestow his kingdom upon his eldest son (Rāma). His dear wife Kaikayī who was given (two) boons (by him) formerly, asked the best king for the coronation of Bharata and banishment of Rāma for fourteen years.

186-188. That king, with his mind struck by grief, (and) due to being veracious, banished his son. Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha, though capable (of snatching the kingdom), righteously left it for him, and to (keep) the promise of his father, went, with Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, to the forest to kill Rāvaṇa. That king (Daśaratha), afflicted by the separation from his son, died.

189-190. Pious Bharata, being appointed to the kingdom along with the ministers showing that he was a good brother, did not desire the kingdom. Having come to the forest, he requested (Rāma) his brother and the descendant of Kakutstha. Rāma who curbed his enemies, did not desire the kingdom as a result of his father's order.

191-193. He gave him his own sandals. He (i.e. Bharata) too received them with devotion. Bharata brought Rāma's auspicious sandals to the kingdom, and he, Kaikayī's son, everyday worshipped them with sandal, with flowers. And the best king, being engaged in the practice of penance, remained in it (i.e. the kingdom). Till the noble Rāma came (back to Ayodhyā) all the citizens remained engaged in vows.

194. Rāma with Sītā enjoyed himself on the mountain like Citrakūṭa, in the holy hermitage of Bharadvāja, and the holy water of Mandākinī.

195-202. Sometime the magnanimous Rāma was resting (with his head) on Sītā's lap. Indra's crow came there and went about him. He, seeing Jānakī there and being tormented by Cupid's arrow, tore her plump and raised breast with his sharp nails. King Rāma, seeing the crow, took a darbha with his hand and uniting it with the missile of Brahman, discharged it. The crow, seeing the fierce blade of grass, with its form full of flames, and crying with a distressed tone, ran away. Rāma's very fierce missile followed the crow. The crow, oppressed by fear, wandered in the three worlds. Wherever the crow, desiring shelter, went, the fearful missile of Rāma went after him. The crow, tormented by the missile and (therefore) seeking a shelter, quickly went to Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Yama and Varuṇa. All the wise gods like Rudra and the demons, seeing the crow, said: "We are not able to protect (you)." Then Brahmā, the lord of the three worlds, said (to the crow):

Brahmā said:

203-205. O best of crows, submit yourself to him only. He, the glorious one alone, is the ocean of pity for all. He, the lord of beings, endowed with qualities like good character and affectionate to those who have sought his shelter, will certainly protect you. He is the father, the mother, the companion and the friend of the entire world. Seek the refuge of the lord of gods. O bird, there is no other refuge.

Mahādeva said:

206-208. Thus addressed by Brahmā, the crow, overcome by fear, suddenly approached Rāma and fell on the ground. Seeing the crow in peril of life, Sītā politely said to her lord, the mighty (Rāma), "Protect him, protect him." The respectable lady Sītā put the head of the crow that had fallen before her on Rāma's feet.

209-211. The virtuous Rāma, the ocean of the nectar of pity and afflicted by compassion, raised him with his hand and protected him. Rāma, the treasure of compassion, said to the crow: "Do not be afraid. I shall grant you protection from fear. Go as you please." He, protected by Rāma, repeatedly saluted Rāma and Sītā, and quickly went to heaven.

212-213. Then Rāma, along with Sītā and the intelligent Lakṣmaṇa, being praised by great sages, lived on the Citrakūṭa mountain. Rāma, the best of the Raghus, being worshipped on it by Bharadvāja, went to the very huge hermitage of Atri.

214-217. The excellent pious sage, seeing the best of the Raghus to have come, with joy went forth with his wife to greet him. Having seated him, along with Sītā, on a very auspicious and divine seat, he affectionately offered him materials of worship, water for washing his feet and for sipping, and various garments, *madhuparka*, so also ornaments and unction. His wife Anasūyā affectionately gave Sītā divine and excellent garments and bright ornaments. She fed Rāma with divine food, drink and eatables, etc.

218-219. Prince Rāma, along with Lakṣmaṇa, very devoutly honoured by him, lived there for a day. When it dawned, Rāma got up, took himself round the great sage, saluted him, and set about going.

220-221. Permitted by him the lotus-eyed Rāma went to the Daṇḍaka forest thronged by great sages. There he killed the very fierce demon named Virādha and then entered the auspicious hermitage of Śarabhaṅga.

222. He, on seeing Rāma, had his sins instantly destroyed and went, along with gandharvas and celestial nymphs to Brahmā's world.

223-224. One by one Rāma went to the hermitages of Sutiḥṣṇa, of Agastya, of Agastya's brother also, and was honoured by them. Then Rāma lived very happily and for a long time in Pañcavaṭī, on the auspicious bank of Godāvarī.

225-227. On going there the greatest sages, the religious ascetics, worshipped the lotus-eyed Rāma, the lord of the souls. They acquainted him with the threat coming from the hosts of demons. Having comforted them, he gave them the gift of fearlessness. After being honoured by him they went to their own hermitages. Rāma passed thirteen happy years there.

228-229a. After sometime, the demoness, Rāvaṇa's unconquerable sister of a fierce form, entered the charming Pañcavaṭī on the auspicious bank of Godāvarī.

229b-235a. Having seen the excellent Raghu (i.e. Rāma) resembling a crore of Cupids, dark like lotus-leaves, having large, lotus-like eyes, a raised nose, large arms, a conch-like neck, and a large chin, resembling a red lotus, with his palms marked with lotuses, adorned with a row of nails like the spotless moon resembling glossy and tender dūrvā (grass), an auspicious treasure of delicacy, wearing a yellow silken garment, adorned with all ornaments, of the age of a youth, having a body deluding the world, the demoness, oppressed by Cupid's arrows, approached Rāma having lotus-like eyes, and said to him:

The demoness said:

235b-236. Who are you, dwelling in the Daṇḍaka forest in the guise of an ascetic? Why have you come to (this forest) difficult to be approached (even) by demons? Quickly tell the truth. (Please) do not tell a lie.

Maheśvara said:

237-240a. That Rāma, thus addressed, laughed and said:

Rāma said:

I am king Daśaratha's son, called Rāma. This archer is my innocent younger brother, Lakṣmaṇa. This is my dear wife Sītā, Janaka's daughter. By my father's order I have come to this forest. With a desire to do good to the sages, we are roaming in this great forest. O beautiful lady, why have you come to my hermitage? Who are you? In whose family are you born? Tell me the whole truth.

Maheśvara said:

240b. Thus addressed by Rāma, she said fearlessly:

The demoness said:

241-245a. O king, I am the daughter of Viśravas and the sister of Rāvaṇa. I am Śūrpaṇakhā by name, and am well-known in the three worlds. O lord, this Daṇḍaka forest is given to me by my brother. Eating groups of sages I roam in the great forest. Seeing you, an excellent sage, I, tormented by Cupid's arrows, and being very fearless, have come (here) with a desire to dally with you. O best king, please be my husband. O king, I desire to devour this Sītā (wife) of you. With you I shall dally in the forest with prominent mountains.

Maheśvara said:

245b-252a. Seeing the demoness, after having spoken like this, ready to devour Sītā, Śrī Rāma raised his sword and cut off her nose and ears. The demoness, with her face deformed, and weeping with fear, entered Khara's house, and told him Rāma's act. He, the killer of his enemies, surrounded by thousands of demons, and with Dūṣaṇa and Triśiras, came to fight violently with Rāma. Rāma easily killed those demons of huge bodies in the fearful forest with arrows resembling Death (i.e. with fatal arrows). With arrows resembling serpents he knocked down in the battle Khara, Triśiras and the very powerful Dūṣaṇa. Having killed all the demons living in the Daṇḍaka forest, and worshipped by hosts of gods and praised by great sages, (Rāma) lived in Daṇḍaka forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa.

252b-255a. Learning about the murder of the demons, Rāvaṇa, rendered violent with anger, came along with the wicked

Mārica to Janasthāna. That demon Rāvaṇa came to Pañcavaṭī with Mārica of an illusory deer-form, and when Daśaratha's sons were away from the hermitage he, desiring his own murder, kidnapped Sītā, the wife of Rāma.

255b-257a. The powerful Jaṭāyu, the king of vultures, seeing her being kidnapped, fought due to his affection for Rāma with the demon. Rāvaṇa who resisted his enemies, killed him with the strength of his arms and entered the city of Laṅkā.

257b-261. Having kept Sītā in the Aśoka-grove he, desiring death by Rāma's arrow, entered his house. And Rāma having killed the demon Mārica who had taken up the form of a deer, again came there (i.e. to his hermitage) with his brother Lakṣmaṇa. Coming to know that Sītā was kidnapped by a demon, the very intelligent son of Daśaratha, being tormented by great grief, lamented. Looking for Sītā in the forest, he, on his way seeing a very mighty vulture fallen on the ground with his feet and wings cut off and with his entire body full of blood, was amazed.

262a. The glorious Rāma asked him: "Who desired to kill you and why?"

262b. The vulture, on seeing Rāma, very gently spoke:

The vulture said:

263. O Rāma, the mighty Rāvaṇa has kidnapped your wife. He, the chief of the demons, struck me in the battle.

Maheśvara said:

264-266. Having spoken like this, he suddenly cast his life before Rāma. Rāma performed his obsequies according to the Vedic precepts. And he gave him his own eternal abode, fit to be reached by meditating saints. The best bird, the vulture, attained salvation, the final position due to the common form of Viṣṇu. Then Rāma went to Mālyavat (mountain), to the auspicious hermitage of Mataṅga.

267-270. He went to the pious, glorious Śabari. That best among Viṣṇu's devotees, seeing Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, went forth to greet them. Having saluted and seated them on a seat of *darbhas*, she washed their feet. With her mind full of joy she devoutly worshipped them with fragrant wild flowers. She, of a firm vow, then offered the two descendants of Raghu (viz. Rāma and Lakṣ-

maṇa) fragrant fruits and sweet roots. (Rāma,) the descendant of Kakutstha, gave her the highest liberation.

271-273. Then Rāma, killer of his enemies, having gone to the Pampā lake killed there the demon Kabandha of a fierce form. The very vigorous one, having killed him, burnt him. (Then) he (i.e. Kabandha) went to heaven. Then the lotus-eyed Rāma, having gone to Godāvarī, asked her, "O Gaṅgā, do you know my dear (wife) Sītā?" That Gaṅgā, covered with ignorance, did not tell him (anything).

274-275. Rāma angrily cursed her: "Be of red water." Then being dejected she through fear, led by great sages, and being helpless and with the palms of her hands joined sought Rāma's refuge. Then all great sages said to the eternal Rāma:

The sages said:

276. Gaṅgā, purifying the three worlds, has risen from your lotus-like feet. O lord of the world, you alone can free her from the curse.

Maheśvara said:

277a. Then the pious Rāma, affectionate to those who seek his shelter, said:

Rāma said:

277bc. May this Gaṅgā, destroying sins, be free from my curse merely by Śabari's bath and united with auspicious water.

278-279. Speaking like this, the very powerful Rāma made, with the tip of his Śārṅga bow, the Śabari-tīrtha like Gaṅgā and Gayā. In its water was the holy place of great devotees of Viṣṇu. "Undoubtedly that form becomes venerable to the world."

280-282a. Speaking like this the descendant of Kakutstha went to R̥ṣyamūka mountain. Then on the bank of Pampā lake he was joined by the monkey Hanūmat. At his words (i.e. request) he came in contact with Sugrīva. At the words (i.e. request) of Sugrīva, Rāma, having bound Vālin, the lord of monkeys, consecrated Sugrīva on that kingdom.

282b-287. And the lord of monkeys desiring to find out

Sītā, sent heroes like Hanūmat. Hanūmat, the son of Wind, entered the city of Laṅkā and saw (there) the helpless Sītā emaciated due to fasting and being very much grieved, with her body smeared with dirt and mud, and wearing a dirty garment. The monkey, having shown her the token of recognition and having told her the news (about Rāma), having killed seven sons of the ministers, so also Rāvaṇa's son, after having uprooted the pillar of the gateway, and having cheered up Sītā, destroyed the grove, the garden-keepers, the servants and the chief leaders of the army.

288-291. By chance he was arrested by Rāvaṇa's son. Seeing the lord of demons and having also talked to him, the monkey burnt the city of Laṅkā with the fire from his (burning) tail. Having taken the token of recognition given by her (i.e. Sītā) he again came (back to Rāma). The very lustrous chief of monkeys, approached the lotus-eyed Rāma and reported to him that he had actually seen Sītā. Rāma, with Sugrīva, and surrounded by many monkeys, went to the shore of the great ocean, and kept his army there.

292-294. Rāvaṇa's younger brother called Bibhiṣaṇa, who was pious, veracious, and best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu, knowing Rāma to have arrived, abandoned his elder brother (Rāvaṇa), so also the kingdom, sons, wife, and submitted himself to Rāma. At the words of Hanūmat the lord accepted him, and granting protection to the gentle one, consecrated him on the kingdom (i.e. the throne) of the demons.

295-297. Then Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha, desiring to cross the ocean, approached him, and he, the mighty one, seeing the very clean water, took up the Śārṅga bow and dried up the ocean with volleys of arrows. Then the ocean, the lord of rivers, yielded himself to the descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma), the treasure of pity. Then Rāma again filled the ocean with the Varuṇa missile.

298-299. Then on the ocean, the abode of alligators, Nala constructed a bridge with rocks brought by the monkeys. Then the great army entered the city of Laṅkā, and a great battle between the monkeys and the demons was fought.

300-306. Then Rāvaṇa's very mighty son Indrajit bound both Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with magical nooses (literally, serpent-

nooses). Garuḍa, having come (there), let loose the nooses. The very powerful monkeys killed all the demons. In the battle Rāma killed Rāvaṇa's younger brother, the very strong Kumbhakarṇa, with arrows resembling flames of fire. With the missile presided over by Brahmā the angry Indrajit knocked down the monkeys. The mountain having great herbs was brought by Hanūmat. And all got up (alive) by the touch of it that was brought. Then Rāma's brave younger brother (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa), knocked down with arrows Indra's conqueror (i.e. Indrajit) as Indra did Vṛtra. The very strong Rāvaṇa set out with his complete army and ministers to fight with Rāma on the battlefield. The battle between the monkeys and demons took place on all sides.

307-321. A battle took place between Rāma and Rāvaṇa; so also with Lakṣmaṇa. The lord of demons knocked down-Lakṣmaṇa with (the missile called) Śakti. Then the angry Rāma, of great lustre and the destroyer of the demons, killed the demon soldiers with arrows resembling Yama, the god of death, and destroying everything. Rāma very much covered the demon Rāvaṇa with thousands of blazing arrows resembling the rod of (Yama, the god of) Death. The demon, with his entire body pierced with missiles of Rāma, fled through fear from the battlefield to Laṅkā. Seeing the world full of Rāma, he entered his house through dejection. Then Hanūmat brought the great mountain with great herbs. Due to that Rāma's younger brother regained consciousness. Then with a desire for victory Rāvaṇa commenced a sacrifice. The chief monkeys then destroyed it of a magical form. Then Rāvaṇa again set out, after getting into a divine chariot and along with many demons, to fight with Rāma. Then the intelligent Indra sent to Rāma a divine chariot, yoked with bay horses and with a charioteer. The best of the Raghus, having got into the chariot brought by Mātalin (Indra's charioteer), and being praised by hosts of gods, fought with that demon. Then a great, very fierce battle, with weapons and missiles took place day and night for a week between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. All the gods, remaining in aeroplanes, witnessed the battle. The best of the Raghus cut off the heads of Rāvaṇa, which many times sprang up due to the boon of Śiva. Rāma quickly discharged a very fierce missile sacred to Brahmā and resembling the fire at the time of the deluge to kill the wicked one. That missile, dis-

charged by Rāghava, tore Rāvaṇa's chest, pierced the earth and went to the nether world, and being honoured by serpents (again) came back to Rāma's hand. That great demon losing his life, fell down and died.

322-325. Then all the hosts of gods with their minds full of joy, dropped showers of flowers on the noble lord of the world. The chiefs of gandharvas sang (his praise) and bebies of celestial nymphs danced. So also auspicious breezes blew, and the sun was very bright. Sages, siddhas, gods and kinnaras praised (him). The best of the Raghu-family consecrated the greatest demon Bibhīṣaṇa on the throne of Laṅkā, and looked upon himself as having accomplished his object. Having consecrated Bibhīṣaṇa Rāma then said these words to Bibhīṣaṇa :

Rāma said:

326-327. As long as the moon and the sun exist, as long as the earth exists, as long as my account exists, the kingdom (of Laṅkā) will rest with Bibhīṣaṇa. Being very powerful, reach, along with the host of your sons and grandsons, my divine, ancient abode accessible to meditating saints.

The lord said:

328-330. The very mighty one, Rāma, having thus given a boon to the demon and having approached Sītā, spoke many harsh and censurable words to her in the assembly of people. The chaste lady much censured by him entered fire. Then all the hosts of gods led by Śiva, Brahmā, seeing the mother (i.e. Sītā) entering fire, were afflicted by fear, and approaching the greatest of Raghus, said, with their palms joined, to him :

Gods said:

331-339. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of large arms and of a great valour, listen. Sītā is extremely pure. She never violates your norms of conduct. You should not abandon her wrongly, as the sun does not give up his light. She is the mother of the entire world, and is support of the whole world. Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarna were your former highly devoted servants. Due to the curse of Sanaka etc. they were born on the earth. For their liberation Sītā was seized (by Rāvaṇa) in the Daṇḍaka forest.

The two pre-eminent demons were killed by you. They are (now) liberated, and with their sons, grandsons and followers have gone to heaven. You are Viṣṇu; you are the highest Brahman; you are the ancient one meditated upon by the meditating saints. You alone, of all gods, are the immutable (god) without a beginning or an end. You are the glorious Nārāyaṇa. Sītā is the ancient Lakṣmī. She is the mother of all the worlds. You, O highest lord, are the father. This mother of the world is eternal and shall never abandon you. O best of the Raghus, as you are omnipresent, so also she is. Therefore, O you descendant of Kakutstha, O you gentle one, accept this chaste Sītā of a good conduct and a strong vow, as (Lakṣmī) from the Milky Ocean.

The lord said:

340. In the meanwhile Fire, the observer of the world, brought Sītā there, and handed her over to Rāma in the vicinity (i.e. the presence) of gods. Fire, present in all bodies, then said to the descendant of Kakutstha:

Fire said:

341. O lord, this Sītā is of a good conduct and is sinless. O Rāma, accept her quickly. I have told you the truth.

The lord said:

342-343. Then Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, having accepted Sītā at the words of Fire, (and) being worshipped by the best gods, was pleased. Those excellent monkeys who were killed in the battle by the demons, came back to life and got up due to the boon of the grandsire.

344-347. Then (Bibhīṣaṇa,) the lord of demons gave Rāma the aeroplane named Puṣpaka which resembled the sun, which belonged to Kubera, and which was seized (from Kubera) by his brother (Rāvaṇa). He (also) gave Rāma garments and ornaments. The brave, glorious Rāma, Daśaratha's son, honoured by him got into the excellent aeroplane along with Sītā and his brave brother Lakṣmaṇa, so also along with the hosts of bears and monkeys, the noble Sugrīva, the brave Bibhīṣaṇa, and the very mighty demons.

348-352a. All the bears, monkeys and demons got into the

aeroplane and the ever-liberated noble ones got into an aeroplane of Vaikuṇṭha. Rāma, being praised by best gods, proceeded to Ayodhyā. Rāma of a genuine valour went to Bharadvāja's hermitage, and sent Hanūmat near Bharata. The best monkey having gone to the fisherman's house, saw Guha, a devotee of Viṣṇu, and told him about Rāma's arrival. Then from there he went to Nandigrāma, saw Rāma's younger brother and told him about the joyous occasion of Rāma's arrival.

352b-357. Having learnt from the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) about the arrival of Rāma, Bharata, along with his younger brother and friends, obtained incomparable joy. Having again come back to Rāma, Hanūmat, the son of Wind, told all that Bharata did. Rāma also along with his younger brother got down from the best aeroplane and saluted with his wife Bharadvāja, the treasure of penance. The sage honoured the descendant of Kakutstha along with his younger brother by (offering him) cooked food, fruits, roots etc. and garments and ornaments. Honoured by him, Rāma saluted the best sage, and permitted by him, again, along with his followers, and surrounded by his friends went to Nandigrāma in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane).

358-361. Kekayī's son (Bharata) with his younger brother and along with his ministers and chief citizens, so also strong best kings, gladly went forth to greet his elder brother (Rāma). Approaching the best of Raghus, he, surrounded by his followers, saluted him. Rāma, the tormentor of his enemies, got down from the Puṣpaka aeroplane, and embraced Bharata and Śatrughna. The very lustrous one, along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, saluted his family priest Vasiṣṭha, and relatives like his old mothers.

362-368a. Bharata embraced Bibhiṣaṇa, Sugriva, Jāmbavanta, so also Aṅgada, Hanūmat and Suṣeṇa. After an auspicious bath along with his brother and attendants, he, having divine flowers and garments and smeared with divine sandal and being praised by gods, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, got into a divine auspicious chariot occupied by Sumanta. Bharata, Sugriva, Śatrughna and Bibhiṣaṇa, Aṅgada and Suṣeṇa, Jāmbavat, Hanūmat, Nīla, Nala, Subhaga, Śarabha, Gandhamādana and other brave monkeys, so also Guha, the lord of the Niṣādas, very brave demons and very powerful greatest kings, mounted many auspicious elephants and horses.

368b-369. The highly lustrous one entered the indestructible city of Sāketa to the accompaniment of many auspicious musical instruments, many eulogies, and along with bears, monkeys, demons and excellent warriors of Niṣādas (i.e. fishermen). Prince Rāma, on seeing the capital, and thinking only of his father king (Daśaratha) on the way, entered the house purified by the movements of the meritorious feet of Sugrīva, Māruti and Bibhiṣaṇa.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Rāma's Consecration

Śaṅkara said:

1-17a. On that auspicious day at an auspicious moment people performed auspicious acts for the consecration of the pious one. These sages—Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Jābāli, and Kaśyapa, Mārkaṇḍeya, Maudgalya, Parvata, so also Nārada, performed the auspicious consecration of the best king there with muttering of hymns and sacrifices. Having seated Rāma along with Sītā on an auspicious golden seat full of (i.e. decked with) jewels, as Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī, the sages who had fulfilled their vows, muttered the auspicious Vedic hymns in honour of Viṣṇu and consecrated the descendant of Kakutstha and the lord of the world with pure water which was purified with hymns, was (brought) from all holy places, was holy, which had auspicious substances in it, was furnished with tips of dūrvā grass, tulasī-leaves, flowers and sandal. At that most auspicious moment gods beat drums in heaven and dropped showers of flowers from all sides. With his queen (Sītā) the descendant of Raghu adorned with divine garments, ornaments, divine sandal and unguents and with various kinds of flowers looked superb in the company of the sages, the masters of the Vedas. At that time Lakṣmaṇa held the divine umbrella and chowrie. By his side(s) Bharata and Śatrughna stood brilliantly with fans. Bibhiṣaṇa, the lord of demons, gave him the mirror. Sugrīva, the lord of the monkeys, held a pitcher full (of water), and the very lustrous Jāmbavat

(held) a charming garland of flowers. Vālin's son gave Rāma a tām̐būla with camphor. Hunūmat (held) many divine lamps, and Suṣeṇa (held) an auspicious flag. The ministers, surrounding the noble one, waited upon him. Sṛṣṭi, Jayanta, Vijaya, Saurāṣṭra, Rāṣṭravardhana, Akopa, Dharmapāla, and Sumantra are said to be (his) ministers. Kings, best men, lords of various countries, citizens, traders, old men waited upon the king. He was surrounded by bears, chief monkeys, ministers, kings, demons, principal brāhmaṇas and servants. *

17b-23. As the lord of Lakṣmī completely united with deities in the highest heaven (shines), similarly the best glorious king then shone in Sāketa. The hosts of gods seated in aeroplanes and with their minds full of joy, so also gandharvas and hosts of the celestial nymphs, praised with shouts of victory the descendant of Kakutṣtha, the best of the Raghus, whose hands reached his knees, who had worn a yellow garment, whose neck was like a conch, whose chest was large, who had (put on) beautiful ornaments, who was seated with queen (Sītā), and who was consecrated. Then Rāma, consecrated by great sages like Vasiṣṭha, shone with Sītā like god Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. Śiva afraid due to Rāma's being a great mortal, of waiting on his lotus-like feet, seeing Rāma was pleased and with delight praised him. He folded the palms of his hands, was full of joy, and had a faltering (voice). He delighted all gods, sages and monkeys also.

Mahādeva said:

24-30. Salutation to the original source, to the eternal highest soul, to the one having the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss, to the one identical with the universe, to the creator. Salutation to Viṣṇu the bulb, the root of continuous joy, to the form delighting the three worlds; salutation to the one venerable to Brahmā and Indra, to one bringing about the welfare and giving protection from fear. Salutation to the one of the form of Viṣṇu. O you of the form of everything, salutation to you. Salutation to (you) the cause of creation, sustenance and destruction (of the world), to (you) of three qualities, to you of the form having no limitation, to the great soul. (Salutation to you) causing Nescience in the form of this goddess Sītā as a limiting adjunct. Salutation to both of you, the Puruṣa (the soul) and the Prakṛti

(the primordial matter), the author of the worlds. Salutation to the mother and the father of the world, to the mother (Sītā) and to Rāghava (i.e. Rāma). Salutation to you, of the form of visible world, and of the form without the visible world. Salutation to you, of the form of meditation, to the form of the Supreme Soul fit to be meditated upon by the meditating saints. Salutation to both of you devoid of change and no-change.

31-40. Salutation to you the supreme soul, of the form of the seed, to Sītā and to Rāma. Sītā is Lakṣmī; you are Viṣṇu. Sītā is Pārvatī; you are Śiva. Sītā herself is Sāvitrī; you are the four-faced Brahmā. Sītā is Indrāṇī; you are Indra. Sītā is Svāhā (the oblation made to all gods); you are Fire. Sītā is the destructive goddess; you are of the form of Yama. Sītā is all wealth; you are Kubera, O best of Raghus. Sītā is goddess Rudrāṇī; you are very strong Rudra. Sītā is goddess Rohiṇī; you are the Moon giving pleasure to the world. Sītā is Saṁjñā; you are the Sun. Sītā is the Night; you are the Day. Sītā is goddess Mahākālī. You always are Mahākāla. In the three worlds whatever is of the feminine gender is Sītā. Whatever is marked with the masculine gender is you, O lord. O lord of all gods, Sītā is the supporter everywhere. Then you are also there to protect. Her power sustains the universe. Therefore, the merit marked (acquired?) by you two is a crore-fold. Your deeds marked (described?) by Śiva and Śakti, give peace. O Rāma, we two are venerable to the world. You two are always venerable to us. Gaurī mutters your name. I mutter your formula. To one desiring to die at Maṇi-karṇikā and remaining in half of its water I give your emancipating formula, giving (i.e. leading to) Brahman.

41. Therefore, O lord of Jānakī, you are certainly the highest Brahman. All deluded by you do not know you truly.

The lord said:

42-50. Thus addressed by Śambhu, Rāma who had assumed a divine form and was of a wonderful appearance, became disposed to favour. Seeing him of that form, men, monkeys and deities were not able even to see that lustrous, great, wonderful (form). The best gods, through fear saluted him devoutly. Rāma, realising that men, monkeys and deities were frightened, took up the illusory human form and again spoke to the gods:

Rāmacandra said:

O gods, listen. That man who will everyday praise me with the hymn told by Śiva, will be equal to a god. Freed from all sins he obtains my nature. In a battle he gets victory and is never repulsed. He is not tormented by ghosts, vampires and female deities to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes. A sonless man obtains a son. A maiden gets a husband. A poor man obtains wealth and would become virtuous and of good disposition. The glorious one has the power equal to that of the (highest) soul. There is no doubt about it. In all acts and undertakings men have no obstacle. Whatever desire, difficult to be fulfilled, is entertained by a man is satisfied within six months due to the grace of this eulogy. By means of this hymn is obtained the fruit a crore times more than the religious merit obtained in all holy places and all sacrifices.

The lord said:

51-53. Speaking like this Rāmacandra dismissed Maheśvara. He (also) dismissed all gods like Brahmā that had come there. Rāmacandra honoured all men and dismissed with affection all men, monkeys and deities full of love. All of them thus dismissed by him, went very much delighted, reciting the great hymn uttered by the lord and remembering Rāma of a universal form.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Rāma Goes to Heaven

Śaṅkara said:

1-6. Rāma enjoyed with Sītā royal pleasures as desired while protecting directions on all sides for a thousand years. All inmates of the harem, so also the citizens, censured Sītā who had stayed in the demon's house. Rāma who warded off his enemies, through fear of public scandal, and exhibiting human behaviour, abandoned the princess (Sītā) who was pregnant, in the assembly of sages in Vālmīki's holy hermitage in a large forest on the bank

of Gaṅgā. Dependent upon her husband she stayed in the sage's house. Taken care of by the sage Vālmiki, she was honoured by sages' wives. There only she gave birth to twin sons named Kuśa and Lava. Educated and trained by the sage they grew there only.

7-13a. Rāma too, along with his brothers, protected the earth. He, the king, endowed with virtues like restraint, and free from all enjoyments, always worshipping Viṣṇu having no beginning or end, and highly devoted to celibacy, ruled over the earth. Śatrughna, the righteous descendant of Raghu, having killed Lavaṇa, ruled, along with his two sons, over Mathurā created by gods. Bharata, having killed gandharvas on both the sides of Sindhu, installed his two very mighty sons in that country. The very powerful Lakṣmaṇa, having killed the Madras in the western Madra country, consecrated his two brave sons, and again going back to Ayodhyā, touched Rāma's feet. (Rāma,) the descendant of Kakutstha brought back to life the son of a brāhmaṇa that had met death, and then killed a śūdra ascetic.

13b-17. Then Rāma, the killer of his enemy's heroes performed a horse-sacrifice in the Naimiṣa (forest) in the assembly of people on the bank of Gautamī. Rāghava, knowing the highest truth, fashioned a golden (image of) Jānakī, and with that the very mighty one performed many sacrifices. The lord performed various sacrifices, complete with presents, like myriads of horse-sacrifices, Vājapeya sacrifices, Agniṣṭoma, Viśvajit, Gomedha and Śatakratu. In the meanwhile, Vālmiki of a very great (i.e. severe) penance (to his credit) brought Sītā there, and said these words to Rāma:

Vālmiki said:

18. O you of a good vow, you do not deserve to abandon (i.e. please do not abandon) sinless Sītā. This chaste one is free from passion and is like light to the sun. O descendant of Kakutstha, she is identical with you. O sinless one, why did you abandon her?

Rāma said:

19-22. O brāhmaṇa, from your words I understand that Sītā is sinless. The chaste lady was formerly kidnapped by Rāvaṇa in the secluded Daṇḍaka (forest). Having killed him in

battle, and having properly taken Sītā who was purified and who came out of Agni's mouth, I came to Ayodhyā (again). There was a great public scandal among the citizens. Being afraid of it I abandoned her of a good conduct, near you. Therefore, for satisfying the people, Sītā who is highly devoted to me, must convince the kings and great sages (of her innocence).

Maheśvara said:

23-24. Thus addressed the chaste Sītā put forward a proof amazing the people in the assembly of sages and kings. Showing those people her sole devotion to Rāma, the chaste Sītā, with the palms of her hands folded, said in the assembly of all (people):

Sītā said:

25-26. Since I have not thought of anyone except Rāma, may goddess Earth give me a cavity. Since I spoke the truth that I do not know anyone else but Rāma, Dharanī (i.e. the Earth) would at once come to her daughter Vaidehī.

Maheśvara said:

27-32. Then the lord of birds, the hero, knowing the mother (had come) from below the earth, held a seat full of jewels. Then goddess Dharanī, holding Sītā with both her hands, greeted her with a welcome, and seated her on the seat. Seeing her seated on the seat, the hosts of gods in heaven profusely and continuously scattered a shower of flowers on divine Sītā. She too, the ancient one, being honoured by divine damsels mounted on Garuḍa, and went to heaven by that path. On her front the goddess of the world was surrounded by hosts of maids. She reached the highest ancient abode, accessible to the meditating saints. Seeing her entering the lower world, all men shouted loudly: "Well (done), well (done), This is Sītā."

33-36. Rāma, overcome by grief, took both his sons and along with sages and best kings entered Sāketa. Then after a long time, (Rāma's) mothers who had fulfilled their vows, died and went to the heaven of their husband (i.e. to the heaven where Daśaratha had gone). Rāma who had fulfilled his vows righteously, ruled over the kingdom for ten thousand and ten hundred

years. Sometime the god of death came to Rāma's abode in the guise of an ascetic and spoke (these) words :

Death (Kāla) said:

37-38. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of large arms, I am sent by the Creator. O best of Raghus, O very intelligent one, listen to what I say. We shall carry on a conversation (lit. wordy duel). He who enters in between (i.e. disturbs us) will merit death.

Maheśvara said:

39. Promising him with the words "All right" the lotus-eyed Rāma placed Lakṣmaṇa at the door. Then Death spoke (these) words: Yama (Death) spoke to Rāma, Daśaratha's son:

Kāla (Death) said:

40-42. O Rāma, listen to what led to my arrival. You descended on the mortal world, saying, after having killed the two best demons: "I would live in the mortal world for ten thousand and ten hundred years." Thus (also) told by the hosts of gods (you have stayed for that much period). Now the time for you to go (back) to heaven has come. O sinless one, let the gods today have the lord in you.

Maheśvara said:

43. To the great sage Rāma said, "Let it be so". In the meanwhile the great ascetic Durvāsas came to the gate of the royal palace and spoke (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa:

Durvāsas said:

44. O prince, O descendant of Kakutstha, go quickly and report to Rāma (about the arrival of) me.

Maheśvara said:

45. To him Lakṣmaṇa said: "O brāhmaṇa, (Rāma has ordered that) no person should be allowed near (him)." Then the best sage overcome by anger said:

Durvāsas said:

46a. I shall pronounce a curse if you do not present me to Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha.

Maheśvara said:

46b-53. Due to the fear of the curse (Lakṣmaṇa) reported to Rāma (the arrival of) the sage. There only Death causing fear to all beings vanished. The king worshipped sage Durvāsas that had come (there). That best Raghu, Lakṣmaṇa, knowing that promise of his elder brother, gave up his human form in the water of Sarayū. Giving up the human form he entered his own body. He having a thousand hoods, and having a lustre of a crore of moons, having divine flowers and garments, smeared with divine sandal, surrounded by thousands of serpent-damsels, well-adorned, having got into a divine aeroplane, went to the abode of Viṣṇu. The best Raghu Kākutstha (i.e. Rāma) knowing Lakṣmaṇa's going to heaven, also desired to go to heaven. Then Rāma, having consecrated his sons Kuśa and Lava, having divided wealth along with chariots, elephants and horses gave it to them. The best of Raghus installed righteously on his kingdom (i.e. throne) Kuśa at Kuśavatī and Lava at Śarasvatī.

54-58. Knowing the intention of Rāma who had realised his soul all the very powerful monkeys and demons came there. (They were) Bibhiṣaṇa, Sugrīva, Jāmbavat, (Māruti) the Wind's son, Nīla, Nala, Suśeṇa, and Guha, the lord of the Niṣādas. Śatrughna also consecrated his brave sons as kings, and all of them came to Ayodhyā protected by Rāma. Having saluted the noble one, with their palms joined they said to him:

The monkeys and others said:

O best of the Raghus, having come to know that you are ready to go to heaven, we have come (here) to follow you. O lord, O Rāma, we cannot live without you (even) for a moment. Therefore, O large-eyed one, with you we shall go to the abode of gods.

Maheśvara said:

59. Thus addressed by them the descendant of Kakutstha said: "All right." Then the very lustrous one said to Bibhiṣaṇa, the lord of demons:

Rāma said:

60. Rule over your kingdom righteously. Do not falsify your promise. Being well pleased enjoy as long as the moon, the sun and the earth remain. Then at the (proper) time come to my place.

Maheśvara said:

61-62. Speaking like this the lotus-eyed Rāma affectionately gave to him his ancient (image of) Viṣṇu, gentle and lying (on Śeṣa) and the family deity of the Ikṣvākus. To Hanūmat Rāma, the killer of his enemies, said:

Rāma said:

63. O lord of monkeys, as long as my stories go on (being narrated) on the earth, remain on the earth. At the (proper) time, O you of a good vow, go to me.

Maheśvara said:

64a. Speaking like this to him, Rāma said to Jāmbavat:

Rāma said:

64b-65. When Dvāpara (age) will come, I shall again be born on the earth in the family of Yadus for destroying the burden of the earth. O best of bears, I shall (then) fight with you.

Maheśvara said:

66-72. The very powerful Rāma, the descendant of Kakutstha, having thus spoken to him, said to all the bears and monkeys (these words): “(Please) go.” Ministers, traders, Bharata, the son of Kaikayī, determined to follow Rāma, came (there). Then the celibate, wearing white garments, went to the Supreme Spirit. Holding kuśas in his hands the restrained one went to the Supreme Spirit. To Rāma’s right side was Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī) with a lotus in her hand. Similarly to the side other than the right (i.e. to the left side) was goddess Dharaṇī (i.e. the earth). O Pārvatī, in the same way Vedas with the Vedāṅgas, Purāṇas with Itihāsas, Omkāra, Vaṣaṭkāra, so also Sāvitrī purifying the world, followed Rāma. Missiles, weapons like bows etc., all having male

bodies followed Rāma. Bharata and Śatrughna, so also all citizens with their sons, wives and attendants went after Rāma.

73-78. Ministers, hosts of attendants, servants, traders, so also monkeys, bears along with Sugrīva and with their sons, wives went after the very intelligent descendant of Kakutstha. Beasts and birds, so also all immobile and mobile objects went after the noble one. So also the best men who saw the descendant of Kakutstha going to heaven. They who thus followed Rāma, did not return. Then having gone over three yojanas he saw Sarayū on the western side. With his followers he entered Sarayū of auspicious water. Then Brahmā, the grandsire, surrounded by hosts of all gods, and along with sages praised the best among Raghus with (suitable) words. He said to Rāma who had entered the water of the Sarayū (river):

Brahmā said:

79-81. O Viṣṇu, come, prosperity to you. O you who honour (others), you have luckily come (here). With your brothers, lustrous like gods, enter your own body of Viṣṇu, which is very bright, divine and ancient. O god, you are the refuge of the world; only few do not take cognizance of you who are inconceivable, noble, immutable, and comprising everything. O you of great lustre, enter that body which you desire (to enter).

Maheśvara said:

82-91. When he was full of the sun's rays, and when showers of flowers were dropped on him, he abandoned the human form and entered his own body. Both the noble Śatrughna and Bharata, endowed with divine lustre, were with him with the conch and the disc, his portions. He, the four-armed one, who had a conch, a disc, a mace, and the Śārṅga (bow) in his hands, who was possessed of divine ornaments, who had (his body) smeared with divine sandal, who had worn divine yellow garments, whose eyes were like lotus-leaves, who was a youth, whose body was handsome, who was bright with delicate parts, whose hair was very glossy, dark and curly, who had auspicious marks, who was dark like fresh dūrvā-sprouts, whose face resembled the full moon, got along with the two goddesses into an aeroplane,

and he, the lord, of a great lustre, praised by all gods, sat on the divine throne at the root of the desire-yielding tree. Those bears, monkeys and men, just on touching the water of Sarayū, happily cast their life. Due to Rāma's grace all they were handsome and had divine forms. They had worn divine flowers and garments; they had divine, auspicious lustre. There were innumerable men. Śrī Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, surrounded by all, worshipped by hosts of gods and siddhas, praised by all gods, got into the aeroplane.

92-95. The lord came to his own eternal, divine, imperishable place. O you of a beautiful appearance, one who would recite the (full) account of Rāma, or would listen to a verse or half a verse or would devoutly remember it, would, being free from sins committed knowingly or unknowingly during crores of existences, reach, along with his sons and wife, without any effort, Viṣṇu's world, to be reached (only) through abstract meditation. O goddess, I have narrated to you this great account of Rāma. Due to the narration (of the account) of Rāma, I am blessed along with you, O goddess. O you of an excellent face, what else do you desire to know? I shall narrate all that.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

The Brave Deeds of Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Pārvati said:

1-2. O lord, you have told well the story of Rāma. Having heard it through your grace, I am happy, O great god. O lord of gods, I desire to hear the great story removing sins, of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva.

Rudra said:

3-8a. O goddess, listen. I shall narrate (to you) the story giving all fruits to men, of the noble Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva's son. O goddess, in the family of Yadus was born the son of Devamīdhā,

called Vasudeva, the best among those knowing Dharma. The prince duly married Devakī of a divine complexion, the daughter of Devaka (Ugrasena's brother), in Mathurā. Kāṁsa was the brave and very strong son of Ugrasena. With the two (Vasudeva and Devakī?) the charioteer was driving the excellent chariot (*obscure*). When they came on a charming path bringing on auspiciousness, a divine voice gravely spoke from the air:

The heavenly voice said:

8b. O Kāṁsa, her eighth embryo (i.e. child) will take away your life.

Rudra said:

9. Having heard it, Kāṁsa set about killing his sister, Vasudeva, with presence of mind, said to him who was very much enraged:

Vasudeva said:

10. O glorious one, do not kill your legitimate sister. O very mighty king, just kill the embryos (i.e. children) that will be born.

Rudra said:

11-13. Saying "All right", Kāṁsa having arrested Vasudeva and Devakī, placed them in his charming house full of all pleasures. In the meanwhile, O goddess, goddess Dharaṇī (i.e. the Earth) very much troubled by the burden of sinners, suddenly went to Brahmā. Having gone to Brahmā, the lord of the world, Dharaṇī, the supporter of the people, said with a grave voice:

Dharaṇī said:

14-16. O Creator, O lord, I am unable to support these people. O you of a good vow, the sinful demons have put up on me. The very powerful ones destroy all good practices of the world. All men deriving their strength from unrighteousness are deluded by sin. In this world very little of religious merit is seen. O god, I have sustained (people) because of (their) religious merit, truth, purity and control. Therefore, I am unable to sustain the world springing from unrighteousness.

Rudra said:

17-18. Speaking like this goddess Dharaṇī vanished there only. Then all hosts of gods led by Brahmā and Rudra and great ascetics went to the lord of the world at the northern shore of the Milky Ocean, and praised him with divine eulogies. Then the lord who was pleased, said to all those best sages :

The lord (Viṣṇu) said:

19a. O hosts of gods, for what purpose have you come here?

Rudra said:

19b. Then the grandsire said to Viṣṇu, the god of gods :

Brahmā said:

20-22a. O god of gods, O lord of the world, the Earth is oppressed with burden. In the world many unconquerable demons are born, like Jarāsandha, Kāṁsa, Pralamba, Dhenuka and others. The wicked ones torment all old people. You are fit to take down the burden of the Earth.

Rudra said:

22bc. Thus addressed by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, the immutable lord of the world, spoke with a grave voice :

The lord (Viṣṇu) said:

23. O very powerful gods, descending (i.e. being born) in the family of the Yadus, I shall coolly remove the burden of the Earth.

Rudra said:

24. Thus addressed, all gods, having saluted Viṣṇu, went to their respective worlds, and thought of that highest god. Then the highest lord said to the Nārāyaṇī Māyā :

The lord said:

25-28. Taking the six sons of Hiraṇyākṣa to the earth, put them into (the womb of) Devakī, the wife of Vasudeva. The seventh one, a portion of Śeṣa, has already entered (Devakī).

Do not tarry. O you of an auspicious appearance, give it to Rohiṇī, her co-wife. Then in the eighth my portion will be born on Devakī. Then Mahānidrā, your ancient portion, will be born on Yaśodā, Nanda's wife. She will go to the great mountain Vinḍhya, and there being worshipped by gods led by Indra would kill the very powerful demons led by the demon Śumbha.

Rudra said:

29-38. Saying, "All right" Mahāmayā put the sons of Hiraṇyākṣa as the six embryos in (the womb of) Devakī one by one. The very powerful Kāṁsa killed them as soon as they were born. The seventh embryo was infused by a portion of Śeṣa. (Mahāmayā) took the growing embryo into (the womb of) Rohiṇī. Due to drawing out (saṁkarṣaṇāt) of the embryo, the immutable Saṁkarṣaṇa was born on her. On the eighth of the dark half of Bhādrapada (he was born) at an auspicious moment. Rohiṇī gave birth to a son, the lord Saṁkarṣaṇa. Then all hosts of gods seated in aeroplanes in the sky, and with their minds full of joy, praised Devakī. Then, O Pārvatī, in the tenth month (of her pregnancy) Viṣṇu was born on her at mid-night of the eighth of the dark half of Śrāvaṇa. He was dark like the petal of a blue lotus. His eyes were large like lotus-leaves. He had four arms. His body was handsome. He was graced with divine ornaments. On his chest were Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha (marks). He was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. This ancient Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu) was born of Vasudeva. Seeing Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the worlds, Vasudeva with his palms joined saluted him, full of the world, and said:

Vasudeva said:

39-41. O lord, O desire-yielding free to the devotees, O lord of the world, you are born of me (i.e. as my son). You, the highest being, are the one without a beginning or an end among the gods. O you inconceivable one, you are a great son. You are thought of by the meditating saints and are ancient. O you sustainer of the earth, you have become my son on the earth. The sinful demons, seeing this your wonderful majestic form will not bear the great vigour, O highest being.

Rudra said:

42-55a. Thus requested by him the ancient Viṣṇu withdrew his form possessed of four arms. He shone as a human being only with two hands. All the demons, his bodyguards, that were there, were deluded by his Māyā, and were covered by mental darkness. In the meanwhile Vasudeva, praised by all gods, took the god, and quickly went from that city. The very strong king of serpents devoutly covered him with a thousand hoods, and accompanied him, when it was raining. At that time the town-gates were opened due to the touch of his feet. Being broken they were wide open; and those (people) that were there, became unconscious. That river Yamunā, that was full, flowed with her water knee-deep only, when the noble one entered her (water). Having crossed Yamunā, the best of the Yadus, being praised by gods, entered (Vraja—the station of cowherds) situated on her bank. There, that wife of Nanda, delivered in the auspicious cow-pen. She who was asleep was deluded by Māyā and covered with Tamas (darkness). That Yādava (i.e. Vasudeva) having placed on her bed the god (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), and taking that daughter again went (back) to Mathurā. Having given that daughter to his wife (Devakī), he remained well-composed. She who was on Devakī's bed, wept due to her being a child. Having heard the voice of the girl in the house, the bodyguards informed Kāṁsa of the auspicious delivery of Devakī. Kāṁsa quickly came there, and seized the girl, and then threw her on a stone. She too quickly went to the sky. Placing her foot on his head, she stood with her full face (visible). The goddess with eight arms said to the lord of demons:

The goddess said:

55b-56. O dull one, what is the use of having thrown me? He who will kill you, is born. He, who is the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of the world is born in this world. He will snatch your life.

Rudra said:

57-58. Having spoken like this, the goddess filling the sky with her lustre, and being praised by gods and gandharvas, suddenly went to the Himālaya mountain. Then Kāṁsa, with his

mind dejected, and oppressed by fear, called his demons led by Pralamba, Cāpūra, and said to them:

Kaṁsa said:

59-61. All hosts of gods, through our fear, have gone to the Milky Ocean, and have told everything about the destruction of the demons to Viṣṇu. Hearing their words, the supporter of the earth, the immutable one is born on the earth as a human being. So today, all you demons, taking any form as you desire, kill, without any fear children of excessive might.

Rudra said:

62-63. Having thus ordered (them), and having comforted and freed Vasudeva and Devakī, he entered his own house. Vasudeva then went to the excellent cow-pen (Vraja) of Nanda. Honoured by him, he gladly kept his son there. The descendant of Yadu said to Yaśodā, Nanda's wife:

Vasudeva said:

64. O honoured mother, protect as your own son, this son of mine, born from Rohiṇī's womb, who has come (i.e. been brought) here through fear of Kaṁsa.

Rudra said:

65-70. Nanda's delicate wife, of a firm vow, said, "All right". And having received a son of the pair, nourished him with joy. Having kept the sons in the house of the cowherd Nanda, Vasudeva being confident, went to Mathurā protected by Kaṁsa. Then on an auspicious day, Garga, impelled by Vasudeva, went to the cow-pen (Vraja) of the cowherd Nanda. The brāhmaṇa was honoured by the (people) residing there. Having duly performed their birth-rites in Gokūla of the god, he gave divine names to Vasudeva's sons. The brāhmaṇa gave the elder one such names as Saṁkarṣaṇa, Rauhīṇeya, Balabhadra, Mahābala, Rāma. (He named) the younger one as Śrīdhara, Śrīkara, Śrīmat, Kṛṣṇa, Ananta, Jagatpati, Vāsudeva, Hṛṣīkeśa etc.

71-87. "In this world they will be known by the names Rāma, Kṛṣṇa." The best brāhmaṇa, having said so, and having worship-

ped the dead ancestors and deities, and being honoured by the cowherds again came (back) to Mathurā. At night Kāṁsa sent Pūtānā, the killer of children. She gave her breast smeared with poison to Kṛṣṇa of unlimited lustre (for being sucked by him). Knowing her to be a demoness, Kṛṣṇa the very lustrous, the best of the Yadus, drank (i.e. sucked) her breast deeply and profusely along with the life of the demoness. She with her body afflicted, and with her sinews suddenly cut off, fell down trembling and making a loud sound died. With her loud sound the sky was filled. Then all the cowherds seeing the demoness fallen on the ground, and Kṛṣṇa playing on her large breasts, were frightened. Being dejected, they quickly took the boy, and due to the fear of the demon, sprinkled with the cow's tail cowdung on his head. O you beautiful lady, the cowherd Nanda came and took the son. Having sprinkled (water) on all the limbs of his body to the accompaniment of (the utterance of) the names of the lord, put that wicked, fearful (demoness) out of Vraja. The group of cowherds who were frightened burnt her in that Vraja. Once Madhusūdana, Viṣṇu, lying under a cart, and having spread out his feet wept. With the stroke of his foot, he turned over the cart. With the pitchers and pots scattered about, it fell upside down. Then the cowherds and cowherdresses, seeing that great cart, were very much amazed, being apprehensive of what it was. The amazed Yaśodā quickly took the boy. Within just a short time only the two boys, the best Yadus, nourished with Yaśodā's milk, and growing, shone while crawling on their knees and hands. A fraudulent demon, disguised as a lad, set out to kill Kṛṣṇa, moved on the earth. Kṛṣṇa, knowing him to be a demon, struck him with his foot. In the form of the demon only he fell down and died. Then Kṛṣṇa roamed in the entire cowshed.

88-94. In every house of the cowherdresses, he took away butter. Then Yaśodā who was angry, tied him with a rope to a mortar and went to sell milk etc. Kṛṣṇa, the supporter of the earth, tied to the mortar with a rope, dragged it, and went between two arjuna trees. With the mortar Kṛṣṇa knocked down the two trees. With their trunks broken, they fell on the ground making a sound. Due to (i.e. on hearing) that loud sound, old, very vigorous cowherds went there, and seeing it were very much amazed. Yaśodā also being dejected freed the lord of the earth

and taking him who was amazed gave the noble one her breast (i.e. breast-fed him). Since the lord of the world was tied with a rope (dāmnā) by his mother, therefore, he was called, *Dāmodara* by all the great sages. The two arjuna trees reached the status of kinnaras.

95-100. Then all the old cowherds, led by the cowherd Nanda, regarding it to be a great portent, went to another place. In the charming Vṛndāvana on the auspicious bank of Yamunā, they made an abode for the cows and the cowherdresses. Then the growing, very strong Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by keepers of calves, looked after the calves. A great demon, named Baka, endeavoured in the form of a crane to kill Kṛṣṇa, the best of the Yadus, who was with the cows and the calves. Seeing him, Viṣṇu also easily raised a clod and struck on his wing. The great demon fell on the earth. Then after a few days, he, looking after the cows and calves in the forest, slept on the earth on sprouts under the shade of a jambū tree.

101-107. In the meanwhile god Brahmā surrounded by hosts of gods came to see Kṛṣṇa, and seeing the two best Yadus (i.e. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa) asleep, snatched the calves and the children of the cowherds, and again went (back) to heaven. When they got up they saw that the children and the calves were lost. They were amazed as to where the cows, calves, and children of the cowherds had gone. Knowing that it was the act done by the Creator, Kṛṣṇa, the ancient one, created the children, the cows and the calves just like that. Madhusūdana, the protector and the lord of the worlds, quickly created the calves and the cowherds of the same form. In the evening the cows—the mothers—seeing their own calves having come (back) behaved as before. When thus the period of a year was passed by the noble one, the creator again gave him (back) the calves and the children. Brahmā, the lord of the three worlds, with his palms joined, taking himself round and saluting Govinda, spoke through fear:

Brahmā said:

108-113. Salutation to you, the soul of all; to you of the nature of true knowledge, of the nature of eternal joy; to the noble one, of a loving soul. You are minute, are of a big, gross

form. You are omnipresent, immutable. O you, the beginning, the middle and the end, salutation to you. Salutation to you of eternal knowledge, power and supremacy; to you full of valour and lustre; to you, O you of a great power; to you of the form of six qualities. O brahman, you are the Supreme Being (described) of the Vedas; you are the great Puruṣa; you are the embodied Supreme Being; you are the Supreme Being of the sacred texts. You are the four (great) men; you are the best ancient man. O Brahman, the earth, fire, air are your powers. Due to your words the earth and fire sprang up, O lord of the world. With your life, O lord, the atmosphere and air were created.

114-118. O you immutable one, in the same way, from your eyes were created the sky and the sun; and O sinless one, from your ears were created the quarters and the moon. From your mind, O great god, were created the flow of water and Varuṇa. That Brahman which is manifested in the Mīmāṃsā that is proclaimed, is also (manifested) in sacrifices or in a great vow, in the hymns that are sung, in the sky, in the heaven. It is also the air. It is also in the sky, so also in the herbs. It is also in the stars, all planets, and the sun also. In the same way it is in the beings. The holy texts call it 'Brahman'. That also is the highest Brahman, well known and immortal all round.

119-122. *Hiraṇmaya*, *Avyaya* (Immutable), *Yajña*, *Śuci* (Pure), *Śucipād* (of pure feet)—these are his epithets in the Vedas. Nowhere is his (likeness found). The holy text describes him as *Cakṣurmaya* (consisting of eyes), *Śratramaya* (consisting of ears), *Chandomaya* (consisting of Vedas), *Manomaya* (consisting of mind), *Vāṇmaya* (consisting of speech), the highest soul, the highest god. O you lotus-eyed one, thus you are the (sole) aim of the Upaniṣads. This one is not able to praise you, who has mastered the entire Vedānta. It was a great offence that I snatched your calves. O you who are affectionate to those who seek your shelter, forgive me.

Maheśvara said:

123-130. The Creator, having thus praised Viṣṇu, and having repeatedly saluted him, gave him (back) the calves, and went home. He, delighted, nourished, and practising severe penance, always keeping in his mind Viṣṇu in the form of a

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CONTENTS

PADMA-PURĀṆA: SECTION VI: UTTARAKHAṆḌA (CONTINUED)

246. Jarāsandha Defeated	3279
247. Rukmiṇī's Abduction	3283
248. Rukmiṇī Formally Married to Kṛṣṇa	3286
249. Kṛṣṇa's other Marriages	3287
250. Aniruddha's Marriage	3294
251. Destruction of Pauṇḍraka's Son	3300
252. Kṛṣṇa Goes Back to His Abode	3302
253. Modes of Viṣṇu's Worship	3310
254. One Hundred and Eight Names of Rāma	3322
255. The Three Gods Subjected to Test by Bhṛgu	3328

SECTION VII: KRIYĀYOGASĀRAKHAṆḌA

1. A Dialogue between Jaimini and Vyāsa	3337
2. Characteristic Marks of a Vaiṣṇava	3340
3. The Story of King Manobhadra	3347
4. Praṇidhi, Padmāvatī and Dhanurdhvaja	3354
5. The Story of Mādhava and Sulocanā	3362
6. Happy End of the Story of Mādhava and Sulocanā	3375
7. Kālakaḥ is Liberated by the Touch of Gaṅgā-water	3388
8. The Love Story of Indra and Padmagandhā	3397
9. The Greatness of Gaṅgā	3405

Contents

10. The Efficacy of Campaka Flower	3415
11. The Rules of Viṣṇu Worship	3421
12. The Greatness of the Holy Fig Tree	3431
13. Viṣṇu's Worship with Lotuses: The Story of Prajā	3439
14. Prohibitions Regarding and Fruit of Viṣṇu Worship	3450
15. The Efficacy of Rāma's Name	3453
16. Cakrika's Story	3460
17. Bhadratanu's Story	3464
18. The Greatness of Puruṣottama	3482
19. What Pleases Viṣṇu; What Makes Him Angry?	3486
20. The Great Efficacy of Giving (Charity)	3494
21. Brāhmaṇas; Gift of Food and Water	3504
22. The Greatness of Ekādaśī	3513
23. Queen Suprajñā on the Efficacy of Ekādaśī Vow	3523
24. The Greatness of Tulasī and Dhātrī	3534
25. The Importance of Honouring a Guest	3539
26. Conduct in the Four Yugas	3545
INDEX	3551

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Jarāsandha Defeated

Śrī Maheśvara said:

1-7. Then Vasudeva performed the thread ceremony of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa according to the Vedic rite. The preceptor Garga performed the ritual for Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The very strong Rāma and Kṛṣṇa whose purificatory rites were performed by the learned devotees of Viṣṇu, with clean, auspicious baths, went to the house of Sāndīpani. Having saluted him, and having learnt the Vedic texts and the scriptures from that noble best brāhmaṇa, they brought (back to life) his dead son, and gave that as the fee. Having received words of blessing from that noble preceptor, the two best Yadus saluted him and went (back) to Mathurā. Then the very mighty Jarāsandha, the father-in-law of that king (i.e. Kāṁsa), having heard that the invincible Kāṁsa was killed by Kṛṣṇa, came with a very great army having a strength of thousands of akṣauhiṇis¹ to kill Kṛṣṇa and besieged the city of Mathurā.

8-16. The very powerful Rāma and Kṛṣṇa went out of that excellent city, and saw the flood of his army abounding in elephants and horses. Kṛṣṇa recollected his former, eternal form. Just by means of its recollection, Dāruka, Viṣṇu's charioteer brought the great chariot named Sugrīvapuṣpaka which was ancient and was drawn by ancient horses like Divyapuṣpa, which was equipped with divine weapons like the conch, the disc, the mace etc., was decorated with the flag (having on it the figure) of Garuḍa and was unconquerable (even) for gods. Viṣṇu's charioteer, on reaching the earth, saluted Kṛṣṇa and presented to him the bright chariot, possessed of weapons and horses. Kṛṣṇa too, seeing the great chariot with joy, took himself round it, and being praised by the hosts of gods, got into it along with his elder brother. He, being one with a body having four hands, holding the conch, the disc, the mace, wearing a crown, ear-rings, garlands, proceeded to fight. The strong Balarāma also, taking a pestle and a plough, started killing that army like an-

1. One akṣauhiṇī = 21870 chariots + 21870 elephants + 65610 horses + 109350 foot-soldiers.

other Maheśvara. Dārūka too quickly drove the chariot to the battlefield, as wind (drives) fire in a forest covered with clusters of grass and creepers.

17-24. Then Jarāsandha's soldiers covered that chariot with maces, iron bars, (missiles called) śakti, and hammers. Viṣṇu quickly and easily destroyed them with his disc only, as a great fire destroys many (blades of) grass and (pieces of) wood with its flame. Then taking the Śārṅga (bow) (Kṛṣṇa) destroyed those troops with sharp arrows. Nothing was known about (the massacre). Some very strong ones had their lotus-like faces cut off with the disc. In the great battle some were crushed with the mace; some with (some) other (weapon). Some were cut off with the sword; others were struck with arrows. The necks of some were struck with the tip of the plough; the heads of some were struck with the pestle. Having, in a moment, killed that entire army, the best of the Yadus, Kṛṣṇa, blew his conch, sounding like the sound of the destructive fire. The great warriors, with their hearts rent by the sound of the conch, fell dead along with horses and elephants. Kṛṣṇa alone killed that army consisting of a thousand akṣauhiṇīs along with horses, chariots and elephants. The army had none left in it.

25-32. In half a watch Kṛṣṇa, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow) killed the army. Then all the hosts of gods with their hearts full of joy, dropped showers of flowers, and shouted, "Well (done), Well done!" The supporter of the earth having shed (i.e. removed) the entire burden of the earth, and being praised by gods, shone on the battlefield. The very mighty, wicked Jarāsandha, seeing his army killed, came to fight with Balarāma. The fight between the two not retreating from fights was very fierce. The brave Rāma, taking his plough, knocked down his chariot along with the charioteer on the battlefield, and seizing the very strong one, raised the pestle and set out to kill him. Lord Kṛṣṇa seeing that the powerful Rāma had made Jarāsandha, the best king, face the peril to his life as a lion would do to a great elephant, said to his elder brother: "(Please) let him not be killed." The righteous, very intelligent one got Jarāsandha freed. The immutable Saṁkarṣaṇa freed his enemy at the words of Kṛṣṇa.

33-37. He, along with his younger brother (Sunāman) got into a chariot and entered Mathurā (? Magadha). Having approached Kālayavana, the powerful one, endowed with might, he told him about the valour of Vasudeva's sons. He narrated to him the destruction of the akāṣauhiṇīs, so also his own defeat and the great deeds of Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that the very powerful, angry (Kāla)Yavana, surrounded by thousands of crores of arrogant, very strong and brave mlecchas, went quickly to Mathurā for the help of the king of Magadha.

38-39. Having covered the earth with many countries with his troops, and having placed a large army (outside the city), he besieged the city of Mathurā. Kṛṣṇa too, thinking of the welfare of his citizens then asked the Ocean for (some) land for the people to reside (on).

40-46a. The Ocean gave Kṛṣṇa (a piece of land) having an expanse of thirty yojanas. In the water he created the Dvāravatī city. It had many palaces; its ramparts and arched doorways were golden. It was covered with rows of divine houses having (i.e. decked with) various jewels. It also had many charming gardens and lakes. The lotus-eyed (Kṛṣṇa) fashioned it like Indra's (city) Amarāvatī. Janārdana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) suddenly, at night, lifted the people that were asleep there, and put them in Dvāravatī. When the people along with their sons and wives got up, they (found themselves) placed in golden mansions and (so) were much amazed. Surrounded by principal houses full of such objects of enjoyments as much wealth, corn, divine garments and ornaments, they stayed there as the hosts of gods (live) in heaven.

46b-52. Then the very powerful Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the lords of themselves came out of Mathurā to fight with (Kāla)Yavana. Rāma, the great warrior, taking a plough and a pestle, being angry, killed the great army of the Yavanas in the battle. Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, strung the Śārṅga (bow) with arrows resembling flames of fire, and burnt the entire army of the mlecchas. Seeing his army killed, that mighty Kālayavana, the lord of Yavanas, fought with Kṛṣṇa, with a mace. Seeing that great havoc (done) by him for a long time, the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa too, turning away from the battle, retreated. (Kālayavana) very

speedily followed him, saying, 'Wait, wait'. The very intelligent Kṛṣṇa speedily entered a cave. There the great sage, the king Mucukunda, was asleep.

53-55. Lord Kṛṣṇa remained invisible to the king. The great hero, Yavana also, raising his mace with his hand, and set out to kill Kṛṣṇa, entered that cave. Seeing the king that was asleep, and taking him to be Kṛṣṇa, Yavana struck the great sage Mucukunda with his foot. Then the revered great sage, Mucukunda, woke up.

56-60. He, with his eyes red through anger, made a *hum* sound. Due to his *hum* sound, so also due to looking at (Kāla-yavana) angrily, the Yavana was completely burnt, was reduced to ash and (thus) gave up his life. Then in front of the royal sage was seen Kṛṣṇa, who was dark like the petals of a blue lotus, whose eyes were like lotuses, who had the conch, the disc, the mace in his hands, and who had put on yellow garments. Seeing him of an unlimited lustre, the great sage suddenly got up and said, "Oh, great luck, great luck (to me)!" With his entire body horripilated, and (his eyes) full of tears of joy, he praising him with shouts of victory repeatedly saluted him (i.e. Kṛṣṇa).

Mucukunda said:

61-66. O highest lord, seeing (you) I am today fortunate; I am blessed. Today my existence is fruitful; my life is fruitful. Salutation to Vāsudeva, Jagannātha (the lord of the world), Śārṅgin (holder of the Śārṅga bow), to Dāmodara, to the god, the treasure of lustres. Salutation to Adhokṣaja, to Hari, who had taken up the form of Man-Lion. Salutation to you, to Rāghava, the lotus-eyed one. Salutation to Acyuta (unfallen), to (A-)Vikāra (changeless) and Ananta (unlimited). Salutation to you, to Govinda, Viṣṇu, Jīṣṇu (conqueror). Salutation to Nārāyaṇa, to the lord of Śrī, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to the highest soul. Salutation to you, to Mukunda, to you having four forms. Salutation to you, the highest well-being, to the highest soul. Salutation to Vāsudeva, to Śānta (the peaceful one), to the lord of the Yadus.

Maheśvara said:

67. Having thus praised Govinda, he repeatedly saluted him. The lord, who was pleased, said to Mucukunda, the great sage:

The lord said:

68-70. O royal sage, ask for the boon which is in your mind.

Maheśvara said:

He too asked for liberation free from rebirth. Then Kṛṣṇa gave him the divine ancient world. The very intelligent king also having given up the human form, obtained the same form as of the god, the highest soul. Having mounted upon Garuḍa, he reached the eternal position.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

Rukmiṇī's Abduction

Rudra said:

1-3. After the intelligent Mucukunda had killed Yavana, the descendant of Yadu gave him a boon, and went out (of the cave). Having heard that Yavana was killed, the very wicked Jarāsandha, surrounded by his army, fought with Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa killed the entire army of that wicked one. The lord of Magadha, having fainted, fell on the ground.

4-7a. The lord of Magadha, having regained consciousness after a long time, and being distressed by fear and his body afflicted by fear, could not fight with Rāma in the battle. With his remaining army and followers killed, he, turning away (from the battle) ran away. Taking the (two) Rāma and Kṛṣṇa as unconquerable, he gave up hostility against them and entered his own city. Then the two sons of Vasudeva, along with their army left the city of Mathurā and entered the city of Dvārikā.

7b-10a. Vāyu, sent by Indra, affectionately gave Kṛṣṇa the assembly(-hall) of gods, which was fashioned by Viśvakarman, was decorated with diamonds and lapis lazuli, graced with many seats, which shone with divine golden umbrellas, full of (i.e. decked with) various gems. The kings like Ugrasena along with the traders, on arriving at the charming assembly(-hall), were delighted as hosts of gods (are delighted) in heaven.

10b-12. The king named Raivata, born in the Ikṣvāku family, affectionately gave Rāma his daughter named Revatī who was endowed with all (auspicious) marks. That Rāma duly married that Revatī and amused himself with her as Indra with Śacī.

13-19. Bhīṣmaka, the king of Vidarbha, was pious and virtuous. He had good sons like Rukma. (Bhīṣmaka's) daughter, their youngest sister was Rukmiṇī, of an excellent complexion. She was born with a portion of Lakṣmī and had all auspicious marks. She was Sitā in (the lord's) existence as Rāma, and was Rukmiṇī in his birth as Kṛṣṇa. She accompanied Viṣṇu in his other incarnations also. In the Dvāpara (age) Hiranyaka and Hiranyākṣa were again born with the names Śīśupāla and Dantavakra. The two very mighty and brave ones were born in the family of the Cedi (king). His son desired to give Rukmiṇī (in marriage) to Śīśupāla. The beautiful-faced (Rukmiṇī) did not want Śīśupāla as her husband. She, of a firm vow, was attached to Viṣṇu from her childhood. That virgin Rukmiṇī, dedicated to Viṣṇu, always worshipped the deities and gave various presents (to brāhmaṇas).

20-21. Highly devoted to practising vows, and thinking of Viṣṇu, the lord of the soul, as her husband, she lived in her father's house. Through his intelligent son Rukmin, the best king tried to get her married to Śīśupāla.

22-23. Intending to have Kṛṣṇa as her husband, she sent a brāhmaṇa, the son of her family-priest (to Kṛṣṇa). He quickly went to Dvārakā. Having approached Kṛṣṇa and Rāma and being duly honoured by them, he told them in private what Rukmiṇī had said.

24-26. Having heard it, the two best among men, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, along with that intelligent brāhmaṇa, got into the chariot full of all weapons and missiles and moving (even) in the sky along with the noble Dāruka, quickly went to the (capital) city of Vidarbha. All kings, led by Jarāsandha, from all countries had come to witness the marriage(-ceremony) of the intelligent Śīśupāla.

27-30. At the time of the marriage, Rukmiṇī, having put on golden ornaments, went out of the city with her friends to worship Durgā. At that time only Devakī's son (Kṛṣṇa) reached

(there). The strong Kṛṣṇa seized her who was in her chariot. Suddenly putting her into his chariot he quickly came home. Then kings like Jarāsandha, full of anger, went along with prince Rukmin, to fight (with Kṛṣṇa). With their army having the four-fold division, the angry ones pursued Kṛṣṇa.

31-35. The powerful Balabhadra, having got down from his excellent chariot, took the plough and the pestle and in a moment struck the enemies. With force he struck the chariots, horses, great elephants and foot-soldiers also with his plough and pestle in the battle. Due to the fall of his plough the rows of chariots were pounded. The elephants also fell on the ground as mountains due to (the fall of) the thunderbolt (on them). The heads of all were broken; all vomitted blood profusely. At that time, in a moment, Balarāma struck down the army along with the horses, the elephants and the chariots in the great battle. On the battlefield there rivers of blood flowed on all sides.

36-42. All the kings that were routed, being tormented by fear, fled away. The powerful Rukmin, through anger, fought with Kṛṣṇa. Raising his bow, he struck Kṛṣṇa with volleys of arrows. Then Kṛṣṇa laughed and taking his Śārṅga (bow) struck with one arrow the horses of his chariot and the charioteer. The supporter of the earth rent his chariot, flag and banner. He, deprived of his chariot, stood on the ground. The powerful Kṛṣṇa cut off his sword with one arrow. Then raising his fist, he struck Kṛṣṇa on his chest. Kṛṣṇa binding him, seized him on the battlefield. Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), the killer of (the demon) Madhu, smiled, and taking an arrow with a sharp horse-shoe-shaped head, shaved his head and left him. He, full of grief, and hissing like a serpent, entered his own city and stayed there only.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

Rukmiṇī Formally Married to Kṛṣṇa

Rudra said:

1-6. Then getting into the divine chariot along with Rāma, Rukmiṇī and Dārūka, Kṛṣṇa speedily went home. Then having entered the city of Dvārakā, (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) the son of Devakī, married princess Rukmiṇī decorated with (ornaments of) gold according to the Vedic rite on an auspicious day and at an auspicious time. At the time of that marriage divine drums were sounded, and the best gods dropped showers of flowers. Vasudeva, Ugrasena, so also Akrūra, the best Yadu Balabhadra of a great lustre, so also other principal Yadus married Kṛṣṇa to Rukmiṇī with great pleasure. The cowherd Nanda came (there) with young cowherds and hosts of (other) cowherds. Yaśodā also came there with well-decorated ladies.

7-10. All the wives of Vasudeva led by Devakī, Revatī, queen Rohiṇī, and other ladies from the city performed all the marriage-rites with great joy. Devakī there affectionately honoured all gods. She got done the entire nuptial rite properly with (the help of) old ladies, and also a celebration through best brāhmaṇas. She fed the brāhmaṇas and kings like Ugrasena were well honoured with auspicious garments and ornaments.

11-14. Cowherds like Nanda, ladies like Yaśodā were honoured with many ornaments of gold and jewels and with garments. They were also delighted in that marriage-celebration. The couple together saluted Agni. The two were congratulated with blessings by principal brāhmaṇas knowing the Vedas. On that marriage-altar the bride and the bridegroom shone. The kṣatriya (viz. Kṛṣṇa), the son of Devakī, with his wife saluted old brāhmaṇas, so also his elder brother.

15-19. Kṛṣṇa, having thus completed the entire nuptial rite dismissed all kings that had come there. The best kings honoured by Kṛṣṇa proceeded (homewards). The very noble brāhmaṇas went to their respective abodes. The pious, immutable son of Devakī, quite happily lived in that divine mansion. He, being praised by sages and hosts of gods in heaven, amused himself

with her as Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī. The eternal Viṣṇu, with his mind pleased day by day lived in the very beautiful Dvāravatī.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Kṛṣṇa's Other Marriages

Śrī Rudra said:

1-6. The glorious daughter of Satrājīta, named Satyā, born with a portion of the Earth, was another wife of Kṛṣṇa. The glorious daughter of the Sun, named Kālindī, was his third wife. She had come up as a portion of Līlā. Kṛṣṇa married Vindānuvinda's daughter Mitravindā of a bright smile, who had stood for self-choice marriage. He whose eyes were large like lotus-leaves, having bound with one noose the seven maddened bulls, took her with the dowry of his valour. King Satrājīta gave to his younger brother, the noble Prasena, a great jewel called 'Syamantaka'¹. Sometime Kṛṣṇa asked for that excellent gem. Then Prasena violently said to Vāsudeva:

Prasena said:

7. This gem everyday produces eight bhāras of gold. There-

1. Syamantaka—A kind of gem said to yield eight bhāras of gold and to protect the owner from all kinds of dangers and portents. Satrājīta, son of Nighna, got it from the Sun, and always wore it round his neck. He afterward gave it to his brother Prasena, from whom it passed into the hands of the monkey-chief Jāmbavat who got possession of it after having killed Prasena. Kṛṣṇa, however, overtook Jāmbavat and vanquished him in fight after a long struggle. The monkey-chief thereupon presented it along with his daughter to Kṛṣṇa; Kṛṣṇa then gave the jewel back to its proper owner Satrājīta who out of gratitude presented it along with his daughter Satyabhāmā to him. Afterwards when Satyabhāmā was at her father's house with the jewel, Śatadhanvan at the instigation of a Yādava named Akrūra who desired the jewel for himself, killed Satrājīta and gave it to Akrūra. Śatadhanvan was afterwards killed by Kṛṣṇa, but when he found that the jewel was with Akrūra he allowed him to retain it with himself after having once shown it to the people.

fore, this gem called Syamantaka is not to be given to anyone by me.

Mahādeva said:

8-12. Having understood his intention, Kṛṣṇa remained silent. Sometime with all the best Yadus like very powerful Prasena, Kṛṣṇa went ahunting, and entered a great forest. Many in thousands followed, each one to hunt beasts. Prasena alone went far in the great forest. A lion on seeing him approached him, killed him, and snatched the gem. The very mighty Jāmbavat also killed the lion, seized the gem and quickly entered a cave resorted to by the divine women. When the sun had set, Kṛṣṇa along with his followers, entered his own city on seeing the moon risen on the fourth day.

13-18. Then all the citizens said to one another about Kṛṣṇa: “Kṛṣṇa having killed Prasena in the forest under the pretext of hunting, has definitely taken the Syamantaka gem.” Kṛṣṇa, having heard those words of the people of Dvārakā, went to a dense forest through the fear of ignorant people. He showed to all of them (Prasena) killed by a lion. Having proved his innocence and having placed a great army there only, Kṛṣṇa alone went to a dense forest with Śārṅga-bow and his mace in his hand. Seeing a great cave, Kṛṣṇa entered it with a doubt. In it, in a clean house brightened with various excellent jewels, a maid having placed Jāmbavat’s son on a swing and sportively holding the (Syamantaka) gem on its top, was oscillating the swing and singing with joy:

19-25a. “A lion had killed Prasena. The lion was killed by Jāmbavat. O good boy, do not cry. This Syamantaka belongs to you (only).” Hearing it, the brave Kṛṣṇa blew his conch. Due to that great sound Jāmbavat came out to the place. Continuously for ten (days and) nights a fierce fight, with fists like the thunderbolt, and frightening all beings, took place between the two. Jāmbavat, seeing the increase in Kṛṣṇa’s might, and decrease in his own, realised the former words of the Supreme Being. ‘This is that Rāma that has again descended for the protection of Dharma. That my master has come to grant me (the object of) my desire.’ Knowing like this the lord of the bears desisted from the fight, and with great amazement, he, with his palms joined,

asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa: “Who are you?” Kṛṣṇa, stopping fighting said with a grave voice:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

25b-26 I am Vasudeva’s son, called Vāsudeva. You very fearless, have taken away my gem called Syamantaka. Give it (back) to me quickly. Otherwise you will be killed.

Mahādeva said:

27. Hearing those (words), Jāmbavat was delighted. He saluted (Kṛṣṇa) by (prostrating himself before him) like a staff. Having taken himself round Kṛṣṇa, and saluting him, he spoke to him politely:

Jāmbavat said:

28-29. I am lucky, I am satisfied after seeing you, O lord. O you son of Devakī, I am your servant due to (my being your servant in) the former existence. O Govinda, you have given the battle desired before. O you lord of the world, mine of pity, eternal one, forgive me this battle that I had with you through delusion.

Mahādeva said:

30-36. Speaking like this, and bowing and repeatedly saluting the lord he politely seated him on a seat full of (i.e. decked with) many gems. He washed his feet resembling fresh lotuses with auspicious water; worshipped the descendant of Yadu with a (respectful offering called) madhuparka; properly honoured him with (i.e. by giving him) divine garments and ornaments; he gave him, of unlimited lustre, as his wife, his daughter endowed with beauty, named Jāmbavatī, a gem among girls. He also gave him the great gem called Syamantaka, along with other gems. Kṛṣṇa, the delighted killer of his enemies, having married the girl there only, affectionately gave that Jāmbavat final beatitude. Gladly taking that girl, his (i.e. Jāmbavat’s) daughter, he went out of the cave and from it went to the city of Dvārakā. The best Yadu gave the gem called Syamantaka to Satrājit; and to that daughter (of Jāmbavat) also he gave an excellent gem.

37-47. They say that seeing the moon on the fourth of the

bright half of Bhādrapada (leads to) a false charge. Therefore, one should avoid it. If a man sees the moon on that fourth day (i.e. of the bright half of Bhādrapada), he is freed from the false charge by listening to the account of the Syamantaka. The three beautiful bright daughters of the king of Madra, viz., Sulakṣmaṇā, Nāgnajiti, and glorious Suśīlā, standing for self-choice marriage, chose Kṛṣṇa (as their husband). On one day the descendant of Yadu married them. All these, beginning with Rukmiṇī, were thus the eight queens of the noble one: Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Kālindī of a bright smile, Mitravindā, Jāmbavatī, Nāgnajiti, Sulakṣmaṇā and Suśīlā, of a slim body, said to be the eighth one. A very powerful demon, the Earth's son, named Naraka, having conquered in a battle, Indra, the lord of gods, and all (other) gods, forcibly took away the very bright ear-rings of Aditi, the mother of gods, so also the various gems of gods. So also (he took away) the Airāvata elephant of Indra and his horse Uccaiṣrava; and rubies etc. of Kubera, and his treasures Śaṅkha¹ and Padma. The Earth's son also kidnapped the (divine) and the celestial nymphs; so also he forcibly took away the gods' weapons like the thunderbolt; and with them only, he, having struck the gods remaining in the heaven, lived in the assembly-hall fashioned by Maya in that city in the spotless sky.

48-58. Then all hosts of gods led by Indra and overcome by fear, sought the refuge of Kṛṣṇa, non-tormenting (one). Kṛṣṇa too hearing all those acts of Naraka, granted exemption from fear to gods and thought of Garuḍa. At that moment the very powerful Garuḍa, saluted by all gods, stood with his palms joined in front of that Viṣṇu. Keśava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), having mounted on the best bird along with Satyā, and being praised by the sages, went to the demon's abode. It was shining in the sky like the orb of the sun. It was full of many demons and had many divine ornaments. Kṛṣṇa saw that city difficult to be broken through even by gods. The powerful lord, having observed its covers, cut them off with his disc, as the sun (removes) the darkness. Then all the demons, having raised their lances, went, in hundreds and

1. Śaṅkha and Padma are two of the nine treasures of Kubera. The names of the nine treasures are: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla, and Kharva.

thousands to fight. Then with divine iron clubs, small javelins thrown with the hand, and good spears with a sharp edge they struck Keśava, as fire with straws. Then the eagle-bannered lord took his Śārṅga bow, and with arrows resembling the flames of fire, he cut off the divine weapons. The powerful Supreme Being cut off, with his disc only, their necks, elephants and speedy horses also. Some were cut off with the disc; others were struck with arrows.

59-65. In that battle some demons were struck with the mace. Thus all the demons were knocked down on the ground, as the mountains are pierced with thunderbolt discharged by Indra. The lotus-eyed Viṣṇu, having struck down all the demons, blew his great conch called Pāñcajanya. Then that brave Naraka, taking a bow and getting into a divine chariot came to fight with Keśava. The battle between the two was terrific, piercing and thrilling with many thousands of arrows like two showering clouds. Then the ancient, powerful son of Vasudeva cut off the bow of the chief of demons with a crescent-shaped arrow. He discharged a very divine missile on the great chest of Naraka. The great demon, with his chest pierced with it, fell on the ground roaring like a great mountain pierced by Indra with his thunderbolt.

66-68. Then Kṛṣṇa, having gone near the demon (lying) on the ground, and entreated by him, said to the demon: "Choose a boon." The demon said to Kṛṣṇa seated on Garuḍa: "I have nothing to do with a boon, though I am Naraka. For the good of other people I am asking for an excellent boon. O lord of the lord of all beings, O Madhusūdana, O you who remove the fear (of your devotees), those men who take an auspicious bath on the day of my death (will) not obtain (i.e. go to) hell."

Mahādeva said:

69-75. Lord Govinda gave him the boon: "Let it be so." Then actually seeing Viṣṇu's feet resembling the autumnal lotuses, and decorated with diamonds and lapis lazuli, honoured by Brahmā, Rudra etc., so also by (other) gods and sages, the Earth's son gave up his life and obtained absorption into Viṣṇu. Then all the hosts of gods, with their minds full of joy, dropped showers of flowers, and the great sages praised (him). The lotus-

eyed Kṛṣṇa entered his city. He gave to Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt, the various gems of the gods forcibly snatched away by him, so also the ear-rings of the mother of gods, and the horse Uccaiṣravas, the best elephant Airāvata and the blazing Maṇiparvata (literally, the mountain of gems). All this the best Yadu gave to Indra. The powerful Naraka had, after vanquishing kings from all countries, taken away sixteen thousand maidens.

76-80. All of them were then confined in the harem of Naraka. Seeing Kṛṣṇa of great might, and resembling a hundred Cupids, all of them chose him, the omnipresent lord of the universe, as their husband. At this time only Govinda, of endless forms, and the Supreme Being, duly took their hand (in marriage). All the sons of Naraka, led by the Earth, sought the shelter of Govinda. He, the treasure of pity, protected them. Due to (his giving) importance to the words of the Earth, he installed them all on his kingdom. He, putting all those excellent women into the aeroplane of Indra, took them to Dvāravati through noble messengers of gods.

81-90. Having mounted upon Garuḍa, Keśava, along with Satyā quickly went to heaven to see the mother of gods. Janārdana, the very powerful one, having entered the city of the king of gods, got down from the best bird along with his wife. There he saluted the mother of gods fit to be saluted. Aditi, affectionate towards her son, embraced him with her arms, and having seated him on the chief seat honoured him devoutly. Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, led by Indra, then worshipped the highest god as he deserved. The glorious Satyabhāmā came to the house of Śacī. Honoured duly by her she sat on a comfortable seat. At that time, her servants, directed by Indra, affectionately gave her the flowers of the Pārijāta (trees). Taking those flowers that slender-waisted goddess Śacī tied them on her own dark, clean hair on her head, insulting the glorious Satyabhāmā. 'This human female does not deserve the auspicious flowers fit for gods.' Thinking like this, she did not give the flowers to her. Going out of the city, Satyā, full of anger, went to her husband Kṛṣṇa, and the lotus-eyed one said (to him):

Satyā said:

91. O Govinda, O best of the Yadus, this Śacī being proud

of the Pārijāta put (the flowers) on her own head without giving them to me.

Mahādeva said:

92-100. Having heard the words of Satyā, the very strong Vāsudeva, Devakī's son, uprooted the Pārijāta tree, put it on Garuḍa, and having quickly mounted, along with Satyā, on the strong one (i.e. Garuḍa), he went to the charming city of Dvārakā. Then Indra, the king of gods, full of anger, got on the Airāvata, and along with Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, Sādhya and hosts of Maruts went to fight with Keśava. Then all the hosts of gods, having surrounded Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), dropped showers of weapons on him as clouds drop showers of water on a great mountain. With his disc Kṛṣṇa cut off those missiles of gods. The angry Garuḍa made the gods fall down with the movement of his wings as the wind makes the straws (to fall down). Then lord Indra, the master of the gods, suddenly discharged his blazing thunderbolt to kill Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa easily caught that thunderbolt with one hand. Then the frightened Indra, getting down from his best elephant (Airāvata), stood, with the palms of his hands joined, before (Kṛṣṇa) and having saluted him, and after praising him with hymns, said in a faltering tone :

Indra said:

101. O Kṛṣṇa, this Pārijāta (tree) fit for the gods was formerly given to me and the gods. (Now) how can it remain in the human (world)?

Mahādeva said:

102-107a. Then the lord said to Indra standing by him: "O lord of gods, in your house Satyā was insulted. Your dear wife Pulomajā, instead of giving the Pārijāta (flowers) to Satyā, wore them on her own head. For her (i.e. Satyā) I took away the Pārijāta (tree) to give it to her as promised, O lord of the hosts of gods. I shall place the Pārijāta (tree) in your house. Therefore, O lord of gods, let the Pārijāta be not given today. For the good of the deities I shall send the Pārijāta to the earth.

Let it remain in my house till then. O Indra, when I go to heaven take it (back) as you like.”

Mahādeva said:

107b-111. Speaking like this, the best of the Yadus, gave the thunderbolt (back) to him. Saying, “Let it be so”, that wielder of the thunderbolt (i.e. Indra), went, surrounded by hosts of gods, to his divine city. Kṛṣṇa too, having mounted, along with Satyā, Garuḍa, and being praised by sages, entered Dvāravatī. (Then that) omnipresent Viṣṇu, having placed that divine tree, Pārijāta, near Satyā, enjoyed with all wives. That glorious Viṣṇu, taking all forms, and giving happiness, lived in the abodes of all of them during nights.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTY

Aniruddha's Marriage

Śrī Rudra said:

1-3. On Rukmiṇī was born Pradyumna, Madana's (Cupid's) portion, from Kṛṣṇa. He, the very mighty one born of Cupid, killed Śambara. Aniruddha was born from him on Rukmin's daughter.

4-10. He too married Bāṇa's daughter by name Uṣā. In her dream she, aged sixteen, having enjoyed properly (Aniruddha), dark like the petals of a dark lotus, having lotus-like eyes, of large arms, wearing beautiful ornaments, got up. Not seeing him after being awake, she, tormented by passion of love, with her mind confused, saying “O you having a face like a red lotus, where are you going?” lamented in many ways. Then her friend, named Citralekhā, seeing the girl reduced to that condition, asked her, “Why is your mind confused?” She too told her about the husband obtained in her dream. She too drew the pictures of all the best human beings and gods on a piece of cloth and showed them to her. She even properly showed her (the pictures of) Kṛṣṇa, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha,

born in the Yadu family. Having approved out of the pictures that of Kṛṣṇa, she, seeing Aniruddha after Pradyumna, embraced it, saying: “This is he.”

11-15. Then with many illusory demonesses Citralekhā at night went to Dvāravatī. She saw Aniruddha sleeping in the harem. She enticed him, seized him, and put him on the bed of Bāṇa’s daughter in the harem of Bāṇa, full of many sanctuaries and mansions. He too became awake and on seeing Uṣā who lay on the soft couch, was marked with all (good) characteristics, adorned with beautiful ornaments, garments, sandal, flowers, who had a golden complexion, fine hair, well-developed breasts, embraced her who was full of love, and happily dallied with her. Old demonesses residing in the harem, having come to know about Aniruddha thus confined and continuously dallying (with Uṣā) for just a month, reported it to the king. The king, with his eyes red with anger, being very much amazed, sent the city-servants ordering them: “Bring him here”. They too quickly went up the king’s palace to arrest Aniruddha lying on the bed of the princess.

16-20. He, seeing them agitated, easily took out a pillar of the palace and in a very short time only smashed the servants numbering a million with the pillar. Then the lord of the demons, seeing his servants destroyed, became curious, and deciding ‘This is Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s grandson as told by the divine sage’, he took his bow and himself came near Aniruddha to arrest him. Aniruddha too, seeing the king with a thousand arms having come to fight, whirling his iron club, hurled it at Bāṇa. He cut off that iron club with an arrow discharged from his bow. Then having tightly bound Aniruddha with the missile of serpent he placed him in his own harem.

21-25. Then Kṛṣṇa too, having learnt through the royal sage that it was just like that, mounted upon the best bird (i.e. Garuḍa), and along with Baladeva, Pradyumna and his army came to cut off the cluster of Bāṇa’s arms. Formerly Bali’s son (Bāṇa) had adored Śaṅkara. He had said to (Bāṇa): “Choose a boon.” Bāṇa had asked for this boon from that lord: “Always be seated at the gate of my city for (its) protection, and kill the army of the enemy that might come there.” Śaṅkara too, saying, “All right” to him, remained at the gate of his city with weapons,

his sons and attendants. Just at that time, seeing Kṛṣṇa to have angrily come along with his army, he got on his bull, and equipped with all weapons, and surrounded by his sons and attendants went out to fight (with Kṛṣṇa). Kṛṣṇa too seeing that lord of beings, who had held elephant's hide, a skull, who was decorated with blazing serpents, was tawny, had three eyes, had held the trident, was (capable of) destroying the entire host of beings, caused fear to all beings, resembled the fire of destruction, who was accompanied by his two sons, was surrounded by all his attendants, and who had destroyed Tripura, kept his army far behind, and accompanied by Balabhadra and Pradyumna started with a smile to fight with Rudra.

26-38. First a fierce (battle) took place between Kṛṣṇa and Śaṁkara, with arrows resembling the fire of destruction discharged from (Śaṁkara's bow called) Pināka and (Viṣṇu's bow called) Śārṅga. Rāma too had (a fight) with Bāṇa, and Pradyumna with Kārtikeya. The two great heroes fought like two haughty lions. Gajānana struck Yādava on his chest with his tusk. Rāma took a pestle and struck at his tusk. (Gajānana) having the rat as his vehicle, with his tusk broken, suddenly fled. Since then the lord of the attendants has his tusk broken in the world. He is called *Ekadanta* by gods, demons and gandharvas. (Kārtikeya) having the peacock as his vehicle fought with Pradyumna. Balarāma caused (Śiva's) attendants to run away. Śaṁkara, with his eyes very red, having fought with Kṛṣṇa for a very long time, put on his arrow a very blazing great fever, and discharged it. Kṛṣṇa by means of cold fever warded off that missile. The two fevers discharged by those two, Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, speedily entered the human world by their order. Those men who listen to (the account of) the battle between Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, are free from fever (or torment) and reach (Viṣṇu) the infallible one. Then that Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), putting the deluding weapon on his arrow, discharged it at Śiva. Deluded by that missile, he yawned again and again; and he, Śaṁkara, the lord of gods, fell down on the ground in a swoon. Seeing his father unconscious, the powerful Kārtikeya, Ṣaṁmukha (literally, having six faces), raised the (missile called) Śakti and went to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Merely by the 'hum' sound, Kṛṣṇa turned him away.

39-45. Having thus vanquished the three-eyed god Śiva,

having the trident in his hand, the brave and the best of the Yadus blew his loud-sounding conch. Hearing that Śaṁkara, along with his sons, was vanquished by Kṛṣṇa, Bāṇa, getting into a chariot, himself came to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Suddenly seeing Kṛṣṇa seated on Garuḍa, he covered him with showers of many weapons and missiles, with maces, iron bars, lances, (missiles called) Śakti, iron clubs, swords, and discs continuously. Kṛṣṇa cut them off with his disc only. He discharged his (disc) Sudarśana to cut off his arms. The Sudarśana having a thousand spokes discharged at the king of demons quickly cut off the forest (i.e. the large number) of his arms in a thousand ways. In the meanwhile, O goddess, Pārvatī who had fulfilled her vow, came near Kṛṣṇa, and with the palms of her hands joined, said :

Pārvatī said:

46-49. O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, O lord of the world, O Nārāyaṇa, O treasure of compassion, O best of the Yadus, O lord of gods, I was your female servant in a former existence. At that time you, the pleased noble one, had granted me a boon about the perpetual state of having my husband living, O gentle one. O lord, the sages have declared that one principal name of your thousand names has given good fortune to Gaurī. O Govinda, O eternal one mounted on Garuḍa, make it true. Therefore, please give life to my husband.

Rudra said:

50-51. Thus addressed by the goddess the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa withdrew the missile with which her husband was made unconscious. Freed from the missile of Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, the lord of all beings, got up and joining the palms of his hands, praised the lord of the worlds.

Śaṁkara said:

52-56. O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, O lord of the world, O Supreme Being, O highest god, O highest lord, O you without a beginning and an end, O you immutable one, in the human beings there is a strong power. The action of taking up a body is due to you. It is the sign of honour. Be pleased with me. Salutation to you. O eternal one, be pleased with me. O lord of the world, favour me.

Be gracious to me, O Acyuta, Keśava. You are the creator, the supporter, the destroyer of the worlds. You are the father of the worlds. O lord of gods, you alone are the Brahman of the nature of intelligence and the lack of it. You are the origin. You are without an origin. You are the lord and Śeṣa also. You are Mahat; you are the highest Brahman; you alone are the individual soul.

57-61. O best of all gods, you are immortal; O lord of gods you are the lord of the mortals. Due to your extremely good character you have an origin. The two eternal highest souls have come up from your breath. So also the five elements (have come up from you) due to your great affection. You put yourself in the work of service (i.e. as a servant) in the perishable and the imperishable, in the highest abode resorted to by gods and the place of lustre, and in the universe. This is not otherwise. He who does not know you in the world, is a fool. You are the cause of everything. The wise ones know the abode of the lord of the low and high (to be good) for service (*obscure!*). They, the diligent ones rest at the position equal to the gods. The common man remains away to bow down to your eternal position.

62-69. That fourth stage (Turyā: the state of liberation of the soul) of charming rays of light is possible in your case. O you eternal superintendent, the couples talk about you. These best ones, O you beyond qualities, narrate your names, deeds, eternal qualities and grandeurs. O Keśava, in the former and latter learning full of action and knowledge, the two, along with their sons are singing the praise of you, the lord of young ladies (*obscure!*). You are wisdom; you are the highest Brahman; with your great knowledge only, O eternal one, you yourself, the wise one, give (him) life. Due to your grace only, he who knows the soul, obtains, in this world and the highest heaven, wisdom, proficiency, intellect, perception, so also courage, and all desired objects. Then he would be immortal. The self having this name is the heart. O lord, these ten are the names of the Wisdom, the treasure of compassion: (Ātman, Hṛd=heart,) mind, desire, reasoning, recollection, volition, penance, sacrifices, and love.

70-80. This you are the highest Brahman; this you are the creator. This you are Indra, Rudra, and all the deities. O highest lord, you are all these beings—sons, friends, (other forms) of

existence and others also, O eternal one. The viviparous, the oviparous, the beings generated by sweet sweat, plants, horses, cows, men, elephants and others, so whatever being there is, so also the movable beings, so also the immobile (objects)—all have sprung from you (only). The sacred texts describe you, Viṣṇu, as omnipresent. The people, impelled by you only act towards good or bad (things). Therefore, O ocean of pity, forgive by means of your most auspicious qualities this offence that I have committed. Salutation to you, O you lotus-eyed one, Govinda, Acyuta, Mādhava, Vāsudeva. O you fit to be saluted by the world, O Nārāyaṇa, salutation to you. O lord of the worlds, O Nṛsimha, O mine of pity, O lord of Lakṣmī, O omnipresent one, O glorious one, O highest soul, salutation to you. O lord, O you always worshipped by the liberated (souls) having Vaikuṇṭha as their dwelling place, O you lord of the three (Vedas), O Rāma, O you having lotus-like eyes, salutation to you. O you descendant of Yadu, salutation to you who destroy those that are a burden to the earth, who are of the form of Kṛṣṇa's mirth, who are Viṣṇu, who are Jīṣṇu (the conqueror).

Having thus praised and saluted Govinda, the lord of Umā, the lord of beings, having, joined the palms of his hands, spoke in a grave voice:

Rudra said:

81-90. O lord, this Bāṇa, Bali's son, is granted a boon by me. Formerly I had given him a boon that he had asked for, viz. immortality, O best of the Yadus. You deserve to do everything. Therefore, please protect this Bali's son, dear to me.

Saying "All right", the lord, Govinda, the ocean of compassion, withdrawing his disc, freed Bāṇa, Bali's son, who ran the risk to his life, had his arms cut off, and was covered with blood. Śaṁkara, the lord who had fulfilled his vow, after having freed Bali's son, having along with Pārvatī mounted the best bull (Nandin), went to his abode, the Kailāsa mountain. That Bāṇa, having saluted the very powerful Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, went with them to (his) city and freed (Aniruddha) Madana's son. Having honoured them, as they deserved, with divine garments and

ornaments, he gave Uṣā (in marriage) to Śāuri, Kṛṣṇa's grandson. Then Rāma and Kṛṣṇa got Aniruddha duly married. They, along with Pradyumna, were then worshipped by Bāṇa. Then Kṛṣṇa, having placed Aniruddha with Uṣā in a divine chariot, went to Dvāravatī. Like Indra with the gods, Rāma with Pradyumna, and Kṛṣṇa with the army, entered the charming city. Aniruddha, full of joy, enjoyed day and night many pleasures in the company of Bāṇa's daughter in a house full of many jewels.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYONE

Destruction of Pauṇḍraka's Son

Śrī Rudra said:

1-6. Then Pauṇḍraka Vāsudeva, king of Kāśī, fasted in a solitary place, and worshipping Maheśa for twelve years, muttered the five-syllabled formula. At the time of the repetition of the name of the deity he worshipped Śaṁkara with (i.e. by offering) his own lotus-like eye. Then the lord of Umā having the trident in his hand, being pleased, said to him: "Choose a boon". Then he said to Śiva who had five faces, is the lord of all beings, and was pleased: "O giver of boons, give me a form similar to that of Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa)." Śiva (gave) him (a form with) four arms with a disc, a conch, a mace and a lotus (held in them), having eyes like lotus-petals, having charming hair with a crown (on it) resembling that of Vāsudeva. Solicited by him as "Give me also the marks like a yellow garment, and ornaments like the Kaustubha", Śiva also gave him all that. He enticed all people, saying, "I am Vāsudeva".

7-9. Sometime Nārada, having come from heaven to that king of Kāśī, who was haughty with pride and power, said: "You cannot have the status of Vāsudeva without conquering Vasudeva's son." That moment only he, having put himself into a chariot with Garuḍa-banner, reached Dvārakā with the army of four divisions, (numbering) an akṣauhiṇī. There he sent a messenger (to Kṛṣṇa to tell him) "I, Vāsudeva standing in a golden

carriage at the gate of the city, have come to fight (with you). Without conquering me you cannot have the status of Vāsudeva.”

10-14. Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) too, having heard it, mounted upon Garuḍa and on coming out to fight with Pauṇḍraka, saw at the gate Pauṇḍraka with an army (numbering) an akṣauhiṇī, and seated in a chariot, and having a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus in his hands. Kṛṣṇa took the Śārṅga (bow) and in a short time only completely destroyed that army (numbering) an akṣauhiṇī, consisting of horses, elephants and foot-soldiers with arrows resembling the fire of destruction in brightness. And with one arrow he easily chopped off the weapons in his hands like the conch, disc, mace etc. Having cut off his lotus-like head (adorned) with a crown, by means of his pure Sudarśana (disc), he caused it to fall into the harem in (the city of) Vārāṇasī. Seeing it all the residents of Kāśī, fearing ‘What is this?’ were amazed.

15-17. Daṇḍapāṇi, Pauṇḍraka’s son, having heard that his father was killed by lord Vāsudeva, and directed by his mother, (as if) by Death, and told by his priest, offered a sacrifice, called Māheśvara, to Śaṅkara. He, being pleased, affectionately gave him a Kṛtyā (a female deity capable of destruction and proficient in magic) belonging to Maheśvara and capable of killing Kṛṣṇa. That Kāśī king, seeing that Kṛtyā of Maheśvara, that had a body full of a group of flames, had a blazing mass of hair, had tawny eyes, whose face was blazing and fierce, that had a trident in her hand, whose body was smeared with ash, who was adorned with the string of human heads, that caused fear to all gods, was presented by Rudra, impelled her to kill Kṛṣṇa along with his sons, wives and relations.

18-19. And she causing fear to the entire world, burning with her lustre the whole earth, and roaring with a sound strong like the fire at the time of deluge reached Dvārakā. All people staying there saw her and thinking it to be a great deluge, and wailing aloud, reported it to Kṛṣṇa.

20-24. Kṛṣṇa too told all of them not to fear, and seeing that very fierce Kṛtyā standing like that at the portal of the rampart, suddenly discharged that Sudarśana of a thousand spokes, capable of keeping off all weapons and missiles at the Kṛtyā. She, with lustre resembling that of a crore of suns at the time of the

end of a kalpa, seeing that great Sudarśana, going up a hundred yojanas, possessed of a thousand blazing weapons, made of gold, full of lustre, capable of making the entire world reduced to a condition at the time of deluge, saluted by all gods, the refuge of the entire world, lost her lustre, was overcome by fear, and crying (aloud) she ran to Vārāṇasī. Sudarśana too closely pursued her. She too, overcome by fear and crying entered that city of the king of Kāśī. Sudarśana also, reaching the city of Vārāṇasī, reducing to ash Pauṇḍraka's son, Daṇḍapāṇi, along with servants and army and elephants, so also the city of Maheśvara having many palaces and mansions, and being worshipped by all gods and great sages, again reached Kṛṣṇa's hand which was very soft, like a kalpa (sacred precept?). And about this the (following) verses are sung:

25-28. Having burnt with vigour that army discharging weapons and missiles and never decaying, reducing to ash the Kṛtyā, then the city of Vārāṇasī which had many chariots and elephants, and along with horses and men and women, and all stores and granaries, which was difficult to be seen even by gods, the houses, ramparts and courtyards of which were marked with doors, that disc of Viṣṇu burnt the entire city only. That disc, with its power of movement unexhausted, having accomplished what cannot be accomplished, with its lustre blazing, came to Viṣṇu's hand.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Kṛṣṇa Goes Back to His Abode

Śrī Rudra said:

1-3. After the killing of Kāṁsa, the king of Magadha, hating Yādavas, always troubled them. They, being afflicted, told (about it) to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa called Bhīma and Arjuna and consulted them: "He has worshipped Rudra. Due to his favour he cannot be killed with weapons. But somehow he must be kil-

led.” Then having thought he said to Bhīma: “Wrestle with him.” He promised to do so.

4-8. Then Vāsudeva, fit to be saluted by all the mobile and immobile world, went along with Bhīma and Arjuna in the guise of a brāhmaṇa to his city and reached his harem. He too having vanquished in battle very powerful kṣatriyas and having confined them, killed one of them every month and with his blood only made an offering to Bhairava. Thus exerting to kill Jarāsandha who had killed many men and kings, he along with Bhīma and Arjuna entered his house in the guise of a brāhmaṇa. He, seeing them, saluted them (by prostrating himself) like a staff, seated them on proper seats, worshipped them with madhuparka, and said to them: “I am fortunate; I am blessed. Why have you approached me? Tell it to me. I shall give all that to you.” Out of them Vāsudeva, smiling, said to the king: “We Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma, and Arjuna have come to fight with you. Choose one of us for a duel.”

9-12. He too said, “All right.” Then he chose Bhīma for the duel. Then a fierce, continuous duel took place between Bhīma and Jarāsandha (lasting for) twenty-five days. Then prompted by Kṛṣṇa only (Bhīma) the son of Vāyu, split his (i.e. Jarāsandha’s) body into two, and dropped it on the ground. Thus Kṛṣṇa, getting Jarāsandha killed by Pāṇḍu’s son (Bhīma), freed the kings confined by Jarāsandha. (Kṛṣṇa) the descendant of Yadu, getting Jarāsandha killed by (Bhīma) Vāyu’s son, freed the kings confined in his house.

13-20. All those, protected by Kṛṣṇa, having saluted and praised Kṛṣṇa, went to their respective countries. Then, going to Indraprastha with the two (i.e. Bhīma and Arjuna), Kṛṣṇa made Yudhiṣṭhira perform the Rājasūya sacrifice. There, after the sacrifice was over, the chief honour was given to Kṛṣṇa with the consent of Bhīṣma. There Śiśupāla spoke many abusive words to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa too cut off his head with the Sudarśana (disc). He, after three existences, was assimilated into Viṣṇu. Having heard that Śiśupāla was killed, Dantavakra came to Mathurā to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, having learnt about it, got into his chariot, and came to Mathurā.

21-24. On the bank of Yamunā, at the gate of Mathurā, a fight lasting a day and night took place between Dantavakra and

Kṛṣṇa; and Kṛṣṇa killed him with (his) mace. He with his entire body smashed dropped dead on the ground like a mountain broken through with the thunderbolt. He too obtained the eternal, highest position, the absorption into Viṣṇu, obtainable by the meditating saints. Thus Jaya and Vijaya, under the pretext of the curse of Sanaka and others, descended into the mundane existence merely for the sport of the lord, and in the three existences they were killed by him alone. They obtained liberation at the end of three existences.

25. Kṛṣṇa also, having killed him (i.e. Śiśupāla), having crossed Yamunā, having gone to Nanda-vraja, having saluted his old parents, and having consoled them and embraced by them with their throats (choked) with tears, having embraced all old cowherds, having cheered them up with gems, ornaments, etc. gratified the residents there.

26-30. On the charming sandy bank of Yamunā, covered with auspicious trees, Kṛṣṇa incessantly sported with the cowherdresses. Viṣṇu, dressed as a cowherd, lived here for a couple of months with (i.e. enjoying) pleasure of charming sport and steady love. Then all the cowherds like Nanda, all people along with their sons and wives, beasts, birds, and animals took up a divine form due to Kṛṣṇa's favour, got into an aeroplane, and reached the highest world of Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa, having given all the residents of Nanda-vraja his own pure, highest position, and being praised in heaven by hosts of gods, entered the glorious Dvārakā. There, he taking up an omnipresent form, and along with Vasudeva, Ugrasena, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Akrūra etc., and everyday worshipped by his sixteen thousand wives and his eight divine queens, enjoyed on very soft beds graced with flowers in many mansions.

31-35. Then a fellow religious student of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, a brāhmaṇa, their friend from childhood, very much oppressed by poverty, came, after having tied a handful of rice parched and flattened, obtained by begging, in an old piece of cloth, to the glorious city of Dvārakā to see Kṛṣṇa. He stood silent for a moment at the door of Rukmiṇī's harem. Kṛṣṇa too, knowing that a brāhmaṇa had come, went forth to greet him; and having saluted him and held him by his hand, seated him on an excellent seat in his house, and worshipped him who was trembling with fear with madhuparka after washing his feet with the water from

a golden pitcher in the hands of Rukmiṇī. Having gratified him with food, drink etc. resembling nectar, he himself took with his hand the parched and flattened rice that he had obtained by begging, and ate it with a smile. The moment Kṛṣṇa ate the parched and flattened rice, he had great affluence due to much wealth, corn, (many) garments and ornaments.

36-39. Dismissed by Kṛṣṇa, he, thinking that Kṛṣṇa did not give him a small piece of cloth, or wealth, entered his own city. Then seeing his own house full of much wealth and corn, he said: “Due to his favour I have got this.” With his mind delighted by means of the divine garments and ornaments, he, along with his wife, enjoyed all pleasures, performed many sacrifices to please Viṣṇu, and due to his favour got the happiness of heaven. Then Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s son Duryodhana, (having deceived) Pāṇḍu’s sons under the pretext of gambling that was deceitful, took away their kingdom, and expelled them from his country. Those—Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva—along with their good wife Draupadī, went to a great forest. Having lived there for twelve years, and (having lived) *incognito* for a year, all of them lived in the house of Virāṭa, the king of Matsya (country); and came, with Kṛṣṇa’s help to fight with the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

40-43. There took place a great war, causing fear even to gods, between the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and of Pāṇḍu at the very holy Kurukṣetra. Then Śrīkṛṣṇa also, acting as the charioteer of Arjuna, put his power into Arjuna, and getting all kings led by Bhīṣma, Droṇa etc. and along with an army consisting of eleven akṣauhīṇīs killed by him, he put the Pāṇḍavas on the kingdom (i.e. the throne). And having completely removed the burden of the earth, he entered his own city. After some time, on some day, a brāhmaṇa brought his five-year old dead son, and putting him at the gate of the palace, lamenting much, spoke many words of censure to Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that imprecation, Kṛṣṇa remained silent.

44-48. He (i.e. the brāhmaṇa) said: “My five sons have been formerly killed. This is the sixth one. If Kṛṣṇa does not bring him back to life, I shall die at the royal gate.” At that time Arjuna had come to see Kṛṣṇa. He saw him lamenting like that due to the grief (caused by the loss) of his son. Arjuna too, seeing the five-year old boy dead, was full of pity, and granting the

brāhmaṇa protection, promised him: “I shall bring your son back to life.” The brāhmaṇa, thus cheered up by him, was delighted. Then having consecrated the brāhmaṇā-child with life-restoring missiles, seeing him not regaining life, and finding himself of a futile promise, he, full of great grief, desired to give up his life with that only.

49-53. And Kṛṣṇa, knowing all that, came out of his harem, and said to that brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas: “I shall give (you back) all your sons.” Having cheered him, mounting upon Garuḍa, he, along with Arjuna came to Viṣṇu’s world. Seeing Viṣṇu, along with the goddess (Lakṣmī) there, in a part of the jewelled pavilion, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna saluted him. He embraced them with his arms, and asked them why they had come (there). Kṛṣṇa said: “O revered one, give me the sons of the brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas.” Then that Nārāyaṇa gave Kṛṣṇa those sons of the brāhmaṇa, who were of that age.

54-57. Sṛī Kṛṣṇa too, putting them on the shoulders of Garuḍa, and being full of joy, himself also mounted upon Garuḍa, and being praised by groups of gods, entered Dvāravatī. To that brāhmaṇa he gave the six sons aged five. He (i.e. the brāhmaṇa) too, extremely joyful, gave a blessing to Kṛṣṇa: “May you prosper.” And Arjuna having had his promise fulfilled, saluted Kṛṣṇa and went to his own city protected by Yudhiṣṭhira. A myriad thousand sons were born to the sixteen thousand wives of Kṛṣṇa. It is not possible to tell the number of their sons and grandsons. Here (i.e. with regard to this) also there is a verse:

58-62. There were eight hundred thousands and a myriad of sons. Of all of them, Pradyumna, Rukmiṇī’s son was the first. This earth was covered with those innumerable Yādavas. Fearing a burden to the earth again, Kṛṣṇa desired to destroy them under the pretext of a sage’s curse. Sometime all the young boys came to sport in Narmadā. There, seeing the great sage Kaṇva practising austerity, they made Jāmbavatī’s son put on the dress of a woman, and tying an iron pestle to his belly, they approached the sage, and placing Sāmba’s son in the guise of a wife (husband?), said to him: “Tell us whether in (i.e. from) her womb a female or a male would be born.”

63-67. He, knowing it mentally, and not tolerating it, said to them all: “Be killed with this pestle.” All, with their minds

dejected, approached Kṛṣṇa, and reported to him what the sage had said, and that act (of them). Kṛṣṇa too threw the pounded iron pestle into a pool. From the seed of the iron (pestle) reduced to powder great kāśa (grass) resembling the thunderbolt came up. A fish ate a portion of the pestle, of the size of the small finger. A fisherman, catching that fish, took the piece of the pestle lying in the belly of the fish and fashioned (out of it) the point at the end of an arrow.

68-71. Sometime all the Yādavas like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Pradyumna became intoxicated after drinking the spirituous liquor sent by Indra. They took to fighting with one another, and shouting loud words fought (among themselves) and perished. Kṛṣṇa, tired of fighting, slept in the shade of a desire-yielding tree. A hunter, taking a bow and an arrow, took to hunting. Thus they who had fully abandoned their lives, went to their respective gods.

72-74. Having thus destroyed everything with the pestle, the god himself slept in the shade of a great tree surrounded by many clumps of trees. Thinking about himself of the nature of Vāsudeva having four forms, and putting (one) foot on (another) knee, he sat (there) to abandon his human form. In the meanwhile, the hunter, due to the urging of Death, saw Hari's very red foot marked with a disc, a vajra, a banner, a goad etc., and pierced it. Then recognising him to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and struck by great fear and trembling he joined the palms of his hands and saluted him (saying), "Remove all my faults."

75-77. Śrī Kṛṣṇa seeing him in that condition, made him rise with his hands full of nectar, and said to him (words) consoling him who was oppressed by great fear: "You have not committed a fault." Then he granted him the world of Viṣṇu, which is accessible to the meditating saints (only), from which there is no return, which is eternal and full of all secret things. He gave up his human form just at that moment only; and along with all his sons and wives got into a bright, divine aeroplane and went to Viṣṇu's world which resembled a thousand suns in brightness, was crowded with hosts of celestial nymphs and was golden, and which had Viṣṇu in it.

78-83. At that time, Dārūka getting into a chariot, approached Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa too sent him (back, telling him), "First bring

Arjuna of my nature.” He, getting into a chariot having the mind’s speed, came near Arjuna. O goddess, in the meanwhile Arjuna got into it, went round (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), saluted him, and with the palms of his hands joined said: “What do (i.e. should) I do?” And Kṛṣṇa said to him: “O Pārtha, I shall go to my own world. Going to Dvāravatī and bringing (my) eight wives like Rukmiṇī staying there, send them into my body.” With Dārūka he came to the city.

84-86. In the meanwhile, gods seated in their aeroplanes and remaining in the sky, saw Kṛṣṇa going to heaven; and along with the sages praised him and dropped on him showers of flowers. Kṛṣṇa too gave up his human body, took up the body of the form of Vāsudeva, which was the cause of the maintenance and destruction of the entire world, which was all the individual souls, which was meditated upon by meditating saints checking their internal feelings, mounted upon Garuḍa, and being praised by great sages, went (to Vaikuṇṭha). Arjuna told it to all the queens like Rukmiṇī, along with Vasudeva and Ugrasena.

87-90. Hearing that all citizens and ladies abandoned Dvāravatī and all those ladies dear to Kṛṣṇa, went out of the harem, and along with Vasudeva and Ugrasena quickly approached Hari. All those old Yādavas like Vasudeva, Ugrasena and Akrūra, abandoned their bodies and came to the eternal Vāsudeva. Revatī also embraced Balabhadra’s body and entered fire. Having obtained a (divine) body in it, she got into a divine aeroplane and went to the divine world of Saṁkarṣaṇa, the place of her husband. In the same way Rukmaputrī with Pradyumna, Uṣā with Aniruddha and all Yādava ladies honoured the bodies of their husbands and entered fire.

91-94. Arjuna performed the obsequies of all of them. At that time Dārūka also, getting into the divine chariot called Sugrīva, yoked with divine horses and full of all gems, came (there). The Pārijāta tree and the assembly of gods also came to the world of the lord of gods. At that time the city of Dvāravatī submergd in the great ocean.

95-97. Then the enemies of gods seized all the sixteen thousand wives (of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) going to Indraprastha along with Arjuna. Formerly the wives of gods and gandharvas had laughed at the great sage Aṣṭāvakra after seeing him. He cursed them:

“You will be prostitutes.” Then he was propitiated and honoured by them. Due to his grace they, even after obtaining Vāsudeva saluted by all the worlds, as their husband, got into the hands of the enemies of gods due to that (curse) only. Arjuna too, vanquished by the enemies of gods was overcome by grief. He thought: “The strength of my arms and all my glory have gone away with Kṛṣṇa.” And saying (to himself): “Today my fortune has perished”, he, with his lustre entirely perished like that of the evening sun, came to his own city.

98. Thus, for the good of all gods, for destroying the burden of the entire earth, Vāsudeva descended into the Yadu-family. He destroyed all demons and removed a great burden of the earth. He freed all the residents of Nandavraja, Dvārakā and Mathurā and all the mobile and immobile from the bonds of death and mundane existence, and settled them in (Vaikuṇṭha) which is full of great splendour, is eternal, which is accessible (only) to the meditating saints, is golden, charming and pure, and always being waited upon by divine queens etc. he lived (in Vaikuṇṭha). In this connection there are these verses:

99-107. There might be all other incarnations. (But) the deeds of Kṛṣṇa are great. The lord of Ramā appeared for destroying those who caused burden to the earth. These deeds of Kṛṣṇa were for destroying the wicked. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of pity, always delights in Vaikuṇṭha. O goddess, these auspicious deeds of Kṛṣṇa are very wonderful. I told them to you in brief. They give all fruits. He who would recite, remember or listen to this life(-account) of Vāsudeva with devotion near (the image of) Hari, goes to the highest position. Even he who has (committed) major sins or minor sins, is freed after listening to the deeds of young Kṛṣṇa. He who remembers Hari seated with Rukmiṇī in Dvāravatī, undoubtedly acquires great power. He, after meditating upon him, the leader of all gods, while in a battle, a danger, a difficulty or while surrounded by his enemy, would be highly successful. He who would remember him sporting with the young cowherdresses in the auspicious Govraja, gets all the desired (objects) and also good fortune. So also he who, suffering from great misfortune and diseases etc., would remember the eternal one, the vanquisher of the very fierce Kṛtyā living in the city of Kāśī (would be happy).

108-115. O you desiring the fruits of all times, what is the use of speaking much in this regard? A wise man should only utter the formula: 'Salutation to Kṛṣṇa'. 'Repeated salutations to Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, Hari, the highest soul. I, bowing down repeatedly salute Govinda for the destruction of my affliction.' O goddess, a man should, everyday, with devotion, mutter this formula. Being free from all sins, he would obtain Viṣṇu's world. This lord Janārdana assumes different form(s) for the protection of all gods and of the worlds. I, with a desire to kill Tripura, worshipped Viṣṇu. The glorious one, taking up the form of Buddha, deluded his enemies. Those who were deluded by that teaching gave up all religious practices. (These) enemies of gods were killed by me with Viṣṇu's missile. Viṣṇu, descending in a brāhmaṇa's house at the end of Kali, will kill all the cruel Mlecchas. I have described along with all those appearances, all the forms of the lord of the world. O you of an auspicious face, what else do you want to listen to? I shall narrate it.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Modes of Viṣṇu's Worship

Śrī Pārvatī said:

1-3. O venerable one, you have told me the very wonderful acts of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa in this (narration) of Kṛṣṇa's (deeds) in the state of grandeur. Oh, my heart, listening to the nectar of the tale of Hari—the acts of the noble Rāma and Kṛṣṇa—is not satisfied even for crores of kalpas, O lord of good, O lord of beings. Now I desire to listen to the excellent (account of the) greatness of Viṣṇu. O god, I also desire to hear about the manner of his worship.

Śrī Rudra said:

4-9. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you (the account) of the very noble Viṣṇu. The installation (of his idol) and his self-manifestation—these are the two aspects which it consists of. The

installation with (the accompaniment of) the rites as told in the Śrauta and Smārta texts, of the representation of Viṣṇu of a stone, clay, wood, iron etc., is said to be *Sthāpana*. Listen (as) I (tell you) to that which is called self-manifestation. That representation of Viṣṇu of stone or wood in which the lord of souls has placed himself for men is said to be self-manifest on the earth. One should worship Viṣṇu (whose representation is) either self-manifest or installed. Keśava, the lord of the world, the eternal one, himself approaches (the deities and the great sages) for their worship. Just that which was to be enjoyed in a (particular) body became manifest. One should always worship that only and take delight in that only.

10-16. Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, should be properly worshipped. Due to the penance of the Ikṣvāku lords, he himself appeared on the earth. That Mādhava, removing sins, is to be worshipped by me at Kāśī. I settling myself properly take delight in the charming house, after visiting it, where the old one is self-manifest. The lord of sacrifices is not obtained by men by means of Yoga of eight constituents, but in worship. Being the object of the eyes he gives the desired boon. Men easily attain him in (i.e. by means of) worship in all conditions. In the very meritorious, auspicious country of Bhārata, in Jambūdvīpa, on the earth, he is always present near even the ignorant. Viṣṇu is always near in a worship and never in other (modes of reaching him). Therefore, in the country Bhārata, he is, O goddess, always waited upon by sages and even by gods with rites like penance, sacrifice etc. In this country of Bhārata Viṣṇu is always near.

17-21. One should get rid of sin by purifying (oneself) at the Indradyumna (lake), Kaurmya, the Śimha mountain, Karavīra, Kāśī, Prayāga or (the division of Bhārata called) Saumya, or the Śālagrāma mountain, Dvāravatī, Naimiṣa (forest), so also in Badarikāśrama, Pauṇḍarika and Daṇḍaka (forest), Mathurā, Veṅkaṭa-giri, Śveta mountain, Garuḍa mountain, Kāñcī, Anantaśayana, Śrīraṅga, Vāsava mountain, Nārāyaṇa mountain, Saumya, Varāha, Vāmanāśrama. These and others are self-manifest, and give all desired fruits. The good sages say that in that in which Viṣṇu himself is near, he is self-manifest.

22-26. The best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu should install the (idol of) Keśava according to the precept, and should

bring about his proximity by (muttering) a (sacred) formula. That installation is excellent. He should worship the god (installed) in it in villages and houses. The good recommend the worship in the house on a Śālagrāma stone. Praising, repeating the formula, sacrifice, abstract meditation on the magnanimous one, repeating his name, serving him, being marked with his signs (like the disc etc.) would be his worship. O auspicious one, it is divided into nine kinds. For a brāhmaṇa doing every act for him, is always laid down. A brāhmaṇa, a great devotee of Viṣṇu is the greatest teacher of men. He is venerable to all people as Viṣṇu is.

27-35. A brāhmaṇa who has gone through the five purificatory rites like being heated (with the Vaiṣṇava marks) and having five motives is said to be a great brāhmaṇa. The worship for a kṣatriya is laid down through the performance of the various acts. For vaiśyas the six types of worship are said to be: Marking (his body) with his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) marks, service, honouring those who belong to him, repeating the letters of the formula, repeating viṣṇu's names, and salutation to him. The worship for a śūdra (consists of) five (types): Repeating his names, service to him, worshipping and saluting him and honouring those who belong to him. O dear one, mental worship is common to all men. The worship of the lord of the world should be done according to one's fitness. Viṣṇu should always be worshipped by brāhmaṇas and others who are devoted to no other deity (than Viṣṇu), who do not wish to accomplish any other fruit (than securing him), who know the Vedas and the truth about Brahman, who are free from attachment, who desire salvation, who possess devotion for their preceptors, who are well-pleased, who are very good. Men should perform Viṣṇu's proper worship (i.e. the worship fit) for their castes. The good devotees of Viṣṇu should do (acts) proper for their castes and stages of life. An intelligent man should always properly perform the rites told in the holy texts and codes of law. He should never transgress the acts prescribed in the holy texts and codes of law.

36-39. That devotee of Viṣṇu, who does not practise the acts prescribed in the Śrutis and Smṛtis, becomes a heretic, and would stay in the Raurava hell. Therefore, a man should offer to the lord of the world a worship fit for his caste. One should always practise acts prescribed in the codes of law. O auspicious

one, the mental worship is common to all men. Only after considering his own fitness a man should carefully perform his duty. The means for all to acquire piety are: Tranquillity, control, austerities, purity, truthfulness, avoiding (eating) flesh, non-stealing, and harmlessness.

40-50. Therefore, one should worship Viṣṇu according to his caste and stage of life. Getting up at the end of night and having properly rinsed his mouth, and having saluted the elderly persons he should remember Viṣṇu in his heart. He being pure and controlled in his speech, should devoutly repeat the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). Having evacuated the bowels and discharged the urine¹ on the outside of the village, and having properly purified² himself, he, the restrained and pure one, should properly sip water and should properly bathe after having brushed his teeth. O auspicious one, taking the earth at the root of a tulasī along with its leaf, and having consecrated it with the principal formula and having smeared his body along with (the repetition of) the Gāyatrī hymn only, he should bathe after offering the expiatory formula. O you very pure one, having invoked there Gaṅgā rising from the feet of Viṣṇu, and having quickly dipped (into the water) he should repeat the excellent expiatory formula. Having sipped water, he should sprinkle his person with water in the order prescribed in the formula of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. Then the wise one having quickly dipped himself, should repeat the primary formula twenty-eight times or one hundred and eight times. The devotee of Viṣṇu having consecrated himself with the formula (to be repeated) in water, should offer his prayers. Having sipped water, he should gratify deities, sages and dead ancestors. Having pressed his garment, having sipped water, he, the alert devotee of Viṣṇu, and the best brāhmaṇa, having put on a washed garment should take pure, charming clay and having consecrated it with a formula only, have on his forehead etc. the proper number of the upright sectarian marks. The wise one should then perform (i.e. offer) the sandhyā prayer and recite Sāvitrī (hymn).

1. The reading is definitely 'Mala-mūtra' and not 'Mūla-mantra'.

2. Aghamarṣaṇa: Lit. expiatory, removing or destroying sin; usually applied to a prayer repeated by brāhmaṇas (the 190th hymn of the tenth Maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda).

51-55. He controlled in speech and mind, should go home and wash his feet. Having sipped water with a concentrated mind, he should enter the hall where worship is offered. Having placed (the idol of) the lord, the god Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa on a charming, very bright seat, adorned with a heap of flowers, he should worship him properly with sandal, flowers and sacred rice grains. The brāhmaṇa, with his mind controlled, should worship (the idol of) Viṣṇu—either installed or self-manifest—devoutly, properly and as deserved, according to the way told in Śrutis and Smṛtis. The devotee of Viṣṇu should do what is advised by his preceptor. The Śrauta way is Vaikhānasa and the Smārta is that of Vasiṣṭha.

56-59. What is laid down in Pañcarātra is called divine text. The rite should not be dropped; (for) the propitiation of Viṣṇu is the highest. He should gladly and according to his ability offer worship to Viṣṇu with invocation, seat, (offering) materials of worship etc., sandal, flowers, sacred rice grains, incense, lamps, offerings of eatables, tām̐būla etc. and salutations. The devotee of Viṣṇu should propitiate the deity with sixteen modes of paying homage to the accompaniment at every ṛc of the two hymns—Puruṣa-sūkta and the principal hymn. Again during the various modes of worship he should offer a handful of flowers.

60-70. With the (various) positions of fingers the devotee of Viṣṇu should invoke the lord of the earth. So also he should offer a seat with a flower and the finger-position. With the two principal hymns he should offer at every mode of worship lamp, materials of worship, (water for) sipping, a bath with pure water in vessels, and auspicious substances mixed with tulasī-leaves. Then with fragrant oil he should smear the idol. He should also rub and clean his body with musk and sandal. Having bathed with auspicious, fragrant water with (the accompaniment of) hymns, and having properly decorated (himself) with divine ornaments and garments, he should then offer madhuparka, so also sandal made fragrant. He should devoutly and properly offer fragrant, good flowers, incense, and very beautiful lamp having eight or ten limbs (i.e. wicks). He should also give various kinds of eatables, mixed with rice boiled with milk and cakes. He should also devoutly offer camphor with tām̐būla.

Having waved the lamps he should worship (i.e. offer) a garland of flowers. Having taken himself round (the idol) and having saluted and praised (it) with excellent hymns, he should offer auspicious materials of worship after making (the idol) lie on the lap of Garuḍa. Having repeated auspicious names, he should then perform a sacrifice. He should make an offering into the fire-circle with the remaining of eatables offered to Viṣṇu. He should (repeat) every ṛc (of) the Puruṣa-sūkta and the Śrīsūkta invoking auspiciousness. He should offer into the Vedic fire oblation mixed with ghee. He should devoutly offer (it) with the gem of a hymn as (already) mentioned.

71-81. Meditating upon great Viṣṇu of the form of sacrifice one hundred and eight times or twenty-eight times, he should offer the oblation. After meditating upon the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) resembling pure gold, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, consisting of the entire Vedas, Vedānta, Aṅgas and Upāṅgas, seated with goddess Lakṣmī, he should perform a sacrifice. He should offer the oblation with (Viṣṇu's) names (uttered) after each offering. The best devotee of Viṣṇu should assign (offerings) to the eternal devotees. Then in due order, he should offer oblations to and particularly worship the Śaktis like Bhū, Līlā, Vimalā etc. first and then the deities like Ananta, Garuḍa etc. Then Vāsudeva etc. and deities like Śakti, so also images like that of Keśava, Saṁkarṣaṇa etc., Matsya, Kūrma etc. and the weapons like the disc, so also gods like Viṣṇu, and deities like the Moon, the guardians of the quarters like Indra, so also deities like Dharma should be offered oblations to and worshipped. The best devotee of Viṣṇu, being calm, should everyday, in his daily rite of worship offer the sacrifice to Viṣṇu. In the worship in the house, he, by offering properly the five sacrifices, should duly offer the oblation and then sip water. Seated on the white seat with the skin of the black antelope and darbhas placed on it he should bring about comfort for (being able to enjoy) pleasures by the use of hymns. Properly seated in the position of Padma he should purify the elements of the body.

82-90. With his senses controlled, he should, with a hymn, practise the three (kinds of) breath-control. Then facing the north he should bring about the expansion of the heart-lotus by means of the Sun of knowledge. The best devotee of Viṣṇu

should one by one, imagine in its pericarp, full of the three, the triad of the orbs of the sun, the moon, and the fire. On them he should imagine a seat full of many gems. He should (mentally) arrange at the end of the root of the heart-lotus a lotus with eight (kinds of) grandeur, having brilliance like that of the young sun, and full of the syllables of the mystic formula. Then the pure devotee, of a calm mind, should meditate upon lord Viṣṇu who is seated on it with goddess (Lakṣmī), who resembles a crore of moons, who has four hands, a beautiful body, who holds a conch, a disc and a mace, whose eyes are large like lotus-petals, who is distinguished with all (auspicious) marks, on whose chest are Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha, who has put on a yellow garment, beautiful ornaments, who is adorned with divine ornaments, whose body is smeared with divine sandal, who is graced with divine flowers, is adorned with the garland of wood-flowers and delicate leaves of tulasī, who resembles a crore of suns in lustre, whose body is embraced by Lakṣmī having all (good) marks, who is auspicious; having thus meditated, he should repeat the hymn.

91-96. Having with devotion mentally worshipped (Viṣṇu) a thousand or hundred times, or according to his capacity, he should stop. He should devoutly honour those who belong to him (i.e. his devotees), that have come at that time, and having pleased them by (giving them) food, drink etc., he should dismiss them after following them (a few steps). Having worshipped the dead ancestors he should duly gratify the deities. Having honoured the guests and servants, the couple should eat. He should always avoid the worship of yakṣas, demons and spirits. A brāhmaṇa who through folly worships them, would certainly become a cāṇḍāla. Resorting to yakṣas, goblins and deities enjoying liquor and flesh is said to be equivalent to drinking liquor. The worship of ghosts of brāhmaṇas, vampires, yakṣas and spirits is the means for men of reaching the very fierce hell, Kumbhipāka.

97-106. Due to the worship of yakṣas and spirits all the religious merit earned during crores of existences by (performance of) sacrifices and (giving) gifts, is lost instantly. Due to the worship of yakṣas and spirits, a woman or a man becomes an insect for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores

of kalpas and sinks in feces along with his dead ancestors. He who eats the food offered to yakṣas, goblins or vicious deities would be the eater of pus and blood. The brāhmaṇa (who eats food) assigned to yakṣas, hosts of spirits, cruel ghosts of brāhmaṇas, (would instantly become) a cāṇḍāla only. That woman who would worship yakṣas, goblins, serpents, demons, goes with her face turned down to the fierce Kālasūtra hell. One having lived there along with one's dead ancestors, and licking urine and feces till deluge, and with one's body being eaten by insects, is then born within ten days in hundred (śatasamkhyayā?) on the earth. Therefore, one should avoid the worship of yakṣas etc. and of (vicious) deities. One should even avoid an independent worship of brāhmaṇas well-versed in Vedas. Having worshipped god Nārāyaṇa Hari, venerable to the world, a man should worship the installation of the god covered on all sides. With the remnant of what is enjoyed by Viṣṇu, he should throw an offering to them.

107-115. The devotee of Viṣṇu should also perform a sacrifice with (materials) that have remained after it (i.e. Viṣṇu's worship). He should offer an oblation to the deities after having properly made an offering to Viṣṇu. He should also offer everything to his dead ancestors and should secure immortality. Harassing beings leads wise men to hell. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, know that which, without being given, is taken by men to be a theft and is the cause of hell. A man who eats prohibited articles of food like garlic, (drinks) liquor etc., (eats) radish, red garlic, sesamum-flour, pot-herb, bilva, kośātakī-fruit, bottle-gourd, egg-plant, bijāli-fruit, kavaca fruit, and other prohibited articles of food as noted in the holy texts, reaches a strange, inauspicious hell. The food of the non-devotees of Viṣṇu, that of the fallen, that which is not offered to Viṣṇu would be like the flesh of a dog. He who eats the food of (i.e. offered to) yakṣas, demons and spirits, so also (he who enjoys) wine, liquor and onion goes to a hell where the food is pus and blood. A man (goes to hell) by means of these—installing, touching or coming in contact with them. They too just go to a hell where the food is feces, urine and insects. So also a man (goes to hell) due to contact with the fallen and the heretics.

116-117. Knowing the ancient best Puruṣa (i.e. Viṣṇu), the

entire enjoyer of all sacrifices, a man should perform his daily and occasional obligatory rites, so also those that are performed through the desire for some object (optional). O goddess, those who desire heaven, should never worship yakṣas, demons, spirits, goblins and Bhairavas.

118-124. A brāhmaṇa should avoid worshipping yakṣas, demons and spirits. (For by doing so) for three hundred crores of kalpas he remains in the state of a goblin. Therefore, the worship of demons and spirits is prohibited. Due to the worship of yakṣas and groups of spirits he goes to the Raurava hell (and stays there) for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas. He, being without the marks like the conch, the disc and other marks most dear to Viṣṇu, and fallen from all pious acts would go to hell. By means of illicit intercourse, harm (to others), snatching another's wealth, by eating prohibited articles of food, he would instantly reach hell. (If) a man abandoning the woman whose hand he has sought, goes to another woman, that is illicit intercourse; it is the cause of instantly going to hell. A man similarly goes to hell only due to the contact with the fallen, the heretics and also those who do impious deeds. He should even avoid the contact of those who come in contact with such persons.

125. The devotee of Viṣṇu should avoid a family full of sins. Seeking solitude, he should abandon the village mixed with (i.e. full of) great sins.

126-131. Similarly, he who desires absolute solitude, should even abandon that region. The means to attain Viṣṇu is said to be doing one's own duty, having knowledge, devotion etc. That brāhmaṇa who practises his duties and knowledge in accordance with Viṣṇu's order, and is highly devoted to Viṣṇu, would be the one who solicits solitude. The devotee of Viṣṇu should properly avoid a prohibited act with a sinful thought (i.e. by looking upon it as a sinful act). Soliciting solitariness he should even mentally abandon (acts according to) the holy text due to blemish. Similarly he who desires absolute solitude, should avoid (acts) looking upon them as fit to be abandoned. Acts are said to be of three kinds: daily, occasional (both obligatory) and (those which are) performed through the desire for some object (i.e. optional).

The sages have declared knowledge also to be like that in the world: the discrimination between what ought and ought not to be done; thinking about the other world; the means to accomplish it; the knowledge of Viṣṇu's nature only. A devotee should be full of devotion. It is said to be of nine kinds:

132-140. The auspicious marks of Sudarśana (disc); the upright sectarian mark on the forehead; repeating the formula of (i.e. taught by) the good preceptor; worshipping Viṣṇu properly; recollection of Viṣṇu; glorification of Viṣṇu; service of the highest soul; salutation before him; and honouring those who belong to him; resorting to his favour and a holy place. (Thus) devotion is said to be of nine kinds. That with which the devotee of Viṣṇu seeks the shelter of god Viṣṇu, should be known as pious resignation. It is declared to be of three kinds: It is said to be of three types in the world: *tāmasī* (vicious), *rājasī* (passionate) and *sāttvikī* (sincere). Fulfilment is also divided into three (kinds); it is common to all (human) beings. Looking upon these four as fit to be abandoned(?), the devotee of Viṣṇu should give it(?) up. Brahman only, being the means, would cling to Viṣṇu's devotee(?). The best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu should practise acts, knowledge through love for the lord, and abandoning (i.e. not looking upon) them as means. With devotion he should worship Viṣṇu three times (a day). O you auspicious one, he should especially worship him at the time of an occasional obligatory (rite). On everyday of the month of Kārtika he should worship him (i.e. Viṣṇu) with jasmine flowers. He of a controlled mind and a firm vow, should continuously offer a lamp. Having fed brāhmaṇas he would, in the end, attain absorption into Viṣṇu.

141-145. O goddess, in Dhanu-month, he should every morning continuously worship the lord of gods with lotuses and white and black karavīra flowers. He should offer incense, lamps and eatables according to his capacity. At the conclusion he should feed brāhmaṇas who are the best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu. He undoubtedly gets the fruit of a thousand horse-sacrifices. In the month of Māgha, (every morning) when the sun has risen, he should particularly bathe in a river, and worship Viṣṇu with flowers and lotuses, O you of an auspicious face. He should offer rice cooked in milk and eatables with ghee

(to Viṣṇu). Having bathed (every morning) he should continuously worship Viṣṇu (everyday) for a month. In-conclusion he should offer sugar with water.

146-151. O you of an auspicious appearance, he should devoutly honour Viṣṇu's devotees at the end of the month. Similarly in the month of Caitra he should daily worship the lord of the world with campaka flowers and also with bakula flowers; and should offer food prepared in jaggery. Being well concentrated, he should feed brāhmaṇas at the end of the month. He would (thus) obtain (the fruit of) the worship performed for a thousand years. In Vaiśākha he should worship the god with great lotuses having hundred petals. O goddess, having worshipped him in the proper manner, he should devoutly offer him water mixed with molasses along with curd, food and fruits. O Pārvatī, the lord of the world, along with Lakṣmī, is pleased. In the month of Jyeṣṭha, he, having worshipped Hṛṣikeśa with white lotuses, trumpet(-flowers), and blue lotuses, and having devoutly offered him food with mangoes, he would be the giver of a crore of cows.

152-157. Having fed Viṣṇu's devotees, he would obtain complete immortality. In (the month of) Āṣāḍha he should everyday worship devoutly Acyuta, Lakṣmī's husband, and the god of gods with clove-flowers, and offer him rice boiled in milk. At the end of the month he should feed brāhmaṇas, the best among great devotees of Viṣṇu. Undoubtedly he obtains (the merit) of the worship for sixty thousand years. In the month of Śrāvaṇa he should worship Viṣṇu with punnāga flower, and ketakī petals. Having worshipped Viṣṇu with devotion, he would not obtain birth again. Devoutly he should give cakes mixed with sugar and ghee. He should feed brāhmaṇas; similarly he would obtain full immortality. In Śrāvaṇa he should worship the lord with kunda and kurabaka (flowers). He should devoutly offer milk and food mixed with jaggery. Everyday he would obtain the fruit of the gift of a crore of cows.

158-170. In the month of Āśvina he should worship Viṣṇu with blue lotuses. He should devoutly offer him milk mixed with cakes. Being delighted and surrounded by his own people, he reaches Viṣṇu's world for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas. O goddess, in the same way, in

the month of Kārtika he would obtain absorption (into Viṣṇu) on devoutly worshipping Acyuta with tender tulasī-leaves. With devotion, and in due order, he should devoutly and duly offer food with milk, ghee and sugar, so also rice boiled in milk and cakes. O you of an excellent face, one should, according to one's capacity, particularly worship Viṣṇu on the new-moon day, Saturday, constellation sacred to Viṣṇu, the Sun's passage, portentous calamity, and lunar or solar eclipse. The best brāhmaṇa should offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu according to his capacity on the day of Jupiter's passage (from one to another constellation) and constellations of Viṣṇu's birth. He should offer a handful of flowers, approved by the Vedas, for every ṛc. He should also break the fast with the oblation of rice,¹ barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manes, or with rice cooked in milk. He should feed Viṣṇu's devotees and give them presents according to his capacity. Having emancipated a crore of (the members of) his family, he would obtain Viṣṇu's position. If the best devotee of Viṣṇu is unable to worship Viṣṇu, he should, along with the repetition of hymns sacred to Viṣṇu,² everyday offer a sacrifice with a thousand handfuls of flowers. Or the wise man should worship the lord to please him (offering a handful of flowers) with every verse. Or continuously for seven nights he should (recite) the gem of a hymn one thousand and eight times, and should worship him with an offering. The wise man should especially honour the best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu. At the end he should, according to his wealth, take an ablution. A brāhmaṇa should take an ablution to the accompaniment of the repetition of hymns sacred to Viṣṇu.

171-174. The best brāhmaṇa, having duly and according to his capacity, bathed here, and having devoutly washed his feet in another vessel, should worship (Viṣṇu) with incense, flowers etc. and garments, ornaments etc; so also he should worship him with a tāmbūla, fruits according to his capacity. Having fed (a brāhmaṇa) with food, drink etc. and having repeatedly saluted him, he should follow him to the boundary (of the village), and having saluted him who is dismissed, he should again salute him

1. Caru: An oblation of rice, barley, and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manes.

2. (Vaiṣṇava) anuvāka: repeating (hymns) sacred to Viṣṇu,

devoutly, and slowly return. With his mind controlled, he, having entered his house, should again worship the lord of beings.

175-179. Thus till he is alive, he should diligently worship Viṣṇu. O auspicious one, he should especially always honour those that belong to him. O goddess, of all worships that of Viṣṇu is the best. Therefore, honouring those that belong to him, is the best. He who would worship Viṣṇu, but would not honour those who belong to him should not be reckoned as Viṣṇu's devotee, but is known to be a hypocrite. Therefore, a man should always with (i.e. making an) effort honour those that belong to him. By means of honouring the best devotee of Viṣṇu, he overcomes the entire stream of difficulties. O goddess, thus I have described the excellent daily and occasional (obligatory) worship of Viṣṇu, so also that of those who belong to him.

180. O goddess, I have also described to you, his valour, nature, the accomplishment of the fruit, his residence, body so also the group of the four (kinds of) acts etc. What else do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

One Hundred and Eight Names of Rāma

Vasiṣṭha said:

1. That goddess, thus addressed by her lord, the Trident-holder, saluted the noble one, and with the palms of her hands joined, then spoke:

Pārvatī said:

2-3. O lord, you have well described the excellent practices of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, and the nature of the highest lord Viṣṇu, which is the greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret). O you saluted by all gods, I am fortunate; I am blessed. Due to your favour I (shall) worship the eternal lord of gods.

Vasiṣṭha said:

4. Then hearing her words Śiva, the destroyer of Tripura, with his heart pleased, embraced the goddess (and said):

Rudra said:

5-7. Well (said), well (said), O great goddess, O you of an excellent face. Worship Hṛṣīkeśa, Acyuta, the lord of Lakṣmī. O good one, with you as my wife, devoted to Viṣṇu, I am fortunate. O you of a beautiful body, permitted by your intelligent preceptor, Vāmadeva, worship the ancient lord, Viṣṇu. O you daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, by worshipping Viṣṇu in the way of (i.e. according to) the advice of the preceptor, a man obtains every desire (object), not otherwise.

Vasiṣṭha said:

8-9. The goddess, thus addressed, and being delighted and desirous of worshipping Viṣṇu, then suddenly approached Vāmadeva, O king. The goddess, after approaching, honouring the preceptor and saluting the best sage with the palms of her hands joined, said (to him):

Pārvatī said:

10. O revered one, O best brāhmaṇa, by your grace I shall properly worship Viṣṇu. Please permit me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

11-12. Thus addressed by the goddess, the preceptor, the great sage Vāmadeva, duly gave her an excellent mystic formula. The best sage told (her) the thousand names of Viṣṇu. The preceptor, after telling her the manner of worship, also spoke with great love to Pārvatī who had fulfilled her vow.

Vāmadeva said:

13. O you of an excellent face, having everyday worshipped Viṣṇu in the morning, repeat the thousand names of Viṣṇu after that.

Vasiṣṭha said:

14-16. Pārvatī who was advised by that preceptor Vāma-

deva, thus addressed by that preceptor, worshipped (Viṣṇu) with her mind delighted, saluted (him), and again came to her abode. Then after a few days, the bull-bannered Śaṅkara, having worshipped Viṣṇu on a Dvādaśī-day, was seated on a charming peak of Kailāsa. He then spoke to Pārvatī to take food.

Śaṅkara said:

17a. O Pārvatī, saluted by the world, come to eat with me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

17b-18. Goddess Pārvatī said to him: "O god, I shall eat after I repeat the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). O lord, you may eat food." Then the highest lord, smiling, said to her:

Śaṅkara said:

19-22a. O Pārvatī, you are fortunate; you are blessed. You are Viṣṇu's devotee. O goddess, without good luck, devotion to Viṣṇu is difficult to have. O you charming one, O you of an excellent face, I, saying 'Rāma, Rāma', am interested in Rāma. Rāma's name is equal to the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). O Pārvatī, my mind, hearing the names beginning with (the letter) 'ra', becomes pleased, due to the expectation of their being Rāma's names. O great goddess, uttering (the word) *Rāma*, now eat with me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

22b-23. Then uttering the name *Rāma* Pārvatī ate with (Śaṅkara). Then the great goddess Pārvatī, seated with Śaṅkara, uttered the name *Rāma*, and with her mind disposed to love, asked god Śaṅkara:

Pārvatī said:

24. You said Rāma's name is equivalent to the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). The enemy of Rāvaṇa has other names (also). O lord of gods, tell them to me. Devotion (for them) has arisen in me.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

25-29. O Pārvatī, listen. I shall tell the names of Rāma. O

Pārvatī, whatever common and Vaidika words are there, they are Rāmacandra's names. Among them the (Viṣṇu-)sahasra (-nāma) is superior; and among them the hundred and eight names (told) below are chief. Just one name of Viṣṇu is said to be superior to all Vedas; so also are the thousand names equal to Rāma's names. O dear one, that fruit which one who recites the hymns of all Vedas, gets is obtained crorefold by Rāma's name only. O you of an auspicious appearance, listen to the principal names of Rāma. O dear one, I shall tell you those which are sung by the sages:

30-47. Om, Śrīrāma; Rāmacandra; the eternal Rāmabhadra; the lotus-eyed one; the glorious lord of kings; the best among the Raghus; the lord of Jānakī; the conqueror; the victorious one; Janārdana; the one dear to Viśvāmitra; the controlled one; the one who is exclusively devoted to the protection of those who have sought his shelter; the destroyer of Vālin; the eloquent one; the truth-speaking one; the one of genuine valour; the one true to his word; the one getting the fruit of his vow; always the resort of Hanūmat; the son of Kauśalyā; the destroyer of Khara; skilled in killing Virādha; the protector of Bibhiṣaṇa; the one who cut off the head of Rāvaṇa; the breaker of seven tālas; the one who broke Śiva's bow; the one who broke down the great pride of (Paraśurāma) the son of Jamadagni; the one who killed Tāḍakā; the one who mastered Vedānta; the soul of the Vedas; the only medicine for the bondage to the mundane existence; the enemy of Dūṣaṇa and Triśiras; the one having three forms; having three qualities and (of the form of the) triad (i.e. the three Vedas); the one having three strides; the soul of the three worlds; the one whose acts are said to be meritorious; the protector of the three worlds; the archer; the one who lived in Daṇḍaka forest; the one who sanctified Ahalyā; the one devoted to his parents; the one who grants boons; the one who has controlled his senses and anger, his greed; and who is the preceptor of the world; the one who associated himself with bears and monkeys; the one who resorted to Citrakūṭa; the one who gave the boon of protection of Jayanta; and the one who was served by Sumitrā's son; the one who is the superior lord of all gods; the one who brought the dead monkeys back to life; the killer of the deceitful Mārīca; the one who is illustrious; and who has

large arms; the one who is praised by all gods; who is gentle; who is friendly; who is the best sage; who is a great meditating saint; who is very generous; the one who gave a stable kingdom to Sugrīva; the one who is said to give greater fruit than (one due to) all religious merit; who destroys all sins; the one who is the first god; and also the greatest god; the one who is the dawn of good fortune; who has great strength; who is the ancient and best Puruṣa (the Supreme Being); the one who has a smiling face; who speaks measured words; who speaks first; (who is called) Rāghava; the one who is grave with infinite virtues; who is wise and uncommon due to the quality of control; who does human acts due to his Māyā (illusory power); the one who is honoured by Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva); the one who constructed the bridge; the one who vanquished the Ocean; who is full of all holy places; who is Viṣṇu; whose body is dark, handsome, brave; who wears yellow garments; who is an archer; who is the lord of all sacrifices; who (himself) is the sacrifice; who is free from old age and death; the one who installed Śiva's Phallus; who is free from primitive qualities; the one who is the highest lord; who is the highest Brahman; who has the body of consciousness and joy; who is the highest light; the one who is the highest abode; the highest sky; and the higher than the high; who is the highest lord; who has gone to the other side; who is the opposite bank; who is of the nature of all souls; is auspicious. These are the hundred and eight names of Śri Rāmacandra.

48-51. O goddess, I have told you this secret of secrets through love for you. He who would recite or listen to these (names) with a devoted heart, is freed from all sins (committed) even during crores of kalpas. Watery places turn into dry grounds, and foes become friends. Kings become servants, and fires become mild. Spirits become favourable, and unstable wealth becomes stable for the man who recites them devoutly; so also planets become favourable; calamities are removed, of the man who recites (them) devoutly, O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain.

52-57. He who would recite it with great devotion, has the three worlds under his control. By narrating (them) he obtains whatever object he desires. With five ancestors and five successors, he always delights in Vaikuṇṭha for thousands of crores of

kalpas, and hundreds of crores of kalpas. Those men who praise Rāma who is dark like dūrvā-blades, who is lotus-eyed, who has put on yellow garments, with divine names, are not worldly spirits. Salutation to Rāma, Rāmabhadra, Rāmacandra, the Creator, to Raghunātha, to the lord, and the husband of Sītā. O goddess, a man, repeating this hymn day and night, is free from all sins, and would obtain absorption into Viṣṇu. O you having beautiful brows, through love for you I have thus told you Rāma's greatness contained in the Vedas and called auspicious.

Vasiṣṭha said:

58-59a. Having heard that greatness of the highest lord told by Śaṅkara, she, with her eyes full of tears of joy, obtained incomparable delight. Having saluted her husband, the bull-bannered, lord of gods.

Pārvati said:

59b-60. Oh, matchless is the greatness of Rāma, the highest soul. Even (after hearing it) for hundreds of kalpas my ears would not be satisfied. I am fortunate: I am blessed. O sinless one, you have told me everything. May I have, through your grace, devotion for Rāma in every existence.

Vasiṣṭha said:

61-69. Speaking like this, Pārvatī, the best devotee of Viṣṇu, lived happily in all conditions with her husband on the Kailāsa mountain, repeating the formula: 'Salutation to Rāma, Rāmabhadra, Rāmacandra, the Creator, to Raghunātha, the lord, the husband of Sītā.' O king, I have told you all this topmost secret. O king the religious treatises proclaimed by Rudra are vicious (*tāmasa*). The bull-bannered (god) narrated them for deluding people. Lord Śiva told this one in private to the goddess. The lord, highly devoted to her, told the goddess this significant gist of the hymn, with a hidden meaning, through love for her, O king. He who would listen to or recite with a mind full of devotion, this wonderful dialogue between Umā and the great Lord, would be an omniscient and great devotee of Viṣṇu. Being free from all practices, he obtains the highest position. O very mighty lord of

kings, in your dynasty Viṣṇu, the propitious highest lord will be born as Daśaratha's son for the good of all people. Therefore, the Ikṣvākus, among whom lord Rāma, of lotus-like eyes, is born, are honoured even by gods, O king.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

The Three Gods Subjected to Test by Bhṛgu

Dilīpa said:

1-6. O brāhmaṇa, you have fully told (me) about all the practices, and about the general and particular nature of the highest (lord) and the individual soul. O best brāhmaṇa, through curiosity I am asking you one other (question). Due to your great love (for me) properly tell (i.e. answer) that also. Rudra, the destroyer of Tripura, is the best among the great devotees of Viṣṇu. Due to what did he, along with his wife, have a condemned form? How did the very illustrious one have the form of clitoris? O best brāhmaṇa, how did the five-faced one, four-armed one, trident-holder and three-eyed one have a condemned form? O son of Mitra-Varuṇa, tell all this (to me).

Vasiṣṭha said:

7-13. O king, listen; I shall explain to you what you have asked me respectfully. In the pure hearts of men a thought for bliss is produced. Formerly on the best mountain Mandara Svāyambhuva Manu performed, along with sages, an excellent prolonged sacrificial session. There came all sages who had fulfilled their vows, who were proficient in various holy texts, whose lustre was like that of the young sun and fire, who, the brāhmaṇas, were well-versed in all Vedas, and who had mastered all religious practices. When the great sacrificial session took place, the sages whose sins had been exhausted, and who had penance as their wealth, spoke among themselves in order to find the truth about the deity. Which excellent deity should be honoured by brāhmaṇas proficient in the Vedas? Who, out of Brahmā, Viṣṇu

and Śiva, being praised, gives salvation to men? Water of (i.e. flowing from) whose feet should be resorted to? So also the purifying remnant of whose food should be enjoyed? Who, the immutable one, is the highest abode, the highest soul and who is eternal? Whose favour and holy place would gratify the manes?

14-20. Such a great discussion took place among those who were seated. Some great sages said: "Rudra alone (is the greatest deity)." Other best sages said: "Brahmā alone is fit to be worshipped." Other best one said that the Sun alone was fit to be worshipped among the souls. Other brāhmaṇas said: "The immutable lotus-eyed Vāsudeva, the highest one, the one without a beginning or an end (viz.) Viṣṇu alone is the highest lord. He, the best among the deities, deserves to be worshipped." To them, who were discussing, Svāyambhuva Manu said: "He, the lord, who is full of good nature, who has auspicious qualities, who is lotus-eyed, who is glorious, who is the lord of Lakṣmī, who is the highest Brahman, is the only lord adored by brāhmaṇas, proficient in Vedas. Others mixed with passion and vice are not fit to be worshipped." Having heard these words of him, all the great sages, joining the palms of their hands, said to the brāhmaṇa, Bhṛgu, the treasure of penance:

The sages said:

21-25. O you of a good vow, you are able to remove our doubt. Approach, O you of a good vow, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa. O sage, go near them and observe their bodies. Out of them, he who possesses the pure sattvaguna, is alone fit to be worshipped, and never anyone else. He, full of pure sattva, will be friendly to brāhmaṇas. To brāhmaṇas he will be a holy place and a favour. Even to deities and manes the remnants of his food will be purifying. Therefore, O best sage, go to the residence of gods. O lord, O best sage, quickly bring about the welfare of all people.

26-27. Thus addressed, the best sage, along with Vāmadeva, quickly went to Kailāsa where the bull-bannered (god) lived. Having gone near the door of the house of the magnanimous Śaṅkara and seeing very fierce Nandin with a spear in his hand, he said (to him):

28-34. "I, the brāhmaṇa Bhṛgu, have come to see Hara, the

best god. Quickly announce me (i.e. my arrival) to the magnanimous Śaṅkara." Hearing the words of him, Nandin, the lord of (Śiva's) attendants spoke harsh words to the great sage of an unlimited splendour: "The lord is not in the vicinity. Śaṅkara is sporting with goddess (Pārvatī). O best sage, go back if you desire to live." Thus repudiated by him the (sage) of a great penance remained there, at the door of the great lord, for many days. "Since he, arrogant due to the company of a woman, thinks lightly of me, he shall have the form of clitoris. Approached (i.e. overcome) by vice he slights me, a brāhmaṇa! Reduced to an impious state, he will not be adored by brāhmaṇas. Therefore, all the food, water, flowers and oblations offered to him will undoubtedly be useless."

35-40. The very lustrous one, having thus cursed Śaṅkara honoured by the world, said to the very fierce attendant, Nandin, holding a spear, O king: "May Śiva's devotees, having ash, phallus and bones be impious and out of the Vedic fold." The sage, having thus cursed Rudra, Tripura's killer, went to Brahmā's world, respected by all people. The very intelligent one, having seen Brahmā, saluted him by joining the palms of his hands. The great ascetic, having saluted him, remained silent before him. Seeing the best sage, Brahmā, possessed of an abundance of rajas did not honour him, the great sage that had approached him. He also did not rise to honour him, nor did he speak pleasing words.

41-45. The lotus-seated (Brahmā) remained there with great majesty. Seeing him with preponderance of rajas, the great sage, the grandsire of all worlds, who was very lustrous, said (these) words to Brahman: "Since you, having preponderance of rajas, are slighting me, therefore, be dishonoured by all people." Bhṛgu, the brāhmaṇa, having thus cursed the magnanimous Brahmā, respected by the world, suddenly went to Viṣṇu's residence. The brāhmaṇa, having entered Viṣṇu's world on the northern coast of the Milky Ocean, and being properly honoured there by the glorious ones remaining there, and not being stopped there, entered the inner apartment.

46-52. Having entered that spotless palace, resembling the sun, he saw Lakṣmī's lord lying on the bed of the serpent. Both his feet were being rubbed by the lotus-like hands of Lakṣmī.

Seeing him, the best sage Bhṛgu, full of anger kicked with his left foot Viṣṇu's chest. The lord, getting up quickly, and gladly saying, "I am fortunate", joyfully pressed his foot with his hands. Slowly stroking his feet he spoke (these) sweet words: "O brāhmaṇa-sage, I am fortunate. I am always blessed. Due to the contact of your foot, there will be propitiousness in my body. May the dust-particles from the foot of a brāhmaṇa, which are the cause of the acquisition of affluence, which are the comets to the host of calamities that have come up, which are bridges over the boundless ocean of the mundane existence, purify me. All the holy places like Gaṅgā etc. undoubtedly remain in the body of him, on whose body dust-particles from a brāhmaṇa's foot always remain."

53-54. Saying so and quickly getting up with goddess (Lakṣmī), Viṣṇu devoutly honoured him with divine garlands, sandal etc. Having seen him, the best sage, with his eyes full of tears of joy, got from the best seat, and saluted that treasure of compassion. The great ascetic, having joined the palms of his hands, gladly said:

Śrī Bhṛgu said:

55-64. Oh, what a (handsome) form! Oh, (great) tranquillity! Oh, (great) knowledge! Oh, (great) pity! Oh, his patience is spotless! Oh, the goodness of Viṣṇu! Similarly the ocean of virtues has natural, auspicious, goodness. It is not at all present in all other gods. You alone are hospitable to the brāhmaṇas. You alone are the protector. You alone are the highest Brahman. You alone are the lord of brāhmaṇas. No other god is respectable. O Puruṣottama, those who worship any other god than you, have become impious, and are censured by all the world. You, Janārdana, are alone fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas, well-versed in the Vedas. None else among the gods is ever venerable. Brahmā, Rudra and others, mixed with rajas and tamas are not fit to be worshipped. You, having pure sattva, are fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas. The water (flowing) from your feet should be resorted to by manes, gods, and all brāhmaṇas. It gives salvation, and destroys sins. Manes, gods, brāhmaṇas should take what is left over after you have eaten, and not what is left over after others have eaten. The food, flowers, so also water of

(i.e. offered to) other gods, would all be unfit to be touched. It is useless like liquor. Therefore, a wise brāhmaṇa should constantly worship you, the eternal one, everyday and should take water of (i.e. sanctified by) you and food eaten by you.

65-68. A brāhmaṇa should not see another god; should not worship him. He should not partake of another god's favour; should not enter the sanctuary of any other (god). (If) a man does not give in this world the food and holy water enjoyed by you in the rite of śrāddha offered to his ancestors, all that would be fruitless. His dead ancestors fall into (and live in) the hell of pus and blood for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas. O master, when one offers an oblation (into fire) or gives (offerings) to deities and manes after offering them to you, there is satisfaction (of deities and manes), (i.e. he satisfies them) and he gets immortality.

69-78a. Therefore, you alone are adorable to gods, and none else. He who, through folly, would worship other (deities) will be impious. You are Nārāyaṇa; you are glorious; you are the ancient Vāsudeva. You are omnipresent Viṣṇu. You are eternal, highest soul and the great god. You alone are fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas. You are hospitable to brāhmaṇas. You possess pure sattva. Due to your being venerable to brāhmaṇas and due to your virtue of having pure sattva, obtain the status of a brāhmaṇa among all the gods themselves; for all brāhmaṇas will resort to you, the highest Brahman, alone. They were brāhmaṇas and not others. There is no doubt about this. Devakī's son is holy. Madhusūdana is holy. The lotus-eyed one is holy. Viṣṇu, Acyuta is holy. Lord Kṛṣṇa is holy. Vāsudeva, Acyuta, Hari (is holy). Narasiṃha is holy. So also is the immutable Nārāyaṇa. Śrīdhara, Śrīśa, Govinda, Vāmana is holy. The Yajñavarāha, Keśava, Puruṣottama is holy. Glorious, lotus-eyed Rāma, descendant of Raghu, is holy. Padmanābha is holy. So also Dāmodara, the lord, Mādhava, Yajña, lord Trivikrama is holy. Hṛṣikeśa is holy; Janārdana, wearing yellow garments (is holy).

78b-87. Salutation to the holy god, to Vāsudeva, holder of the Śārṅga (bow); (Salutation) to Nārāyaṇa, Śrīśa, having lotus-like eyes. Salutation to the holy god, Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu. Salutation to the highest god full of auspicious qualities. Salutation to

the holy god, of the form of all gods. Salutation to you having the body of the Boar. Salutation to you, the lord of the triad (of the Vedas). Salutation to the holy god, lying on the bed of the serpent. Repeated salutations to Rāghava having eyes like lotus-petals. O lord, all gods and sages, deluded by Māyā, do not know you, the lord of all worlds and a great soul. O revered one, even all those proficient in the Vedas do not know you by your name, form and qualities and your acts difficult to be performed. I, capable of knowing your sattva, suggesting your superiority, have been sent by the great sages; (and therefore) I have approached you. O Keśava, in order to know your character and qualities, I put my foot on your chest. O Govinda, O treasure of pity, forgive it.

Speaking like this, and repeatedly saluting Viṣṇu, and being honoured there by the divine, magnanimous, great sages, Bhṛgu, with his mind delighted, again went to the place of sacrifice having an auspicious name.

88-93. The great sages, having seen the magnanimous one to have come back, rose, saluted him, and duly worshipped him. The best sage told them all that: "O best sages, Brahmā and Śiva, the best sages have preponderance of the qualities of rajas and tamas. They were cursed by me. They are not fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas. Śaṁkara enveloped by tamas was cursed by me on the peak of Kailāsa. Viṣṇu full of pure sattva is the ocean of auspicious qualities. Nārāyaṇa is the highest Brahman. (He i.e.) Viṣṇu is the deity of brāhmaṇas. Śrīpati, Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, Janārdana is holy. Govinda, Hari, Acyuta of lotus-like eyes is holy. O best men, he alone is fit to be worshipped by brāhmaṇas, and none else.

94-97. He who, through folly, would worship another (god) will be impious. Even sinners get salvation just by remembering Kṛṣṇa. The water (flowing) from his feet should be taken. The remnants of the food (offered to) him are purifying. It gives heaven and salvation to men, especially to brāhmaṇas. (A man) should everyday offer an oblation which is (first) offered to Viṣṇu, to the gods. He should also offer it to his dead ancestors. (Then) he gets complete immortality. O brāhmaṇas, the dead ancestors of him who does not offer (food) enjoyed by Viṣṇu,

to them at a śrāddha-rite, always eat (and drink) feces and urine.

98-101. Therefore, brāhmaṇas should always eat the remnants of the food offered to Viṣṇu. The remnants (of food offered to other gods) are useless and (therefore) condemned. A brāhmaṇa, weak in knowledge, who even once eats the remnants of food etc. offered to Śaṅkara etc., would certainly be a cāṇḍāla. For thousands of crores of kalpas he is roasted in the fire in hell. O best brāhmaṇas, the remnants of offerings to gods like Rudra, are said to be equal to food offered to demons, yakṣas, goblins and like liquor and flesh. Brāhmaṇas should not eat that food, the offering enjoyed by (these) gods.

102. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇas, leaving another god, worship diligently, till you live, the ancient Viṣṇu only.

103-109. With your doubts removed, endowed with the five purifications like imprinting the body with heated marks, with good hearts, looking upon that as the highest abode of Viṣṇu, properly worship that extraordinary Viṣṇu, O best brāhmaṇas. The brāhmaṇas marked with the disc(-impression) are good and extraordinary. Those without the disc-marks are said to be ordinary and vicious. Therefore, a man should have the heated marks of a disc and a conch at the roots of his arms, which (marks) of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu burn the stream of sins due to contact with ordinary persons. Having had the upright sectarian marks on the body according to the manner prescribed in the holy texts, he should worship Viṣṇu according to the rules with the gem of the hymn (viz. Viṣṇu-sahasranāma). Being diligent he should also partake of the remnants of food offered to him. He should always worship gods at the time of finishing his worship. O brāhmaṇas, knowing him to be the highest lord enjoying all sacrifices, one should always offer (oblations into fire), give (presents to him) and mutter (his names)."

Vasiṣṭha said:

110. All the sages, thus addressed, and with their sins exhausted, saluted Bhṛgu and with the palms of their hands duly joined, said:

The sages said:

111-112. O revered best brāhmaṇa, you alone remove our

doubts. You are the refuge of the people. O brāhmaṇa, you are the highest asylum. You alone are the best piety. You alone are the highest penance. We shall exist due to your favour, and not otherwise, O brāhmaṇa.

Vasiṣṭha said:

113-117. All the great sages, having thus praised that brāhmaṇa Bhṛgu, and having got the hymn from him, worshipped Viṣṇu. O best king, I have told all this to you as the occasion has arisen. O best king, due to the touch of the lotus-like hand of Rāma the entire form condemned by the world will be spotless. Rāghava, the highest Brahman, is the purifier among all gods. Touched and seen by him all these, Śaṁkara and others, become spotless. Viṣṇu, the ocean of the virtue of affection, is the father, the mother of all gods. He is also the protector of all people. If you desire the highest position, then seek his shelter only.

118. O king, I have told you the entire Purāṇa, acceptable to the Vedas, and narrated by Brahmā in the age of Svāyambhuva Manu.

119-125. This account, (causing) liberation, of Viṣṇu should be told to the one modest due to devotion for Viṣṇu and having pure sattva, and not otherwise (i.e. to none else). The reader (or reciter) of this should have the marks of a conch, a disc, an upright sectarian mark etc. It should always be heard from his mouth. (Then only) you will have a son. Not otherwise. In him who, being well-composed, would recite to others or read (for himself) this (Purāṇa), is always produced undivided devotion for Viṣṇu. A student obtains knowledge; one seeking religious merit obtains it. One seeking salvation obtains it. One desiring enjoyment gets happiness. A man, full of devotion, should read it on the twelfth day, when the Sun is in the Śravaṇā (constellation), on a Saṁkrānti day, or at an eclipse, or on the full-moon day or the new-moon day. He who, being composed, reads half a verse or a quarter of it, undoubtedly obtains the fruit of a thousand horse-sacrifices. I have thus narrated to you this Purāṇa-text. Worship Viṣṇu if you desire the highest position.

Sūta said:

126-127. The best king (Dilīpa), thus addressed by his preceptor Vasiṣṭha, saluted and duly honoured him. Having properly received the hymn from the best brāhmaṇa, and having, till the end of his life, diligently worshipped Viṣṇu, he reached, in (due) time, the ancient position of Viṣṇu, fit to be reached by meditating saints.

VII KRIYĀYOGASĀRAKHAṆḌA

(Section on Essence of Yoga by Works)

CHAPTER ONE

A Dialogue between Jaimini and Vyāsa

Salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa. Now is commenced the Kriyā-yogasāraḥṇḍa.

1. We devoutly, constantly salute the pair of the lotus-like feet of Lakṣmī's lord, which is crowned with the bees of the heads that are bowing down, of the line of the gods like Brahmā, which very much nourishes the mass of the exquisite beauty of the lakes of the minds of the meditating saints, which has the mass of the drops of the honey of the water of Gaṅgā, and which removes the afflictions of the mundane existence.

2. Salutation to that god Viṣṇu who, the lord, taking up various forms protects the entire world, those who are highly devoted to worshipping whose feet never plunge into the universal ocean, of whom, the residence is continuously in the lotus-like hearts of all living beings, and who takes up the form of a hog.

3. I salute this (Viṣṇu) along with Lakṣmī, who, the god, spoke in the form of Vyāsa in (i.e. through) the Purāṇa the practices after having taken them out from the Vedas for the good of the world.

4-6. Once all sages, desiring the good of the world, had an interesting chat in the very charming Naimiṣāraṇya. In the meanwhile, Sūta, the very lustrous and glorious disciple of Vyāsa, came there recollecting Viṣṇu. All ascetics like Śaunaka, seeing Sūta, master of the meaning of holy texts, coming there, rose and saluted him.

7-9. He, the best among those who know religious practices, also suddenly and devoutly saluted, (after prostrating himself) like a staff on the ground, the sages, the great devotees of Viṣṇu. Surrounded by all the groups of his disciples, the very intelligent

one sat among the sages on an excellent seat offered by the best sages. Śaunaka, the best sage, full of modesty and joining the palms of his hands, said these words to him, seated there:

Śaunaka said:

10-12. O Sūta, O revered one, O omniscient great sage, by what means would men have great devotion for Viṣṇu when the Kali age has arrived? In the Kali (age) all men will be engaged in doing sins; will be devoid of Vedic learning. How would they achieve their (spiritual) good? In the Kali (age) man's life is dependent on food. Similarly people are short-lived. So also they will be poor and troubled by various miseries.

13-16. O brāhmaṇa, whatever good act is told in the holy texts is accomplished with effort. Therefore, men will not at all do acts in the Kali (age). The wicked-hearted ones will, along with members of their families, meet with destruction when good acts have vanished (and) sinful acts have commenced. O best one, O son of Sūta, tell how great religious merit would be possible with very small exertion, little wealth and within a short time. It is decided in the holy texts that he, due to whose advice, men perform (acts of) sin or (of) virtue, would partake of (the fruits of) them.

17-20. The four—givers of good advice, the kind ones, those free from deceitfulness and those opposing the sinful way—are comparable to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu of the form of knowledge does not look pleasingly at him who, having obtained knowledge in the mundane existence, does not give it to others. That man, delighting others by means of gems of knowledge and (other) gems, should be known as very intelligent and as Viṣṇu having a human form. O best sage, you have mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. There is no other teacher than you, since you are taught by Vyāsa.

Sūta said:

21-24a. O best sage, you are fortunate. You alone are the chief of Viṣṇu's devotees, since you always desire the good of the people. O Śaunaka, listen. For the good of all the people, especially for that of Viṣṇu's devotees, I shall tell you what you desired to hear. Listen to all that (Vyāsa) said when asked by

Jaimini. The great sage Jaimini, always engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, bowing his head, saluted Vyāsa.

Jaimini said:

24b-25a. O revered one, O you who know all religious practices, O son of Satyavatī, tell me from the beginning by what means salvation would be (obtained) in Kali (age).

Sūta said:

25b. O best sage, hearing the words of Jaimini, Vyāsa, with his mind pleased, commenced the propitious tale:

Vyāsa said:

26a-33a. O Jaimini, O best sage, O very intelligent one, you are fortunate, since you always desire to listen to the story of Viṣṇu. Whosoever has a mind to listen to a good story, would have knowledge; and they look upon knowledge as giving salvation. The creator has in vain made the earth to have a burden by creating him, the sinner, who does not like the story of Viṣṇu. The devotees of Viṣṇu are proud of narrating Viṣṇu's tale on the earth. O best sage, that day on which the story of Viṣṇu is not heard, is a bad day, and not that day which is covered with clouds. The lord never abandons being present there on whichever portion of the earth the story of Viṣṇu exists (i.e. is narrated). Having cursed the man who brings in an obstacle when the story of Viṣṇu is commenced, the lord, along with deities goes (away).

33b-38. Those men who are delighted on hearing the glory of Viṣṇu, should be known as portions of gods. They, the best ones, should be looked upon as fit to be honoured. Those men who on hearing the story of Viṣṇu, laugh at (it), should be known as portions of demons. They partake of (i.e. live in) hell. O best brāhmaṇa, at that place where Viṣṇu's story which removes the sinful ailments of the people that listen to it, is (told) everyday, all the holy places like Gaṅgā, the divine sages, deities, sages having penance as their wealth, stay. O sage, listen to this Essence of the Yoga by Works which is very significant and which destroys sins, along with the story of Viṣṇu and Itihāsa.

CHAPTER TWO

Characteristic Marks of a Vaiṣṇava

Vyāsa said:

1-7. At the beginning of the creation great Viṣṇu (Mahā-viṣṇu), desiring to create the entire world, turned himself into three forms—creator, protector and destroyer. The Supreme Being produced from the right side of his body, himself, called Brahmā, for creating this world. O sage, then the lord of the world produced from the left portion (of his body), his portion viz. Viṣṇu, for the protection of the world. The lord who had taken his abode in a lotus, produced from the middle part of his body the imperishable Rudra for the destruction of the world. Some describe the god having the three qualities rajas, sattva and tamas as Brahmā, some as Viṣṇu and some as Śaṅkara. Viṣṇu (who is) one (only), dividing himself into three, creates, devours and protects (the world). Therefore, the best people should not differentiate among the three in the worlds. The original Prakṛti (Nature) of the great Viṣṇu, the highest soul, which is the cause of the universe of beings is described as (consisting of) Vidyā (knowledge) and Avidyā (ignorance).

8-9. She (Prakṛti), of the form of existence and non-existence, is eternal, and is the cause of the world. She suddenly had three forms, Brāhmī, Lakṣmī, Ambikā. O sage, then having appointed (this) original (Nature) to create, maintain and destroy (the world), the first Highest Being vanished there only.

10-17. By his order Brahmā then, with concentration, produced the five gross elements—earth, ether, air, water and fire. The lotus-seated one also produced (the seven worlds) like Bhūr, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahas, Jana, Tapas and Satya (above the earth). O brāhmaṇa, then Brahmā created the (nether) worlds in this order: Atala, then Vitala below it, Sutala below it, Talātala still below, Mahātala below it, then Rasātala below it, and Pātāla below it. At the centre of the earth he produced the great mountain (viz. Meru) with jewelled peaks and bright like gold for the residence of the deities. He produced Mandara, the western mountain, Trikūṭa, Udaya and also various other mountains. Then he produced the Lokāloka mountain; and the highest lord,

Brahmā, produced the seven oceans and the seven islands in between, O best brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, (there is) Jambūdvīpa, (then there is) the dvīpa called Plakṣa. It is double (the size of) it (i.e. Jambūdvīpa). (The dvīpa) Śālmali is double (the size of) it (i.e. Plakṣa).

18-20. These dvīpas (islands) like Plakṣa etc. have all divisions, have all qualities and are forms of deities and divine sages. O brāhmaṇa, these seven islands are surrounded by seven oceans: I shall narrate the names of the oceans. Listen: Lavaṇa, Ikṣu, Surā, Sarpi, Dadhi, Dugdha and Jala. O divine sage, these oceans are to the east and west.

21-22. The mountains like Lokāloka should be known to be double (in size). O best brāhmaṇa, then Brahmā produced in every island trees, bushes, creepers etc., so also the lower animals, and gods, human beings, nāgas, and vidyādharas also.

23-28. Then in due order he created his sons, the sages like Dakṣa, so also brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. The lord also produced their livelihood etc. They call that Bhārata giving auspicious and inauspicious fruits, which lies to the south of the Hema mountain and to the north of the Vindhya mountain. All the best men who obtain a birth in Bhārata country, and do religious practices are like Viṣṇu. O best one, people enjoy (or suffer) the fruit in the land of an auspicious or an inauspicious act performed in the land of actions. There is none else like him in the three worlds, who, having come to the land of actions, is engaged in pious acts. His birth is fruitful and he has well lived his life.

29-30. He who has no inclination to the service of Viṣṇu (has lived in vain). Firm devotion to Viṣṇu, the god of gods, the only lord of the mundane existence, is produced in men by means of religious merit earned during crores of existences. He is the giver of all happiness; he is praiseworthy and fearless.

31-33. That country where a devotee of Viṣṇu does not stay should be abandoned. A small or great sin committed during previous existence, perishes that moment only when the devotee of Viṣṇu is seen. What is the use of a bath in Gaṅgā to him who would devoutly have the water (flowing) from the feet of a devotee of Viṣṇu, that removes all sins, on his head?

34-40a. He who associates himself with Viṣṇu's devotees

even for a short time is freed from all sins among which a brāhmaṇa's murder is prominent. O best brāhmaṇa, all those religious acts that are performed before a devotee of Viṣṇu are protective. That place where Viṣṇu's devotees stay for a while is, to speak the truth, a holy place, a penance-grove. O brāhmaṇa, that gift like food, water, fruit, whichever is given to Viṣṇu's devotee would be inexhaustible. The devotee of Viṣṇu is said to be of the form of all deities. If a man has pleased him, then all deities are pleased in this very fierce worldly existence, full of various afflictions. A man who is a devotee of Viṣṇu never sinks. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, you too, having always devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu by the Yoga in the form of deeds, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

40b-41a. Having heard these words of the magnanimous Vyāsa, Jaimini, putting the palms of his hands on his head, said:

Jaimini said:

41b-43a. O preceptor, you have repeatedly told the greatness of Viṣṇu's devotees. Now tell me everything—what are their characteristics, and, O best sage, how should Viṣṇu's devotees be recognised? Tell me all that from the beginning, if you favour me.

Vyāsa said:

43b-45. Listen to what the lord who was asked by the creator himself, had said when Madhu and Kaiṭabha were killed. I know it. Having, in the form of Rudra, destroyed the entire world at the end of a kalpa, the lord all alone slept by his magical power born of Yoga (Yogamāyā). When the lord had, under the influence of Yoganidrā,¹ slept, the entire earth, was plunged in the mass of water.

46-49. Then Brahmā, the creator of the world, with his mind devoted to him (i.e. Viṣṇu), meditated upon that first god and remained on his lotus-like navel. O brāhmaṇa, at that very fierce time two fierce, very great demons, named Madhu and

1. Sleep personified as a goddess and said to be a form of Durgā.

Kaiṭabha were produced from the excretion of wax from Viṣṇu's ear. The two very fierce demons moving in the air, saw Brahmā on the lotus-like navel of Śrī Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, the two very mighty and brave demons, with their eyes red with anger exerted to kill him.

50-51. Then Brahmā, the creator of the world, conceiving their murder, praised the revered Yoganidrā with soft words. Having heard the praise of (i.e. uttered by) Brahmā, the highest god, she spoke (these) words with affection: "Tell me what you desire."

Brahmā said:

52. These two very fierce demons have determined to kill me. Quickly delude them with trickery. Leave Viṣṇu, the protector.

53-56. Then that sleep of the lord abandoned that great Viṣṇu. Then he, affectionate to those who sought his shelter, and full of pity, fought a close fight with the two demons in the air. After having fought a very fierce fight for five thousand years, nobody became victorious or nobody was defeated. Then the two demons, who were then deluded by that great Māyā, said to Viṣṇu: "Choose a born from us." O brāhmaṇa, then Viṣṇu laughed and spoke these words:

57-60. "O demons, if you are pleased, then quickly get yourselves killed by me." Then the two fierce demons, having great wisdom, and deluded by that great Māyā said: "There is no doubt that just this boon is granted to you. O Viṣṇu, kill us at a place where there is neither water nor land." Then, O brāhmaṇa, bringing the two great demons up to his hip, he suddenly killed them with the wonderful edge of his disc. Seeing that (Viṣṇu) the Disc-holder had killed the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha, Brahmā, with his fear gone, praised the lord of the god of gods.

Brahmā said:

61-64. Salutation to the highest god who destroys all the pains of him who submitted himself to him. Salutation to him of the nature of the three guṇas, to Nārāyaṇa of unlimited valour. Men who have resorted to your lotus-like feet, never meet with

a calamity. O you of infinite fame, I have known this. You have instantly removed this great calamity of me. You are the lord of supernatural means. You are kind. O lord of the three worlds, O god of gods, O protector of those who seek your shelter, O god, though you protected me from being destroyed by the cruel host of demons, and killed these two demons, and though these two (demons) Madhu and Kaiṭabha are very ruthless, yet mentally I look upon them as our own kinsmen, since they pleased you, the god giving all auspicious (objects), by giving you the boon of the destruction of their own life.

65-69. O lord of gods, to that man, at whom you look with pity, the three worlds are charming; all his enemies along with (the members of) their families perish; his friends and all his kinsmen prosper. O bee to the lotus of the face of Lakṣmī, O god of gods, O you who destroy the fear and grief of the people in the worldly existence, always protect, with compassion, me who am resorting to the pair of your lotus-like feet. I salute you. O you lotus-eyed one, be pleased. O lord of Lakṣmī, be pleased. O lord of all beings, be pleased. O all-sustaining one, I salute you. Salutation to you who are pleased with your devotees. Salutation to you who give (i.e. produce) devotion. Salutation to you, of the form of knowledge. O faultless one, be my refuge. Salutation to you, salutation to you, salutation to you. (Repeated) salutations to you. O you full of the world, protect, protect (me).

Vyāsa said:

70. That revered god, praised with these and other hymns by Brahmā, creator of the worlds, was very much pleased.

The lord said:

71. O Lotus-seated (Brahmā), I am pleased with this hymn and devotion of you. Tell me what you desire. I shall give it to you on the earth.

Brahmā said:

72. O lord of gods, O ocean of compassion, O you full of the world, if you are pleased, then let there be no calamities to (i.e. befalling) your devotees. This is the boon of me (i.e. I ask for).

The lord said:

73-74. O best god, let it be so. I have granted this boon to you. On the earth let my devotee never face a calamity. I always live in the hearts of the devotees of Viṣṇu (i.e. me). Therefore, the devotees of Viṣṇu will never have calamities.

Brahmā said:

75-79. O lord of the world, you have undoubtedly given (me) everything, since you have knocked down these demons in a battle. O lord, you will protect him who, finding sometime, praises you with this hymn with great devotion. Oh, it is a great wonder that you who cannot be conceived by means of meditation by gods, roam in the bodies of the devotees of Viṣṇu (i.e. you). O master, what would happen when you are pleased even for a moment? (Then) it is a great wonder that such as you are, you move in the company of the devotees of Viṣṇu. O enemy of Kaiṭabha, who are the devotees of Viṣṇu? Or what are their characteristic marks? How are all of them to be recognised? O Keśava, tell that to me.

The lord said:

80-82. O best one, it is not possible for me properly to narrate the characteristic marks of Viṣṇu's devotee even for hundreds of crores of kalpas. Listen to them in brief. The mundane existence is dependent on Viṣṇu's devotees. Gods are looked after by Viṣṇu's devotees. I am also dependent on them. Therefore, Viṣṇu's devotees are the greatest. O Brahman, leaving Viṣṇu's devotee I do not stay elsewhere even for a moment. Viṣṇu's devotees are my kinsmen.

83-103. Those who are without lust and anger, who are free from harmfulness and hypocrisy, who are free from greed and folly, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who are not jealous, who are kind, who desire the good of all beings, who speak the truth, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who advise pious acts, who practise pious acts, who serve their preceptors (and elders), should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who look upon you, me and Śaṅkara as equal, and who honour a guest, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who have expounded the Vedic learning, who are always devoted

to brāhmaṇas, who are impotent to other women (i.e. women who are not their wives), should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who devoutly observe the Ekādaśī-vow, who sing my names, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who put up temples of deities, who wear tulasī-garlands, who wear lotuses and akṣa-seeds, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. O Brahman, those whose bodies are marked with (the signs of) my weapons like the conch, the disc, the mace, the lotus, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. O Lotus-seated (Brahman), those around whose necks are (worn) the garlands of dhātrī-fruits, and who worship me with the leaves of dhātrī, should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who put marks (on their body) with the clay from the root of the tulasī-tree and with the mud of tulasī-wood, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who are devoted to a bath in Gaṅgā, to (repeating) the name of Gaṅgā, and describe the greatness of Gaṅgā, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those in whose house the Śālagrāma-stone always remains, so also remains the holy text of Bhāgavata, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. O best one, those who everyday clean my places, who offer me lamps, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who again make new (i.e. repair) my shattered temple, and put there decorations, should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees. O you Four-faced (Brahmā), those who grant security to the timid, who give knowledge to the brāhmaṇas, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those whose heads are sprinkled with the water (flowing) from my feet, and who eat the offerings of eatables presented to me, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who offer food and water to those oppressed by hunger and thirst, and those who take to devout deeds, should be known to be Viṣṇu's devotees. Those who construct gardens and plant the pippala-trees, those who serve cows, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. O Brahman, those great devotees who make offering of libations of water everyday to the deceased ancestors, who serve the distressed, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Those who construct lakes and put up villages, who are engaged in offering their daughters (in marriage), who serve their parents-in-law, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Those who wait upon their eldest sister and eldest brother and who do not censure others, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas.

104-111. All virtues are present in Viṣṇu's devotees. (Even) a particle of blemish is not present in them. Therefore, O Four-faced (Brahman), you now be a Vaiṣṇava. O lord of the beings, always propitiate me with the employment of devout deeds. Undoubtedly everything will be good for you. O four-faced (Brahman), those who look upon the wealth of a deity, the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, and the wealth of others as poison, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Those who are free from devotion to heretics, who are highly devoted to Śiva, who are engaged in (observing) the vow of Caturdaśī, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. What is the use of speaking much again and again? Those who worship me, should be known to be Vaiṣṇavas. Create the world again as it was before.

Speaking like this, the highest god vanished there only. Then Brahmā created the entire world as before, and having worshipped Viṣṇu by means of the devout deeds, went to the highest position. Those who devoutly recite this chapter in front of (the idol of) Viṣṇu, become free from all sins, and in the end go to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER THREE

The Story of King Manobhadra

Jaimini said:

1. O very intelligent Vyāsa, tell me the truth about the yoga of devout deeds. From you I desire to know this yoga of devout deeds.

Vyāsa said:

2-6. It is difficult to obtain the human body (i.e. existence) on this earth, O brāhmaṇa. A wise man, after having got a body, should practise yoga for salvation. There are said to be two kinds of yoga: of acts and of meditation. The first of the two viz. that of acts, gives all desired objects to those who practise it.

Worship of Gaṅgā, of Śrī Viṣṇu, (giving) presents, so also devotion to brāhmaṇas and to the Ekādaśī-vow, similarly devotion to Dhātrī and Tulasī and honouring guests are in brief said to be the constituents of the yoga of acts, O best brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, without the yoga of acts the yoga of meditation does not succeed. One engaged in the yoga of acts goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu.

Jaimini said:

7-10. O lord, tell me the importance of those which are the constituents of the yoga of acts, if you favour me. What are the virtues of Gaṅgā? O brāhmaṇa, what is the fruit of Viṣṇu-worship? Which are the best presents? What is the devotion to the brāhmaṇas? What is the fruit of the Ekādaśī-vow? What kind of devotion is devotion to Dhātrī? What kind of devotion is Tulasī-devotion? What is honouring a guest? O sage, tell all this to me. I have got eagerness to hear all this. In the three worlds none else but you are able to tell it.

Vyāsa said:

11-16. Well, well, O best brāhmaṇa, your mind is certainly pure, since you have a strong desire and curiosity to hear this secret account. It is not possible to narrate thoroughly the merit of Bhāgīrathī. Therefore, I shall tell you in brief. Listen with an attentive mind. When one mutters the very soft couple of letters 'Gaṅgā', I think his sin would go away. It gratifies great beings. Gaṅgā is easily accessible everywhere. It is not easily accessible at (these) three places: Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga, and at the place where Gaṅgā joins the ocean. O sage, all gods including Indra, come to the charming Gaṅgādvāra, and bathe there, offer presents etc. O sage, those human beings, animals, insects etc. that accidentally die there, obtain the highest position.

17-21. O brāhmaṇa, listen to a historical account about this, being told by me. By properly listening to it (a man) gets freed from all sins. Formerly in this world there was a powerful king named Manobhadra, who knew the entire prescribed course of conduct and who was born in the family of Soma. His queen was Hemaprabhā who was a loyal wife, who spoke pleasing words, who was very fortunate, and who was endowed with all

(auspicious) marks. The very powerful king, having killed in battle one and all of his enemies, ruled over the entire earth along with the oceans and islands. That very glorious king once called all his ministers and in the assembly spoke (to them) these words with affection:

Manobhadra said:

22-25. O ministers, I have protected this entire earth. All enemies, with their sons, army and elephants have been killed by me. I looked after members of my family by means of all sacrifices with the accompaniment of presents (to brāhmaṇas). (But now) this power of me has been taken away by (this) mighty old age. I, being weak, am unable to perform certain acts. Royal glory like a lovely but an old woman, full of all ornaments, does not look splendid with a powerless person. As long as women of charming eyes do not desire a king to lose his power, all his enemies on the earth are afraid of him.

26-31a. The earth would abandon an old king, though he is endowed with all virtues, and though he has set his heart upon her, as a wanton lady (though) looked after (by a man leaves him). All virtues are obtained by means of devotion. Great glory is obtained through virtues. Bliss is obtainable through (giving) gifts. The Earth is obtainable through might. A man without might is helpless, and is not firm in taming his enemy. A king who accepts the words of a fool only, delights his enemies. Therefore, O excellent ministers, I, dividing my entire kingdom, desire to give it to my two sons, if you agree.

The ministers said:

31b-36. We agree to these words expressed by you, the wise one, O king. There is no doubt about it.

Then, by the king's order, his two young sons named Virabhadra and Yaśobhadra, who were the best, endowed with virtues, spoke pleasing words, were devoted to their father, always calm, strong, eagerly engaged in piety, came to the assembly. Then the king, the best among those who knew politics, suddenly divided his kingdom and gave it to them through curiosity. In the meanwhile, O best brāhmaṇas, a vulture along with his mate

came there and sat in the assembly. Seeing the two (princes) to have come, the two birds were very much delighted.

37a. The king said: "Tell (me), what is your auspicious arrival due to?"

The vulture said:

37b-39. O king, O conqueror. I am a vulture. I have gladly come to see the prosperity of your sons. These two have seen (i.e. faced) a great calamity in their former birth. To see their prosperity in this birth we have come (here).

Hearing the very wonderful words of the vulture, the king, with his mind full of wonder spoke again, O brāhmaṇa.

The king said:

40-41. O vulture, I have heard these very wonderful words from you. How do you know the former account of these two? O best among birds, if you know the former account of these two, then tell it in full.

The vulture said:

42-45. O king, in the age called Dvāpara these two were cāṇḍālas. They were the sons of Satyaghoṣa, and their names were Gara and Saṅgara. O king, once they died in their house. To take them from there Yama's servants with large teeth, having nooses in their hands and numbering thousands of crores came there and fastened these two, inflated with pride, with leather-nooses. And they took them to Yama's abode along a path very difficult to tread upon. Seeing these two, Yama said to Citragupta:

46-47a. "O Citragupta, take into account the entire conduct of these two." By his order Citragupta considered their auspicious and inauspicious acts from the beginning and said to Yama:

Citragupta said:

47b-51. These two large-armed ones, are really (men) of meritorious vows and a great heart. If there is any bad act seen among all acts, it is not giving a present to a brāhmaṇa, after

picking it on their own. O king, due to that act only, these two went to hell. The giver who after picking a gift does not give it to a brāhmaṇa, goes to a fierce hell causing fear to all beings. The giver would not remember the gift; the receiver does not ask for it. Both live in hell as long as the moon and the sun are (in the sky). Therefore, O lord, these two, snatching the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, are great sinners.

52. Let the servants quickly take them to a fierce hell.

53-58. O lord of the earth, then the messengers, with their lips bitten due to anger, threw these two into a fierce hell. O king, on the same day Yama's servants coming to me took me along with my spouse to Yama's abode. O king, listen to the act which I also had done. I shall tell it from the beginning. It causes amazement to the listeners. Formerly I was a brāhmaṇa named Sarvaga, belonging to a great family, living in the Saurāṣṭra country, and master of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. This my glorious, loyal, very fortunate wife named Mañjukaṣā, was born in a pure family. I was mad due to learning, age and means, O glorious one. I, a youth, once mentally disrespected my parents. (I thought:)

59-63. 'I am worthy of being praised in the assembly of many. I am a hermit. I perform all (good) acts. I am wealthy. I am handsome. I am wise. I am engaged in feeding my relatives. But the parents of just a man like me are attached to sinful acts. They are talkative. They are cruel, and strongly desire the company of heretics. My parents have rendered fruitless valour, life, wealth, so also the family, knowledge, fame and all (my) possessions.' O king, repeatedly thinking like this in my mind, I, through disrespect, gave up service to parents, which gives auspicious (results). Due to this act, O king, I was thrown by (Yama's) messengers, by Yama's order, into the hell where the two great sinners (lived).

64-67. O king, listen how long I, along with my wife, lived in this fierce hell with these two sinners. O best king, I experienced the great misery of hell for thousands of crores of yugas and hundreds of crores of yugas. Then, O king, my wife and I were born in the family of vultures, eating the flesh of dead bodies.

These two, O king, who desired to put an end to (their stay in) hell, were born in the family of locusts to experience the fruit of their deeds.

68-77. O king, listen to the deeds these two did in their existence as locusts. I shall tell them, which would amaze the listeners. O king, once a very mighty wind blew. It made the two fly up and dropped them into the very spotless interior of Gaṅgā. These two, of delicate bodies, having fallen into the water of Gaṅgā, instantly met with death removing all sins. Then messengers of charming eyes came to take them. So also aeroplanes endowed with all enjoyments came (there). These two, freed from all sins, and adorned with Tulasī and flowers, got into a divine aeroplane, and went to Viṣṇu's city. O king, they remained there till Brahmā's existence was manifested. Then by Brahmā's order they came to Indra's city. There they enjoyed pleasures difficult to be obtained even by gods. O king, they remained there till the time the very glorious ones were born in your family to enjoy the entire earth. For him who casts his body into Gaṅgā, there is no rebirth. Yet these two, very meritorious ones, were born to enjoy the earth. O king, these two, along with their sons and grandsons, will enjoy the earth for a long time, will meet with death in Gaṅgā, which is difficult to be had even by the meditating saints, and will be absorbed into Viṣṇu.

78-79. Due to my power of recollecting the former existences, I have told you all this former account. These two crest-jewels of the class of kings, have reached this state after having met with death in Gaṅgā. Who will protect the two of us, the wicked ones.

80-87. Disrespect for friends gives men the affliction (to be suffered) in hell. O king, it was seen just in my case. O best brāhmaṇa, absence of devotion to parents gives pain in this world and in the next. In this world it leads to the destruction of wealth and in the next world (i.e. after death) it leads to hell. O king, I think the sin like a brāhmaṇa's murder is better. There is at sometime acquittance from it. But this (misery) is eternal. On the earth men cut off, with the axe of disrespect for their parents, the tree of religious merit, destroying all afflictions, and secured with great trouble. O king, Viṣṇu himself eats whatever is presented into the mouth of the father (and mother), since, O hero,

Viṣṇu is of the form of the father (and mother). Parents are actually deities. Those who serve them day and night, have all fulfilments due to the grace of the lord of the world. Those men who remain (even) for a day without serving their parents live for a thousand kalpas in hell. Therefore, this great misery has come to me now. I do not know when I, along with my wife, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation.

Vyāsa said:

88. Having heard these words of him, and having grasped them, O best brāhmaṇa, the king became delighted and being amazed, spoke again:

The king said:

89-94. O vulture, I have heard these wonderful words from your mouth. But I and these (ministers) do not properly apprehend them.

Then, O best king (?) there was heard a loud voice in the sky: "This is true, true, true. There is no doubt about it." Then, O brāhmaṇa sage, the bird, along with his wife, became as he was before the narration of the greatness of Gaṅgā. Drums were sounded. Best gandharvas sang. Hosts of celestial nymphs danced. Shower(s) of flowers dropped down. A divine aeroplane, endowed with all enjoyments, arrived. The hosts of messengers, sent by (Viṣṇu) the enemy of Kaiṭabha, (also) came (there). Then (the bird) moving everywhere, along with his dear wife forthwith got into the aeroplane and went to Viṣṇu's abode.

95-96. O best brāhmaṇa, the king, having heard about the wonderful act, became, along with his sons and wife, exclusively devoted to the worship of Gaṅgā. In the three worlds there is no holy place like Gaṅgā, by merely uttering the name of which (one) moving everywhere would obtain salvation.

97-98. O best brāhmaṇa, I have narrated to you the greatness of Gaṅgādvāra, which destroys all sins. What else do you desire to hear? The sins of those men who listen to this chapter with great respect in a temple, and of those devotees of the class of brāhmaṇas, who listen to it, perish suddenly.

CHAPTER FOUR

*Praṇidhi, Padmāvati and Dhanurdhvaja**Jaimini said:*

1-2. Through your grace I have heard about the greatness of Gaṅgādvāra. Now I desire to listen to the greatness of Prayāga. O sage, also tell me about the greatness of the union of Gaṅgā and the ocean. On the earth none except you is able to tell it.

Vyāsa said:

3-9. O dear, I cannot thoroughly tell about the fruit of (the bath at) Prayāga or at the place where Gaṅgā joins the ocean. O Brāhmaṇa, listen to it in brief. O sage, do all those crores of holy places in the universe attain similarity with Prayāga? All gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva praise (the bath) at the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī. Those who bathe there in (the month of) Māgha, when the Sun is in (the Zodiacal sign) Capricornus, never return (to his world) from the world of Viṣṇu. The fruit, O brāhmaṇa, due to bathing at Prayāga in (the month of) Māgha would be a crorefold more than that obtained by the wise by (offering) thousands of crores of cows, (performing) sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, (giving) gifts of gold of the measure of Meru mountain and other gifts, offering oblations into fire and giving gifts to brāhmaṇas at Kurukṣetra, Puṣkara, Prabhāsa and Gayā. Therefore, Prayāga is the best of all holy places.

10-13. Undoubtedly that inexhaustible religious merit which, O best brāhmaṇa, as told in Vedas, scriptures and Purāṇas, is had by practising a severe penance for a long time, by bathing, giving gifts and observing vows in (the water of) Godāvarī, when the Sun is in the Zodiacal sign Leo, is had by bathing at Prayāga in the month of Māgha. Hear from me who am telling it, about the fruit which a man obtains by fasting at Kāśī on Caturdaśī in the dark half of the month of Phālguna. He, freed from sins committed during crores of existences, and having every form, and emancipating a crore of men (of his family), delights with Śiva.

14-15. A brāhmaṇa gets the same fruit as he obtains by worshipping Viṣṇu for a hundred crores of kalpas at other places, by bathing just once at Prayāga in the month of Māgha and worshipping (Viṣṇu) even for a day, when the Sun is in (the Zodiacal sign) Capricornus. I am telling the truth (and) truth (only). All (that fruit) would be inexhaustible.

16-17. A man delights with Viṣṇu for as many hundred kalpas as many days a man stays there (i.e. at Prayāga) in the month of Māgha. He who has once bathed in the water of Gaṅgā and Yamunā is instantly freed from all sins by seeing it.

18-19. If men desire to cross this ocean of mundane existence very difficult to cross, they should devoutly see (the idol of) Viṣṇu after bathing in Gaṅgā and Yamunā. O brāhmaṇa sage, if men, by offering their body, worship him there, they instantly get whatever they desire. There is no doubt about it.

20-24. In this matter I shall tell you a historical account. Listen to it, hearing which a man is freed from all sins. There was a very wealthy vaiśya named Praṇidhi. He was solely devoted to worshipping deities and guests, O brāhmaṇa. His wife, Padmāvatī by name, was chaste, loyal wife, of a beautiful body, endowed with good character, born of a good family and speaking in a pleasant manner. O best brāhmaṇa, all those virtues which the highest god has produced as fit to be present in the bodies of women, were present in her. O brāhmaṇa, that vaiśya Praṇidhi, having taken much wealth, went for trade at an auspicious time and on an auspicious day.

25-27. Piety springs from wealth. Great glory springs from wealth. A man secures a (noble) family through wealth. What would take place without wealth? Even a friend runs away by seeing a man without wealth. In autumn a cloud without water would be reduced to big pieces. As long as relatives get to eat, they remain (with him). He who has wealth has (i.e. is born in) a (noble) family. He (alone) is intelligent (and) wise.

28-31. A man, without wealth, though living, is like a dead one. He whose mind turns away from attaining religious merit, material wealth and knowledge should be known to be a fool. Greater is the fruit of more (exertion). Piety should always be practised. Wealth should always be earned. Knowledge should always be learnt (i.e. got) by wise men. Wealth and knowledge

increase everyday by giving them (to others). Piety of men does not increase without its being preserved. A man should not abandon even (a piece of) wood or (a blade of) grass after having got them.

32-37a. A man given to storing never sinks. Then that vaiśya Praṇidhi skilled in domestic affairs, put his wife in his house, and went for trade. O brāhmaṇa sage, once his wife taking unguents to rub and cleanse the body with, went along with her friends for bathing. Then (a cāṇḍāla), the resting place of sins, Dhanurdhvaja by name, saw her who had the beauty of an expanding golden lotus, whose face was like a blooming lotus, whose eyes were like those of a young deer, whose breasts were charming, large and raised, bathing as she liked. Seeing the vaiśya-wife that cāṇḍāla, smitten with love, and not considering his own figure, laughed and said (these) words:

Dhanurdhvaja said:

37b-40a. O auspicious one, O you having large hips, O you of a charming smile, O you beautiful one, who are you? O dear one, why do you take away my mind with charms of your exuberant youth? O you of large buttocks, O you slender one, you, who are virtuous, should enjoy full happiness with me who am (also) virtuous.

O brāhmaṇa, hearing Dhanurdhvaja's words, her friends, getting angry, and biting their lips, spoke (these) words:

The friends said:

40b-44a. O fool, O wicked one, O you born in the family of the wicked, she will not throw even her foot at (i.e. will not even kick) you. This lady is a loyal wife, highly devoted to religious practices. Those who desire their own happiness do not look at her with an evil eye. Those who are foolish and who are afflicted with the fire of the passion of love, are burnt on seeing the beauty of the face of the wife of another person and the wealth of others. O you of a sinful mind, go away. Do not speak words which are very unbearable. We shall not touch you even with our feet.

Dhanurdhvaja said:

44b-48a. Fie upon this word 'caste', since you have not honoured me knowing all virtues in my cāṇḍālahood (i.e. due to my being a cāṇḍāla)! On reaching gold covered with necklaces and remaining in a pitcher, which man, conversant with the collection of excellences, will not seize it? Therefore, O friends, act in such a way that I shall now secure this young lady. I submit myself to you.

O best brāhmaṇa, to the fool who was repeatedly speaking like this, the friends, with great curiosity produced in them, spoke these words (to him):

The friends said:

48b-53. O you very wicked one, if you indeed long for this young lady then quickly cast your body into the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

Looking at one another's face, and laughing, they then took the good man's wife, and entered their houses. Then that cāṇḍāla who had killed thousands of brāhmaṇas, longing for her died in the water of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. Then that cāṇḍāla, remembering his own account, became a strong person, resembling the figure of her husband, and having all his qualities. Then that vaiśya Praṇidhi, having carried out the trade came home on just that auspicious day. The cāṇḍāla also, O brāhmaṇa, entered his house.

54-56. He resembled Praṇidhi in form, age and qualities. Seeing the two, of the same (i.e. similar) figure, who were mines of virtues, she thought (to herself): 'Whose wife am I? Who is my husband?' Then that chaste woman, seeing the pair of husbands, was amazed, and praised god Viṣṇu with words having pleasing letters.

Padmāvati said:

57-61. I salute Govinda who has endless forms, whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by deities like Indra, who is the lord of deep and abstract meditation, who is desireless among those who know deep and abstract meditation, who is the giver

of devotion, and who is fit to be worshipped by the meditating saints. Salutation to you, the destroyer of Kaiṭabha; salutation to you, the destroyer of Madhu; salutation to you who destroyed the demon Kāṁsa; salutation to you who knocked down Cāṇūra. Salutation to you who took out the Vedas; eternal salutation to you who lifted the earth; salutation to you who are capable of bearing the earth; salutation to you who are the destroyer of the demons. Salutation to you whose feet are washed by the water of Gaṅgā; salutation to you who destroy the kṣatriyas; salutation to you who killed Rāvaṇa's family; salutation to you who destroyed the demons. Salutation to you who denounced sacrifices; salutation to you who destroyed the Mleccha-families; salutation to you seated in the heart-lotus; salutation to you who are an ornament among your enemies (ripudhvaja?).

62-65. O lord, O dear to the cowherdesses, be pleased. O bee to the lotus-face of Lakṣmī, be pleased. O Viṣṇu, be pleased. I constantly salute you. O you lotus-eyed one, be pleased; O you who have the disc in your hand, O you who hold the mace called Kaumodakī in your hand, be pleased. O Viṣṇu, who has held (the conch called) Pāñcajanya, be pleased. I constantly, salute you who hold a lotus. I am constantly roaming, being deluded by you—Keśava, in the curious habitation of the mundane existence, having the darkness of ignorance and the lamp of knowledge. O enemy of the demons, Brahmā, Indra and other excellent gods do not understand your Māyā. (Then) how can I, a human being, understand your Māyā? Kindly remove (this) delusion (taking place) before (you).

Vyāsa said:

66-67. Having heard the praise of (i.e. made by) her, lord Viṣṇu, the master of the world, giving the fruits of the four goals (of human life), took notice of it, and he whose lustre was like that of a crore suns, suddenly manifested himself. She, having looked at (i.e. touched) the ground with her head, saluted the pair of his feet.

68. (She said:) O lord of Lakṣmī, O you who give enjoyment and salvation, salutation to you. Remove the confusion about my husband, of me who am without knowledge.

The lord said:

69-71. O beautiful-bodied one, give up your confusion. Both these are your husbands. O you lady of beautiful hips, always serve them devotedly. That who is your young, very intelligent husband Praṇidhi, has himself become two to enjoy the fruit of pleasure, O chaste lady. O you of beautiful buttocks, you too always enjoy pleasure with them, as Lakṣmī of infinite forms sports with me.

Padmāvati said:

72. O god, men do not approve two husbands of one woman. O you full of pity, save me who am sunk under the billow of the ocean of shame.

The lord said:

73. O chaste lady, as you are certainly afraid of infamy on the earth, the refore, O you of a beautiful face, come to my city with them.

74-75. Then by the order of the lord, an aeroplane immediately came there and taking the two (with her) she got ready to go to Vaikuṇṭha. She too, while going with her husbands along the path, saw a magnanimous person along with a lady seated in a chariot, O Jaimini.

76-79. He was supported by hosts of messengers, having eyes like lotus-petals, resembling atasi flowers, having four hands, and seated on Garuḍa. That chaste, beautiful lady then asked those messengers of Viṣṇu, of the form of Viṣṇu, "Who is this man seated in the chariot? O magnanimous ones, who are you having lotus-like eyes, all resembling Viṣṇu, having in your hands conches, discs etc.?" Then all those messengers of Viṣṇu, very much delighted, resembling Viṣṇu in valour, laughed and said:

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

80. O chaste lady, we are Viṣṇu's messengers. Taking this man, a meritorious soul, we are going to the high, excellent world.

Padmāvati said:

81-84. Due to the power of which merit has he acquired such a state? O magnanimous messengers of Viṣṇu, tell it to me.

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

This is a demon named Bṛhaddhvaja. He, causing affliction to the world, lived in a forest etc. He is very powerful and valorous. He kidnapped others' wives, snatched others' wealth, and was an active deceiver. He ate cow's flesh, spoke cruel words, and censured deities. He always did acts that were sinful. O you devoted wife, even in a dream he did not do a virtuous deed.

85-88. O you of large buttocks, this one always tormented by love, getting into a chariot, moves in the sky to kidnap the wife of another man. He, smitten by love forcibly embraces whichever very young woman he sees and wherever he sees her. Once he saw the beautiful wife of a king named Bhīmakeśa (engaged) in sport, and in the prime of youth. Then seeing her bright like a golden lotus, he affectionately said these words to her: "Who are you? What are you doing here?"

89-94. Then that wife of king Bhīmakeśa said: "I, adorned by the name Keśinī and knowing the art of sexual enjoyment, am the wife of king Bhīmakeśa. (But) the king does not even for a moment look at (i.e. care for) me who am conversant with all virtues, who am delighted in love, who am born in his own family, and who am blemishless. I, about whom inquiry is abandoned by the husband, who am grieving over my fate, who am tormented by the fire of separation, always stay here only. O best one, being pleased, please tell me everything: Who are you? How have you come to this garden?" Then he said these words: "O you having a face like the full moon, I am a demon using tricks, and have come here to embrace you. Abandon your angry husband who always finds fault with you. O slender one, resort to me. I shall give you excellent pleasure."

95-99. Then that virtuous (?) wife bound the demon with her creeper-like arms and put her mouth into his (i.e. kissed him). O you of fine hips, having embraced her who got perturbed due to discrimination and excitement, he got along with her into a chariot. With great eagerness they became (i.e. acted like a married) couple. Getting into a chariot with the wind's speed,

they went along the aerial path. Then he spoke these words to her: "O slender one, see, from your husband's country we have come to the place where Gaṅgā joins the Ocean". Then the lady in the chariot, seeing the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean suddenly died due to great fear.

100-102. The demon also seeing the good (?) lady dead, lamented much, and died instantly. By the order of the Garuḍa-bannered (Viṣṇu) we are taking these two, of meritorious deeds and free from sins, to Vaikuṇṭha. Even sinners casting their bodies in water, on ground, or in the air at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, reach the highest position.

103-107a. The holy place at the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean is difficult to be found in the three worlds. Even a killer of a brāhmaṇa, who observes a fast there on the Ekādaśī day in the month of Māgha in winter becomes purified. There is no doubt about this. Having bathed at the place of the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and having seen (the idol of) Hari, Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), and having seen Kārtikeya, rebirth does not take place. Kārtikeya is actually Viṣṇu. The identity between the two is always established. All those who see Kārtikeya, go to (i.e. attain) liberation. Hear (i.e. note) that the holy place at the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean is superior to all (other) holy places. One who dies there in water, on ground or in the air, obtains liberation.

Vyāsa said:

107b-112. O Jaimini, speaking like this, all those messengers of Viṣṇu, taking the two, went, along the aerial path, to Viṣṇu's abode. That (Pṛaṇidhi's) wife, the chaste Padmāvatī, along with the couple of husbands, became assimilated with Viṣṇu, the giver of the four goals of human life, enjoyed all pleasures there, difficult to be obtained; they obtained the highest knowledge and were assimilated with Viṣṇu. Gaṅgā is full of all holy places. Viṣṇu is full of all holy places. Therefore, devotion for Gaṅgā and for Viṣṇu is laid down. Formerly, a king named Mādhava, practised penance for a long time at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and along with his wife, got salvation.

Jaimini said:

113. Who is this Mādhava whom you have mentioned? What acts did he do? How did he practise penance? O best one, tell all that to me.

Vyāsa said:

114. Listen to the story of that magnanimous king Mādhava, O brāhmaṇa sage. O very intelligent one, I shall narrate it in brief.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Story of Mādhava and Sulocanā

Vyāsa said:

1-4. There was a city named Tāladhvaja. It resembled the city of gods. It was well-known in all the worlds and was crowded with the hosts of meritorious (persons). There was a king named Vikrama, born of a pure family. He was religious, truthful and devoted to the protection of his subjects. His wife named Hārāvātī was excellent in the world, who had vanquished the moon's lustre by means of her face. In a host of his wives she alone was dear to him, as Gaṅgā is to the Ocean in the host of rivers.

5-8. O dvija, due to fate a son endowed with all good marks was born to her after sometime. The sovereign emperor who knew all holy texts, named him Mādhava according to the rite told in the holy texts. O brāhmaṇa, then that powerful Mādhava, endowed with virtues, crossed, after sometime, the river of all learning. O brāhmaṇa, the king consecrated his son, the worshipper of the host of all deities, as the heir-apparent.

9-10. O brāhmaṇa, one day he, through curiosity, went along with an army of four divisions to a great forest for hunting. Having killed many animals there, he at mid-day strove to go to the city from the forest.

11-16. Mādhava gladly came to his city with his army. He

saw a young woman engaged in bathing in a lake. Her body was visible due to substances and garments fit for bathing. With the beauty of her face she had vanquished the moon. Her beautiful cheeks were shining by means of two golden ear-rings. Her hips were covered by her very long hair; she laughed charmingly. She was the bud of a golden lotus. Her breasts were charming and raised. Her waist was slender like that of a lion; her voice was sweet like that of a cuckoo in spring. The beautiful, charming one, was placed by Cupid as the banner in the kingdom of youths. Seeing her like that in the lonely forest, which man carrying his life (i.e. which living man) would not be influenced by the passion of love?

17-20. Then that son of Vikrama seeing that beautiful one like that, had his heart wounded by Cupid's arrows, and thought: 'I have not seen anyone else like this on the earth. I desire to make my life fruitful by embracing her here. Of all people I am the best due to my age, handsomeness and virtues. I shall today take her even though she is Indra's woman. Who can (publicly) speak about the fault due to kidnapping someone else's wife, since my father is the king?'

21-23. Having thus firmly thought in his mind, the passionate one kept his army away and went to (the place) where she was bathing. There is no wonder that in the world the three, viz. wealth, arrogance and desire of carnal gratification destroy the power of discrimination. His father is the destroyer of sins and protector of righteousness of people. It is pity that the god of love himself deludes the entire world!

24-27. Seeing him coming with a great speed, she who was sporting (all) alone, became very much anxious. 'I think that seeing me, the young one, alone in the forest, he speedily runs to me. All sages say: Righteousness when protected, protects (the people). What will happen here, cannot be known just now. Enemies run to the place where there is none to help (a person). In that case running away is commended. Staying there destroys life.'

28-29. That beautiful woman, thinking like this, and placing the pitcher on the left (side of her) waist, decided through fear to run away from the lake. Then that Mādhava also came in

front of her with a great speed, O brāhmaṇa, and spreading out his hand, stood (before her).

Śrī Mādhava said:

30-35. O excellent lady, O you of a beautiful body, snatching away my heart by means of the power of your excellent youth, you are running away. I who have lost my sense, am tormented. O you of unsteady outer corners of your eyes, O you of a charming body, what is your name? Who is your husband? Have you come from heaven? (For) there is none else like you on the earth. O beautiful lady, O you whose face is like a lotus, you are the best (lady) here (i.e. on the earth). You are endowed with all (auspicious) marks. How do you, like a maid-servant, carry water? On your bosom you always carry golden breasts; and on your waist you carry the water-pitcher. This is wonderful, O you lady of a delicate body. The toes (turned) red on the path very much heated by the sun, at times appear like the buds of the japā (flowers). O you of large buttocks, resort to me with love; O you of a beautiful face, abandon the pitcher. Just on seeing me, your affliction has ended (i.e. would end).

36-38. I am the son, called Mādhava, of king Śrī Vikrama. With full attachment I, of an excellent body, will be yours, O beautiful lady. In the group of my wives you will be my favourite, as the jasmine is to a bee among creepers having good flowers. Or even if, through pride, you transgress my words, I shall not leave you, since I am the son of the king.

Vyāsa said:

39-42. Hearing the words uttered by him, she left the path, and remained with her face hung down. (Then), O brāhmaṇa, she very slowly said: “Even if you will never listen to the words of me, a stranger to you, yet giving up my sense of shame, I will speak to you. O great hero, I am the wife of a kṣatriya Subāhu. I, Candrakalā, am taking water for the worship of deities. The words which you uttered are not becoming to your family. All (men) born in your family are impotent for others’ wives.

43-46. I am a lonely woman. You are the majestic dignity of heroes. What glory will be yours by forcibly embracing me here? By embracing the wife of another there would be plea-

sure for a moment only. There will be infamy here (i.e. in this world); the rest (i.e. afterwards there) will be misery for more than a hundred kalpas. O brave one, this is the land of religious rites. Meritorious deeds should be done here. Do not put your mind into (i.e. do not think of) kidnapping the wife of another (man). Desire of sensual enjoyments results from greed. Sin results from desire of sensual enjoyments. Death comes from sin. And even after death there (results) residence in hell.

47-51. All your virtues are in vain. Your existence also is fruitless, (since) you, being influenced by lust, long for another's wife. My body is produced from flesh, urine, feces, bones. Even seeing this, are you influenced by Cupid, not afraid of your citizens, because you are born in a royal family? Do you not see Yama, the god of death, roaring over your head? The fish seize the fish-hook; (but) all of them are ignorant. How do you, even being a wise one, seize a fish-hook on reaching it? In the three worlds discrimination is the highest abode of riches. Indiscretion is the highest abode of miseries."

52-55. O Jaimini, having heard the words spoken by her, Mādhava who was deluded by passion of love, again stooping humbly, said: "O dear one, protect me whose mind is shattered by the volley of the arrows of your glances. Protect me. I am seeking your refuge. A woman is most dear as long as she is in youth. A golden bee does not go to a lotus-plant whose fibres have become bud-like (i.e. contracted). O you deer-eyed one, be pleased. Protect me, your own servant. On hearing your insipid words, my heart breaks."

Candrakalā said:

56-57. O great hero, give up your grief. Listen to my good words. I shall tell you about my mental agony which is capable of removing your grief. In the Plakṣa island, beyond the ocean, there is a well-known city named Vikhyātā, resembling Indra's city.

58-59. There lives the king named Guṇākara, who is the best (king), very glorious, endowed with all virtues, and who, the strong one, resembles fire in valour. His wife, Suśīlā by name, was endowed with all (good) marks. By her service she had won over her husband's heart; (and) she was kind to people.

60-65. O hero, her daughter, named Sulocanā, was born from her womb. By her beauty she conquered all hosts of beautiful ladies. Who on the earth is able to describe her beauty and the heap of her virtues? The creator created another (woman) on seeing her beauty. O great hero, O prince, I was her maid-servant. I, a beautiful woman, have through (bad) back, come to your land. There is no (other) beautiful lady like her. There is no (other) handsome man like you. If you desire heavenly enjoyments, then accept her in marriage. Does a strong lion not fix (his mind) to secure, with effort, a female elephant, after having discarded a female fox even though she has come near him? In the world an industrious man obtains great wealth. Tell me which work is (accomplished) without effort, in the world.

Vyāsa said:

66. Having heard those words of her, Mādhava, Viṣṇu's worshipper, put away his passion of love and thus spoke to the beautiful woman:

Mādhava said:

67-68. O lotus-eyed one, by what mark shall I know the girl? Tell me that, O you of beautiful hips, if you favour me. How can I, an ignorant man, go to the other side of the ocean? How shall I have a meeting with her?

Candrakalā said:

69-71. On her left hip is a mark resembling a sesamum-seed. By just seeing that you will recognise the beautiful-eyed one. In your stable there is the son of the noble horse (of Indra) named Uccaiṣravas. He is an excellent horse, going (i.e. able to go) everywhere. By mounting upon that best horse, having wind's speed, you will speedily go to the (other) end of the ocean, since the earth is easy to subdue (i.e. to tread upon).

72-74. Then the king's son, along with his army, came home. That chaste woman Candrakalā also being very pleased, went home. Thinking over her words, Mādhava, with his mind full of anxiety hastily and suddenly went to the stable. He, the son of Vikrama, endowed with valour, joined there the palms of his

hands, and said to the very powerful horses endowed with good qualities:

Mādhava said:

75-77. All of you are noble and endowed with all (auspicious) marks. Which horse is able to take me beyond the ocean?

Then all those horses, on hearing his words, with one another turned their faces towards the ground through fear, and were not ready to take him. One horse, endowed with all (auspicious) marks, went in front of Mādhava, and spoke these words:

78-83. "I shall undoubtedly take you beyond the ocean. But, O prince, listen to my agonies: I eat what is left over after others have eaten. I am bound with cords having crores of knots. O hero, even in a dream, I, a strong one, have not seen grains of rice. Then, O prince, what can be said about other pleasures? O hero, the valour of the good would not be possible without respect (i.e. unless they are respected). How can fire be produced without wood (only) with ghee etc.? I am like this. All these are endowed with decorations. But dogs, (though they are) adorned with all ornaments, are not like lions. O king, O lord, in a moment only I can go round the earth with the mountains, islands and oceans."

Mādhava said:

84-88. O horse, forgive all censures inflicted on you by my father. From today you are the chief (horse) in my stable. In (the mind of) the best man torment given by others does not always abide. Water, heated by fire, would be cool in a moment. Sugar-cane causes satisfaction even for a moment due to its sweetness.

Having spoken thus, the prince saluted the horse. And then, at an auspicious moment, that brilliant Mādhava, along with his servant called Praceṣṭa, mounted on the back of the horse, and crossing the ocean, went to the city (of Vikhyātā) which was endowed with all excellences, was like the city of Indra, and bright due to the rows of great mansions.

89. Seeing there, a good lady, a female gardener, present nearby Mādhava, with a smiling face, uttered these soft words, O brāhmaṇa:

90-93. “O old lady, O mother, I am a traveller. O unknown one, I, a rich man, named Mādhava, desire to stay in your house for a day.” That woman, (a female gardener,) seller of perfumes, who was hospitable, took the guest, and he being delighted, very devoutly entered her house. O brāhmaṇa, she treated him with respect, according to the manner told (in holy texts). O brāhmaṇa, Mādhava, with his mind full of anxiety, passed that night. O brāhmaṇa, when the bright morning dawned, Mādhava told the (female gardener), seller of perfumes, his entire mission.

94-98. On that auspicious day only, the queen arranged for the rite of anointing Sulocanā with fragrant substances etc. (as a preliminary to her marriage). O brāhmaṇa, having heard about that rite of anointing the princess, Mādhava sank in the mass of the billows of the ocean of grief. ‘The rite of anointing her with perfumes etc., longing for whom I left my kingdom, I abandoned my relatives and crossed the great ocean, will take place today only. All the efforts I have made up to now are fruitless. But people will not say that he, fascinated by the sweet one, went over the entire (distance). He who well knows what ought to be done, would not have his exertion foiled.’

99-108. Repeatedly thinking like this in his mind, Mādhava wrote (and put) a love-letter into the garland, flowers, etc. (taken to Sulocanā by the female perfumer): “O maiden, I am the son, named Mādhava, of Vikrama, the magnanimous emperor of Tāladhvaja. O maiden, a female servant of you, Candrakalā by name, lives there. Formerly, the host of your virtues was narrated by her to me. With my heart attached to the host of your virtues, I, having mounted upon a horse, crossed the ocean and came to your city. O maiden Sulocanā, now choose me as your husband, since in this ocean of the mundane I seek your refuge, (and) since no other man knows you (to be) virtuous. A bee alone, and not a frog, knows the virtues of a lotus-plant. So also not one white cloud only appears in the sky (i.e. Many white clouds appear in the sky). But the lotus-plant chooses none else but the moon.” Then the prince, handed over that letter, along with a golden ring, to the female gardener. Then the perfumer, putting that letter, along with the ring, into a garland of flowers, went quickly to the princess. Having presented that garland of flowers to her, she went a little distance away

from her through fear, and stood there with the palms of her hands joined.

109-118a. The very clever princess then saw the letter along with the ring, and read it from the beginning. The princess who was amazed, also wrote, on the backside of the letter, its reply: "O prince, O you of large arms, I have read all the words that you wrote. O best one, read these my words fitting (to your letter). Today will take place the rite of anointing with fragrant substances etc. (preliminary to marriage); and my marriage will certainly take place tomorrow. Nobody in the world will disregard what is approved by one's father. In case of (a piece of) work which is accomplished with difficulty people should not exert themselves too much. If the work succeeds then no exertion is (felt), but if it does not succeed, then there is exertion (i.e. it is felt). Yet, listen to (the means) by which you will (be able to) secure me, for which you have even crossed the ocean. I have to go round this Vidyādhara (chosen as the) groom (for me). Adorned with many ornaments and with my left arm raised I shall go before (i.e. to) him. The hero, would stand facing me. He who is able to take me (away) will be my husband. This is the truth, the truth only, that I have written in the letter. Otherwise it is not possible to transgress the well-fixed rite."

118b-119a. Writing this the maiden handed over (the letter) to her only. She too, taking that letter went to Mādhava.

119b-121. Mādhava, having read what she had written in the letter, again wrote (another letter) with great impatience, O brāhmaṇa: "O virtuous maiden born in a lucky family, all that you have said (in your letter) is just what I had (also) thought. There is no doubt about it." Then, O brāhmaṇa, that female gardener again approached her.

122-125a. And she gave Sulocanā that note (i.e. the letter) of beautiful letters. Then perceiving that her letter was accepted by the prince, she was very much delighted, and was repeatedly amazed, O brāhmaṇa. 'He will undoubtedly do it (i.e. accept me) as he has given his assent. Then is that man Mādhava Indra himself? A husband is always a receptacle of love in this world and the next. Even without seeing him he is respected by me as my husband.'

125b-132. Thinking like this, and sighing again and again,

that chaste lady went with her friends to the perfumer's house under the pretext of (taking) a bath. That respectable perfumer, seizing the maiden with her hand, showed her Mādhava sleeping on a bed. The maiden seeing him resembling Cupid horripilated, and observed his entire great body. The pair of her eyes, merged in (i.e. fixed on) whichever part of the body of him, did not move elsewhere, as it found it difficult to glance anywhere else. (She said:) "He is actually god of love or (Kṛṣṇa) Devakī's son, or actually Śarva, the lord of Pārvatī and the controller of all objects of senses. With such form a man is not born in the world. The life of a deer-eyed one with this one as her lord is fruitful. Did the creator, being influenced by my devotion, create him (as a man) with great effort, when I was born as a daughter? From today this one alone is my lord. There is no doubt about it."

133a. Speaking like this, she decided to go home.

133b-135. The perfumer (the female gardener) said: "O maiden, O good one, you should also keep in mind this consideration. A man does not look as handsome during sleep* as he actually is. O you deer-eyed one, (even) in his sleep (i.e. while he is asleep) all the godly signs like joy, (characteristic) bend in the body, gentle eyes and a peculiar smile (are seen). Though addressed, he will not certainly get up (as is clear from) his lips being bitten (i.e. closed)."

136-137. She slowly touched** his hand with her hands (and said:) "Listen, the princess has courageously come (to see you)." Hearing that Mādhava too, with his mind overcome with confusion, got up and politely said these words to her:

Mādhava said:

138-139. O maiden, my existence is fruitful; my effort is fruitful, that I have actually seen your lotus-like face. O maiden, with all your youth, choose me as your husband. O beautiful one, in the world there is no other groom proper for you than me.

Sulocanā said:

140-141a. O fortunate one, due to my great luck you would

**nindayā* is obviously a misprint. It should be *nidrayā*. (Ed.)

***adarśayat* is perhaps a misprint for *amarśayat*. (Ed.)

be my lord. The words that I uttered are very reliable. O glorious one, order me. I shall go home.

Mādhava said:

141b-143a. If I speak 'wait', O maiden, it would be arrogance (on my part). The word 'go' does not come from my mouth. Having thought for yourself, O beautiful-bodied one, do what is proper. Since the words are true, you will be very much devoted.

143b-151. Thus addressed by him, the maiden, being delighted, went home. Mādhava, surrounded by many attendants, stayed there only. The charming Vidyādhara just remained as the groom. All the men there, adorned with garlands and sandal, and wearing divine garments, shone. In that city at places there was singing, at places there was dancing, and at places there was a row of lamps (put) by someone. The ten quarters were filled with the neighing of the groups of horses, the trumpets of elephants and the delightful notes of birds. O Jaimini, the entire atmosphere was full of hosts of various banners and royal mansions. Some blew conches, some sounded large and (small) drums, so also the sweet(-sounding) musical instruments etc. Then all young ladies, with lotus-buds, and with faces resembling the moon, sang good, charming songs. The ground there appeared like a maiden, due to the garlands dropping down on account of mutual friction, and due to sandal flowing on account of perspiration.

152-155. The beautiful Sulocanā, surrounded by relatives, mounted upon a seat made of gambhārī-wood, and went to an excellent place. In the meanwhile Vikrama's son (Mādhava), asleep on the bed, did not, due to (his ill-)luck, know about the marriage of Sulocanā, of beautiful eyes. Those that are deluded by hundreds of tricks of the creator, are not happy in the world. Therefore, this man (Mādhava) forgot his own agreement, and slept happily. A lotus-plant that leaves the forest through fear of fire and enters water, is burnt (i.e. bitten) there by frost-fire. Whatever is one's fate cannot be changed.

156-158. Let people recite the entire holy texts like that of the Veda. Let them serve a king. Let them practise severe penance

everyday. Yet prosperity does not go to the luckless. Pains and pleasures remain over (one's) head. O best one, they come at the time of others (i.e. Pains come when pleasures are expected and vice versa). Praceṣṭa, seeing the unhappy Mādhava sleeping, and knowing the agreement between the two, thought:

159-163. 'Fie upon this prince! Deluded by destiny's trickery, he, forgetting his agreement, enjoys sleep. That maiden now near the groom (Vidyādhara) would have been unhappy. What would happen if she is taken (by him)? The agreement with her will be fruitless. O sinful one, keeping sleep over your head, remain (here only). Mounting upon the horse I would carry away that beautiful lady. With a great difficulty does one obtain a gem of a maiden and a jewel. Then what is the use of serving this wicked Mādhava? Kings are served (by men) with full devotion for money. If that itself has gladly come (to me), why should I have the trouble of (rendering) service?'

164-168a. Having thought like this, and having mounted upon the horse, Praceṣṭa went, along the aerial path, to the place where the princess was. Having gone round the bridegroom keeping him to her right, and remembering her agreement, she had stood before the Vidyādhara after raising her left hand (i.e. with her left hand raised). Having seized the maiden's hand, the very powerful Praceṣṭa very quickly put her on the horse's back. Taking the princess to the very beautiful city of Kāñcī, and seeing it, Praceṣṭa, with the fear in his mind gone away, and waving his hand, hurriedly said (to her):

Praceṣṭa said:

168b-174a. See this city named Kāñcī, which is near the sea-shore, which is well-known everywhere, and which gives happiness to all men. O you having a face like the moon, here there is no fear of either that hero Mādhava or the Vidyādhara. O beautiful lady, give extinction, accomplished by your pitcher-like breasts and your hands, to this row of flames of the fire of lust, sticking to the fuel (burning) in my heart. The bee of my mouth would now desire (i.e. now desires) to drink the honey in (i.e. from) the charming lotus of your mouth. O dear one, who waits for one about whom nothing is known? God of love strikes me

with his arrows due to the conduct of your charming body. O dear one, protect me, protect me. I have sought your refuge.

The beautiful lady, with her entire body burnt with anger born of grief, seeing the fool, speaking like this thought in her mind:

174b-179a. 'Is this fool, of wicked acts, named Praceṣṭa, written on my forehead (i.e. destined to be my husband)? Oh, I am doomed. Where are my mother, my father, and Vidyādhara—the groom? This one has brought me. Fie upon this doing of the creator! In the world people always fully entertain pride. (But) the creator knows (how) to cut the tree of pride with the axe of exertion. Yet the prudent have recommended four ways out of a calamity: courage, fearlessness coming after that (etc.).' Mentally observing like this, the maiden, expert in all acts, spoke to Praceṣṭa with words of soft letters:

Sulocanā said:

179b-183a. O hero, make your mind steady. I am an unmarried girl. Having embraced me, O wicked-minded one, how will you go? O hero, accept me in marriage (performed) according to the manner laid down in the holy texts. I shall serve you as your maid. What doubt is there? You are my life, my friend, my ornament, and my kinsman. Do you not know that women have no other resort (than their husbands)? Bring objects fit for marriage for (our) marriage. Quickly accept my hand, O you lazy one.

183b-185. Having heard her words, tough within but soft without like a badari-fruit, the fool was very much delighted. The wicked-minded one, putting the maiden at a place on the horse, came to that city to fetch the marriage-string fastened round the wrist. Having thus recommended the rite to him, she thought:

186-194. 'Since the fool, being delighted, and leaving me, has gone what should I do now? Where should I go now? Where should I stay now? How shall I protect myself from this great peril? If I stay here, what then will they (i.e. people) say? Going

to a holy place, and with a desire for a birth in the other world, I shall meet death, since it will promote my happiness. Remembering me even for a moment, this fool, so also the Vidyādhara and Mādhava—the three—will not survive. If I live, their life will be preserved. If I die, all the three will die. When these men will cast their life for me, then I shall indeed be responsible for their death. Now at the holy places lord Viṣṇu should be worshipped. When he is pleased, all happiness will come to me. When life perishes, everything will perish. When it remains everything will be accomplished bit by bit. Does not a very beautiful lotus plant that has survived (during) the night, obtain the union with an excellent bee with a mass of fragrant flowers, when the sun with hot rays has put away the moon?

195-196. O best among the wise, having thus thought in her heart, that beautiful lady mounted upon that very speedy horse, and went to practise penance at the meeting-place of the Ocean and Gaṅgā. In that excellent, auspicious holy place, the meeting place of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, lived a king, named Suśeṇa, born in the family of Soma (the moon).

197-200. She thought in her mind to go to that king's assembly: (She thought): 'How should I, a young lady, see the king? Around my wrist are (tied) the marriage-threads along with dūrvā grass. I am a young maiden without any company, and mounted upon horse. Indeed my behaviour will cause wonder in one's mind. Concealing myself (i.e. my true nature) I shall go to the king's assembly.' With magical power she became one of (i.e. turned herself into) the figure of a man. O Jaimini, she entered the king's assembly, like that of the assembly of gods.

201. Seeing him (i.e. Sulocanā in a man's garb), an affluent one, having a (missile called) śakti in his hand, seated upon a horse, coming (to him), the king himself asked him: "Who are you? Whence have you come?"

202-204. Having heard these words of him, that maiden in a man's figure, saluted the friendly king, the refuge of the good people. "O lord, I am a king's son, named Vīravara. I have now come to your kingdom for my livelihood. I shall accomplish whatever mission is impossible to be accomplished. When I am there, my lord will be nowhere defeated."

CHAPTER SIX

Happy End of the Story of Mādhava and Sulocanā

Tha king said:

1. O you of large arms, stay here only, in my very auspicious kingdom. I shall undoubtedly look after your livelihood.

2-6. Then, O brāhmaṇa, Vīravara, with his mind set upon serving him, constantly stayed there, in the vicinity of the king. Once in his city, a rhinoceros, named Bhīmanāda, continuously agitated all his subjects, O Jaimini. To kill him, the king angrily sent him. Then Vīravara, with people, went to kill that rhinoceros. That powerful (Vīravara) saw that rhinoceros, of the size of a mountain, with his mouth fearful due to the fangs, sleeping on the ground. Making his horse move in the atmosphere that Vīravara angrily spoke to the rhinoceros with a voice deep like that of a cloud:

7-10. “O wicked one, those trees of sins that you have acquired, have fructified, as trees are when they reach the (proper) season (i.e. in the proper season). In Yama’s abode you will see all the beings which you, the sinful one, had devoured in this kingdom. O wicked one, abandon your sleep. Look at me, your killer. What is the use of this sleep to you? You will have ‘the great sleep’ (i.e. death).” Then that very powerful one also, with eyes red due to anger, with his entire body greyish due to dust, abandoned his sleep and got up.

Bhīmanāda said:

11-13. O wicked one, do not be proud. (Very little) has remained (of the span) of your life. Who is free just on seeing me? As a moth would enter the row of the flames of a burning fire, so you will fall into the heap of (i.e. the large) fire of my anger.

He (i.e. Vīravara), looking at him who was talking like this, uttered a ‘hum’ sound and burnt him with great anger.

14-15. Then the rhinoceros, shaking the entire earth, and full of (i.e. making) a thunder-like noise, fell dead on the ground.

O brāhmaṇa, seeing the rhinoceros fallen (dead) on the shore (of the place of the union) of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, he proceeded to go in the vicinity of (i.e. to) the king.

16-18. O brāhmaṇa sage, while going he saw on the path a noble (man) blazing with lustre, and as it were another sun. (He was) accompanied by Viṣṇu's messengers, (was) adorned with tulasī-garlands, wore divine garments, was riding in a celestial chariot, and had a smiling face. That Viravara thus asked him with devotion: "Who are you? Whence have you come? Where are you going? Tell it to us."

The man said:

19-23. O girl who has put on a man's dress, listen to my account. If you desire to hear it, I shall gladly tell it. Formerly I was a king, wild fire of the family of the Caura dynasty. I was known as Dharmabuddhi, devoted to all religious practices. I performed all sacrifices; (gave) all (kinds of) presents. I protected the earth for fourteen thousand years. By (i.e. on listening to) the words of a heretic, I being angry, seized the land of a brāhmaṇa, which was never (before) polluted. Due to that offence of me, Viṣṇu himself angrily took away just at that moment all my royal glory.

24-32. O good lady, I whose wealth was lost, whose mind was burnt by the fire of grief, was subdued by king Yama within a few days. Seeing me, Citragupta brought that action of me to light. He said to the lord, god Yama, Sun's son, of a charming smile and gait: "This is king Dharmabuddhi. He has always done meritorious acts. He has (committed) some sin. Hear it. I shall tell it. Advised by heretics, he took away the royal grant of a brāhmaṇa. Due to that act only, he will have a place in the hell, difficult to be crossed. O Sun's son, he who cuts off the livelihood of a person is guilty of (the sin of committing) his murder. This is decided in the holy texts. Therefore, this king, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, is a sinner. His place is in hell for the period of a hundred crores of kalpas. O king, he who would snatch the land given by himself, or by someone else, goes to (and stays in) hell along with a crore (members) of his family. No atonement for him who would take away the land of a deity or a brāhmaṇa is seen for a period of hundred crores of kalpas. He who protects

the land given by others, obtains religious merit which is a crore times more than that of the giver.”

33-37. Then by Yama's order I ate pus and earth and always committed harm to beings in (my) existence (as a rhinoceros) in (this) kalpa. I, a wicked one, killed thousands of crores cows, brāhmaṇas and other beings also. O good lady, impelled by Yama, you killed me, born in the stock of the rhinoceros, and having no abode. The holy place of the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean is difficult to be obtained even by gods; dying on even a dry ground there, will give me liberation. O you of large buttocks, go. You will undoubtedly get happiness. You will soon see your husband.

Vyāsa said:

38-40. Having heard those very wonderful words of him, the maiden saluted his feet. The king Dharmabuddhi then got into a chariot and went to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, that hero Vīravara also went to the king's assembly. And the king having learnt that the fiercely valorous rhinoceros was dead, gave him (i.e. Vīravara) his daughter Jayantī in marriage.

41-43. Having accepted that girl Jayantī, (Vīravara) in a man's form decided to practise penance at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean. O best brāhmaṇa, having bathed in the morning at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, she would worship lord Nārāyaṇa with songs, musical instruments and dances. O best brāhmaṇa, that excellent lady, ate fleshless food fit to be eaten during days of fast or ate fruits, or sometime fasted also.

44-47. (Praceṣṭa thought:) ‘Who, seeing her all alone, has seized her on the earth? (Or) has that excellent lady, finding me to be (a) mean (man), mounted upon the horse and gone to her kingdom? Is that princess dead due to the separation of Mādhava or of Vidyādhara, since she would not resort to any other man?’ That servant, Praceṣṭa, on her death (i.e. taking her to be dead), went at will. He very much lamented there and grieved very much. Desiring to die he came to (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean.

48. Having bathed at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and having adorned himself with the earth (from the

root) of a tulasī-plant, Praceṣṭa, after having joined the palms of his hands, said these (words) to (Gaṅgā) Bhīṣma's mother:

49. "O mother, I shall now cast my body into your pure water, so that you will make Sulocanā my wife."

50-58. Her servants took him who was repeatedly speaking like this, after binding him with a noose, to the learned assembly. The very fierce servants tormented Praceṣṭa by Viravara's order and put him who was alarmed, into a prison. O best brāhmaṇa, at this time only on this wonderful deed being seen, there was a very loud wailing in his kingdom. O best brāhmaṇa, having heard about this wonderful deed, that king Guṇākara, who was inflamed, came there and said this (?). O best brāhmaṇa, at that time the king, overcome by grief, put at every place in the city, men with quivers, warriors who fight from a chariot, soldiers armed with shields, with swords, bowmen, lancers in thousands of crores for protection. All the warriors of unlimited valour, ordered by him, quickly and angrily stood in the city to protect their lord. Through fear, all singers abandoned (singing) songs, dancer abandoned dances, musicians abandoned (their) musical instruments. Then, O brāhmaṇa-sage, the king called his ministers, and, with his mind overpowered by grief, asked them: "What is this?"

The ministers said:

59. O lord, this is a wonderful action. It was never seen nor heard of before. Where has he gone when so many men were seeing (him)?

60-61. Someone said: "Having come to the earth due to Lakṣmī's curse, she, of her own accord, has vanished in your palace." "That lovely lady, full of tricks, lived in your house through trickery. Having shown her trick, she has gone," thus said others.

62. Others said: "The lovely lady, endowed with all (auspicious) marks, will come again also from where Indra, of an excellent body (comes, i.e. from heaven)."

63. Some said: "Thinking her face to be like himself, the Moon took her to be himself and took her for observing her well."

64-65. Some said: "That virtuous lady, having long clothes, and with her face resembling the full moon, has been erroneously seized by the Moon. She, with a face like a blooming lotus, with bud-like breasts and lotus-stalk-like open hands with the fingers spread, has been (struck) by quarter-elephants, mistaking her for a lotus-plant."

66. Some said: "Having created her having beauty and excellences, the Creator took her to create, after seeing her, another lady like her, O king."

67. Some said: "O king, you have conquered all the quarters. She has gone to heaven to vanquish divine ladies by her beauty."

68. The ministers having thus looked at one another's face, became silent, inactive, and nervous.

69-71. The king saying, "O Sulocanā, leaving me, where have you gone?" fell unconscious on the ground. O best brāhmaṇa, seeing the king fallen (unconscious), there was a loud wailing due to grief in that city. There was an echo of the wailing, O brāhmaṇa. There was a conjecture among the people there that the quarters were crying.

72. All the ministers took the king whose body was greyish due to dust and whose hair was loose, and quickly went to the palace.

73. Then that Vidyādhara, born of Śrī Vikramadeva, embraced her seat and wept with a piteous sound:

74-77. "O dear one, O you having tremulous eye-corners, O you having the lustre of a golden flower, O you of a charming face, where have you gone after dropping me into the ocean of grief? O dear one, what fault of me, did you, the faultless one, note, that you, O you having a lotus-like face, O you good one, are not appearing before me? O good one, even for a moment I shall not live without you. Therefore, appear before me, and save my life. If I do not obtain you, superior even to my life, (then) O good one, what is the use of wealth, people, friends, riches or home to me?"

78-79. O brāhmaṇa sage, having uttered such and other very piteous words, he, deciding to die due to his grief, went to (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean. There he bathed in the Gaṅgā-water mixed with the water of the Ocean,

offered oblation to the Sun and saluted mother (Gaṅgā, and said):

80-82. “O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother, I am casting my body in your pure water. You will do that by which I shall again get her.” Then, O brāhmaṇa, the angry, excellent servants of Viravara, took him to the law fit for him. Then Viravara said (to him): “Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Why do you cast your body here? Tell it to me.”

83-88. Having heard these words of him, that Vidyādhara told the entire story, causing wonder to the listeners. “And there is no doubt that you are the greatest among the foolish people. That maiden was a female gandharva, a demoness, a female serpent or a female kinnara. She had come (to the earth), as it were, through a curse. Therefore, she vanished of her own accord. That maiden of the form of a deity went to the abode of gods. How can you see her again? Can the wicked crows, though powerful, drink the moon’s nectar, fit to be drunk by the cakoras (only). What cannot be obtained can never be obtained. Whatever is fit to be obtained is (alone) obtained (by people). Some people know this; (and so) they are not deluded. A daughter is given (in marriage) by someone, and accepted by someone.

89-94. A groom gets that girl (as his wife) who was such a girl in his former life (also). The purpose of (having) a wife is to have sons. The purpose of (having) a son is (to receive) piṇḍas (from him at the śrāddha ceremony). For this purpose only the wise take a wife. A woman gets as is given by her in this world. The humming bee would put up with a lotus-creeper during the night. (But) even a handsome husband would not please women. Even though the sun is there a bee would drink the honey (from the lotuses) of a lotus-creeper. For a man (these) are matters for laughter: always thinking about women, indifferent to devotion for Viṣṇu, and casting the body (i.e. committing suicide) due to certain afflictions. All these, viz. the wife, the sons, the brother, the country (of one’s birth), the kinsmen can be obtained again. But life cannot be had again. You did not give up the objects of senses. You did not do pious acts.

95-98a. O fool, when the present (existence) has gone the future existence is difficult to secure. Due to the sense of mine-ness, viz. (this is) my mother, (this is) my father, this is my wife,

my wealth, the life of men becomes fruitless.” O Jaimini, thus admonished properly by that Viravara, he gave up his dejection and remained there only. Then that female perfumer, laughing (herself) went home. And having gone (home), she saw Mādhava, who was asleep.

The female perfumer said:

98b-99. Get up, get up, O wicked-minded one. Your roaming about would be useless. That maiden has disappeared of her own accord at the time of her marriage.”

Hearing her words like these, that Mādhava got up.

100-101. Being overcome by great grief, he rolled on the ground. (He said to himself:) “It is not the fault of the girl, nor of Vidyādhara. It is entirely my fault only, since I had the company of the mean. The Creator does not give happiness to men when they have the company of the mean.

102-111. I have realised just this, since this is my fate. Even a great (being) does not at all obtain happiness in the company of the mean: Śiva became naked, and had broken (pieces of objects) as his ornaments, due to his contact with evil spirits. A mean man, entering a hiding place, longs for a woman, riches etc. Having had some attachment Kārtikeya became six-faced. A mean man, having heard about the virtue of the good, instantly sinks down. He goes to listen to a fault which then would become of a hundred forms. A wise man, desiring his good, should not go to the mean. Even for a moment a wise man should not go to the mean. A wise man does not move even a step with the mean. He who takes the words of the mean to be reliable, instantly sinks down. If he gets to listen to a fault, he carefully comes to listen to it. Then getting an opportunity, he, laughing loudly, manifests it. Those whose minds are controlled, have one (i.e. the same) thing in their mind, in their speech and in their action. (But) the wicked have one thing in mind, another in their speech and (still) another in their action. When that girl, that princess will marry, then there will not be the slightest affliction in my mind. (So also I shall not be sorry) if the girl, endowed with all (good) marks, has gone to heaven. (If) she is taken away by the mean (Praceṣṭa), then there would be unbearable

grief in my mind. I am seeing her, of an excellent face, as it were, drawn in a picture at every place.

112-118a. I who am alive, cannot forget her. If the good lady has gone to the bosom of the mean one (i.e. is held in his bosom by the mean one), then she will not live (even) for a moment. Due to the intense grief on her account, that Vidyādhara also will not live. To secure her I had left my country as I had left my mother and my father. Undoubtedly I should cast my life like that only. To obtain her again, I shall abandon my life at (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean.” Making such a firm decision, he proceeded to go. At this time only, that very intelligent Mādhava, after having obtained the unguent for the feet from the best sage Nārada, went to (i.e. reached) (the place of) the union of Gaṅgā and the Ocean, after a few days. Having bathed in the water at (the union of) the Gaṅgā with the Ocean, he worshipped Viṣṇu. Then Mādhava, adorned with the garlands of tulasī-leaves, and with the palms of his hands joined, said to that best river, Jahnu’s daughter:

Mādhava said:

118b-122a. O goddess, I, who am suffering grief, shall abandon my body. You will give that beautiful girl to me (as my wife) in my next birth.

Having spoken like this, and having saluted Gaṅgā, the mother of the three worlds, he proceeded to get into the deep water (of the river). O brāhmaṇa sage, Vīravara seized the prince by his back, and having speedily come, along with his men to the (king’s) assembly, and resorting to love (i.e. affectionately) looked at the prince of praiseworthy beauty. Then he, being asked by Vīravara, “Who are you? How (i.e. why) do you cast your body here?” said to Vīravara:

Mādhava said:

122b-127. I am the son of king Vikrama, named Mādhava. Once I, along with my army, went for hunting to a fierce forest. In the vicinity of the city there was a lake beautiful due to lotuses. I who was lustful, saw there a lonely, beautiful woman. That beautiful woman, named Candrakalā, made a reference of

Sulocanā (as living) on the earth to me, "overcome by passion of love. Then mounting upon a horse, and crossing the ocean, I, along with my servant called Praceṣṭa, went to that city. On that day only the excellent (rite of the) application of perfumes etc. (as a preliminary to the marriage-rite) to her (was to take place). Hearing that I sent (her) a ring. What she also wrote on the back of the excellent letter, sent along with the ring by me, is told (now):

128-130. "O best one, there is the son of king Śrī Trivikrama-deva, called Vidyādhara. My father will give me to him in marriage. (The right of) the application of perfumes etc. will take place today; and my marriage will certainly take place tomorrow. Yet I shall tell you the means by which you (can) obtain me. I (shall) remain with my left hand raised, and facing the bridegroom. He, who can take me is undoubtedly my husband."

131. Having written that letter the maiden gave it into the hand of the female perfumer. That female perfumer also gave that excellent letter to me.

132-133. Praceṣṭa, facing me, heard about the condition, and, mounting on the horse, took her (away). I was overcome by sleep. Listen, due to this affliction, (and) in order to secure her again, I am keeping awake according to the manner (laid down in the scriptures), O good one.

134-139. Thus addressed, that maiden, in a man's form, appointed many foot-soldiers for his protection, and she, laughing, went to the harem. Then, having put on a woman's dress and adorned with various ornaments, she sent her maid-servant to fetch the prince. Having come (to the harem) by her order, the prince saw that chaste lady, as it were, Lakṣmī incarnate. That girl, with her body graced with horripilation, got up from the golden seat, and saluted his feet, O brāhmaṇa. Then that very intelligent prince, securing the marriage-thread there only, married the girl according to the gandharva-type of marriage. That prince sprinkled with the streams of the water of her love and sporting with her, passed the night there only.

140-145. Then when the day broke that chaste lady having eyes like those of a female deer, told Mādhava the whole account from the beginning. Then that chaste Sulocanā, taking that

princess Jayantī and Mādhava, went to Suśeṇa's assembly. Hearing (from) the girl (the account), the king, being delighted, gave to him in marriage Sulocanā and Jayantī. That king, highly devoted to piety and very much pleased, gave him as the dowry half of his kingdom and hundreds (of coins) of gold. Then that prince, having fashioned a beautiful house, lived in that most holy place, O brāhmaṇa. Then, in the meanwhile, Mādhava, having brought Praceṣṭa, kept in the prison, to the assembly, thought:

146-149. 'I shall not protect this evil-minded, cruel man, treacherous to his master, this fool, the greatest enemy. A cruel man, though protected repeatedly with constant favour, wealth and food, acts like an enemy, when he gets an opportunity. (Such) a man, after reaching prosperity, would cut off the head of the master with the same hand with which, in adversity, he would carry the dust of the (master's) feet. The subjugated rows of kings do indeed kill their lord. Even hot water would instantly put out fire.'

150-154. O best brāhmaṇa, thinking like this in his mind, that prince drove out that insensible Praceṣṭa. O brāhmaṇa, with those two ladies, he, free from grief and malady, lived happily there for sometime. On that Sulocanā (the wife) of that magnanimous Mādhava a hundred sons were born; and two hundred sons were born on Jayantī. Those sons of Mādhava also were very proficient in the science of (using) weapons, were highly devoted to piety and became dear to the people. That Mādhava, associated with Viṣṇu's devotion secured in the former existence, once thought in his mind:

155-159. 'Who am I? Whence have I come? To whom do I belong? Who created me? Where shall I go again (after death)? Where shall I stay? The life of me, enjoying objects of senses, has passed without any religious merit. So, who will save me who am plunged in the ocean of perils. That man who, having taken birth in this mundane existence, has not propitiated Viṣṇu, should be known to be the killer of himself and one that is excommunicated. Birth would repeatedly take place, so also death would take place again and again. Therefore, this mundane existence is said to be very fierce and causing affliction. Without devotion for Viṣṇu birth and death would not be kept

off. Therefore, today, having abandoned everything, I shall worship Viṣṇu.'

160. Having thought like this in his mind, and having repeatedly trusted (Viṣṇu), he called Viśvakarman, and said these words to him:

Mādhava said:

161-167. O Viśvakarman, O you of big arms, having fashioned a stone-image of Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects, give it to me.

Then, O brāhmaṇa, by his order, the artisan Viśvakarman fashioned a stone-image of the great Viṣṇu. It was dark like a fresh cloud. Its eyes resembled lotuses. It held a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. It had four arms. It was united with Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī. It was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. It possessed all (good) marks. It was adorned with all ornaments. Having installed that image of Viṣṇu, giving desired objects and having a disc in its hand, in a beautiful pavilion, he started worshipping it. O brāhmaṇa, O best brāhmaṇa, in the same abode he would everyday offer a ghee-lamp with continuous flame. He would himself bathe in the morning, and would sweep (the hall) etc. He would decorate the path, and would smear it (with cowdung).

168-171. Having bathed in the water at (the place of the union of) Gaṅgā and the Ocean, and having offered the five great sacrifices, he would worship Viṣṇu thrice (a day) with excellent offerings, with sandal, incense, with offerings of eatables, tāmbūlas, incense and lamps, so also with songs and musical instruments, discourses, and excellent repetitions of hymns, so also by means of going round the image, keeping it to his right, with salutations, and sacrifices in which presents were given, so also with fleshless food fit to be eaten during days of fast, and by eating fruits. He would mutter the great (prayer) formula of eight letters, viz. 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa' preceded by Om (*Om namo Nārāyaṇāya*), and giving all desired objects.

172-174. In this way for thousands of years he very devoutly performed the worship, giving all desired objects, of the noble Viṣṇu, the highest soul. By means of that devotion, (Viṣṇu) the

crest-jewel of all gods was pleased. The lord, resembling a tulasī-sprout, appeared before him. Seeing Viṣṇu who had appeared before him, Mādhava along with his wives embraced (i.e. touched) the ground with his head, and saluted Viṣṇu's feet.

Mādhava said:

175-190. Salutation to the god of gods. Salutation to the highest soul. Salutation to the highest lord, to the lord of gods; salutation to the giver of knowledge. Salutation to you, O highest joy, O Puruṣottama, O Keśava. Salutation to the lotus-eyed one, to the lord of Lakṣmī. Salutation to you of many forms; repeated salutations to the formless one. Salutation to the conceivable one, to the inconceivable one, to the visible one, and the invisible one. Salutation to the lord of the three worlds; repeated salutations to the father of the worlds. Salutation to the one obtainable by knowledge; salutation to you belonging to all Vedas. Salutation to you, the enemy of Kāmsa. Salutation to you, the enemy of Kaiṭabha. Salutation to you who seized Madhu; repeated salutations to you, the creator, who taking the form of the Fish, extracted the Vedas. Repeated salutations to you. I resort to you who, in the form of the Tortoise, extracted the Earth along with mountains, forests and groves, from inside the water of the deep ocean. Repeated salutations to you who, in the form of the Boar, held up, with your tusk, the Earth, O lord of the Earth. Salutations to you who, in the form of Nṛ-siṃha, tore off the angry demon Hiraṇyakaśipu. O god, salutation to you who, in the form of Vāmana, destroyed Bali's sacrifice, and seized (the earth) for Kāśyapa. Salutation to you, that Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma) who gratified your manes with the blood of the kṣatriyas and who killed Kārtavīrya. Salutation to you, that (Dāśarathi) Rāma, the son of Kauśalyā, who killed Rāvaṇa, so also Mārīca and Kumbhakarṇa. Salutation to you, that (Bala)Rāma, Revatī's husband, who killed Pralamba, and who cleared the Kālindī (i.e. the Yamunā). Salutation to you that Buddha who, seeing the killing of beasts, censured the Vedas with compassion (for the beasts). Salutation to you, of the form of Kalki, who at the end of the yuga killed* the Mlecchas for the

**vihitā* is a misprint for *vihatā*.

good of all people. O Hari, O Viṣṇu, O conqueror of the demons, O Nārāyaṇa full of pity, save me who am fallen into the fierce ocean of the worldly existence.

191-193. Then that Mādhava washed Viṣṇu's feet through joy, and dropping his entire body on the ground, spoke to Viṣṇu:

Mādhava said:

O Govinda, O you highest joy, O Mukunda, O Madhusūdana, O Kṛṣṇa, protect me, a sinner, since you destroy all sins.

Having heard this hymn of praise of him, the lord, affectionate to (his devotees), being very much pleased, himself said these words:

The lord said:

194. O dear, O Mādhava, O best kṣatriya, choose a boon. What do you desire—the state of Brahman, Śiva, or Śakra?

Mādhava said:

195-196. O lord of the world, I have obtained everything. There is no doubt about it. I am seeing you who are invisible even to deities. You are capable of giving enjoyment, salvation, wealth, prosperity—everything. O lord, I am not fit for devotion. Give me devotion only.

The lord said:

197. I am undoubtedly pleased with this devotion of you. Tell me by giving which thing I shall be free from your debt.

Sūta said:

198. O brāhmaṇa, saying so, Viṣṇu who was very much pleased, spread his four arms and embraced him as a father embraces his son.

The lord said:

199-200. Due to the power of the embrace I am acquitted of the debt. O good one, everything will undoubtedly be auspicious. O child, by you having a desire my image was worshipped by means of the yoga of action.

Vyāsa said:

201-204. Having thus given him a boon and having embraced him with his four long arms dear as life, he vanished there only. Then Mādhava, along with his wife, devoutly worshipped that image of Viṣṇu by means of the yoga of action. Along with his sons and grandsons he enjoyed all pleasures. And having met his death along with his wife in Gaṅgā, he obtained liberation. He who with full devotion, recites this chapter containing Viṣṇu's account, destroying all heaps of sins, enjoys all pleasures in this world, and ultimately goes to the abode of lord Śrī Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Kālakalpa is Liberated by the Touch of Gaṅgā-water

Śrī Vyāsa said:

1-4. I shall just again tell you the excellent importance of Gaṅgā; having heard it all men would obtain all their desired objects. On seeing the face of him who has not bathed in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world, a man should instantly look at the Sun. The sins of him who, in the morning, would devoutly remember the couple of letters 'Gaṅ-gā', perish, as darkness perishes at dawn. All the food, water etc. of (i.e. offered by) him who has not seen the best among rivers, are unfit to be accepted.

5-9. The sins of those who bathe in Gaṅgā leave their bodies and go to the bodies of those who do not bathe in Gaṅgā. Oh, very, very strange it is that fools fall into a hell, (though) there is the name of Gaṅgā (to purify them). That brāhmaṇa

who would carry even a drop of the Gaṅgā-water on his head is freed from great sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. That meritorious man, on whose forehead an excellent mark made with the Gaṅgā-sand is seen, undoubtedly purifies the entire world. That man who would see (a man) who has come from the bank of Gaṅgā with great respect, obtains the fruit of thousands of horse-sacrifices.

10. Viṣṇu is pleased with him and gives him all his desired objects who says (to another man): “I am going to the bank of Gaṅgā. You (too) come (with me)”.

11-13. That man who, remembering the name Gaṅgā, bathes even in the water of a well, would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā. He who, at the time of death, gets a drop of the Gaṅgā-water equal (to the size of) a mustard, would go to the highest position. O brāhmaṇa sage, in this context only listen to an ancient account, by merely hearing which goddess Gaṅgā is pleased.

14-17. In the Tretā age there was a brāhmaṇa by name Dharmasva. He was righteous, calm, controlled, full of pity and had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He spoke the truth, was without anger and free from harming (anyone); he had controlled his senses; he desired the good of all beings; he was always engaged in abstract meditation. To cross the ocean of the mundane existence, that devotee of Viṣṇu worshipped Keśava, the lord of gods, by means of the yoga of action (i.e. religious deeds). Sometime, finding an auspicious day, that best brāhmaṇa, desiring liberation, went to the bank of Gaṅgā to bathe, O brāhmaṇa.

18-24. Having bathed there in the Gaṅgā-water, and having presented libations of water etc. to the manes, he, carrying pitchers of the Gaṅgā-water, decided to go home. O brāhmaṇa, at that time a vaiśya called Ratnakara, surrounded by all his servants, came back after finishing trade. He had a brāhmaṇa servant known as Kālakaḥ. He who had committed all (kinds of) sins, came (there) with a staff in his hand. O best brāhmaṇa, one ox of that Ratnakara, fatigued due to the journey, slept on the road. That very cruel Kālakaḥ, seeing the bull lying on the path, struck him with the staff in various ways. Due to anger produced by the strokes of the staff, the bull got up and tore him with his very sharp horns. His chest was torn out by the

couple of horns, and he (also) lost his sight. Dharmasva, full of pity, quickly went near him.

25-26. Then that intelligent one (i.e. Dharmasva) took an excellent tulasī-leaf from his ear, and sprinkled him with the divine drops of the water of Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa, seeing him dead, he, the knower of the most sublime truth, was amazed, and decided to go home.

27-32. Then going along the path while repeating the names of Gaṅgā, he saw before him, thousands of crores of Yama's messengers. Some of them had one of their legs cut off. Some of them had one of their hands cut off. The ears of some were cut off. Some had one ear only. Some had their noses cut off. Some had their tongues cut off. The teeth of some were broken. Some were without teeth. The entire bodies of some were smeared with streams of blood. Some had their hair loose. Some had lost their mouths. Similarly some of them were naked. The chests of some were pierced. The bodies of some were disabled with very sharp arrows. Others had their fingers and hands tied with strong cords. Others wailing due to agony, were intent on running (away).

33-34. That best brāhmaṇa, seeing Yama's servants reduced to such a state, had his heart trembling, and through fear he was a little motionless. Then mustering courage, that brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, asked thus with sweet (voice) the savage servants of Yama.

Dharma(sva) said:

35-36. Who are you of deformed figures and having nooses and hammers in your hands, with your mouths fierce due to fangs and resembling charcoal? All you have eyes like very powerfully burning fire. Yet, someone has reduced you to this bad plight.

Yama's messengers said:

37. We all are Yama's messengers, always carrying out Yama's order. This very great sin has come to us with great chastisement (as its fruit).

Dharmasva said:

38. You, of great power and valour, have come all of a

sudden. Who has reduced you, and how has he reduced you to such a very bad plight?

Yama's messengers said:

39-46. O best brāhmaṇa, give up your fear. Listen to the whole account, since this agony of us has become extremely unbearable. We, the servants, have been sent forth by Yama to carry this Kālakalpa who has been torn with his horns by a bull. Ordered by him (i.e. Yama), all of us, with all weapons in our hands have come here to take the greatest of sinners after tying him. This wicked-hearted Kālakalpa whose death was imminent, was torn with his horns by the bull who became the cause (of his death). You, being kind, repeating the names of Gaṅgā, sprinkled the greatest of sinners with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. Though his sins had gone due to his being sprinkled with the drops of water, we, binding him strongly with cords, exerted to take him (to Yama's abode). The lord of gods, the protector of those who have sought his refuge, also sent his very powerful and valorous messengers to take him (to Vaikuṇṭha). O best brāhmaṇa, certain messengers then came by Viṣṇu's order and angrily said these words to us on the path :

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

47-49. O noble ones, who are you? How do you take this noble-minded one after binding him with a cord? Whose servants are you? Leaving this noble one, run (away) as you please. Otherwise we shall cut off your heads with the edge of (our) discs.

O best brāhmaṇa, having heard these proud words of them, the servants of Viṣṇu, we said to them :

50-53. "We all are the servants of Yama, the lord of (every) life. Taking this greatest sinner we are going to Yama's abode. All you noble ones are adorned with the garlands of tulasī-blossoms. Your eyes are like full-blown lotuses. You are strong, and are Garuḍa-bannered. You have put on divine garments. You are handsome like the peacock's neck. You are holding conches, discs, maces and lotuses. You (each) have four arms. Who are all of you, endowed with all (auspicious) marks? How do you desire to take this greatest sinner?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

54-55. All of us are Viṣṇu's messengers. To take this meritorious man to Vaikuṇṭha we have come here now. O servants of Yama, if you desire to live, then quickly release this our man, Viṣṇu's devotee, free from sins.

56-63. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the words we angrily uttered on hearing these words of them, addressed to all. I (shall) tell them. "This one is a sinner, of a bad conduct. He has committed thousands of murders of brāhmaṇas. He is ungrateful. He is the killer of cows, (his) friends, and is evil-hearted. This extremely wicked one has snatched very many (pieces of) gold of the size of the Meru (mountain). He has always kidnapped others' wives. O servants of Viṣṇu, he has committed thousands of crores of murders of living beings in various ways, so also murders of women. Everyday he snatched the deposits kept with him; he committed incest with his mother and ate cow's flesh also. He killed others and set fire to others' houses. He censured others in an assembly, and caused abortions of widows. He, resembling a Yavana, killed at night with sharp swords a guest that had come to his house through greed for wealth, O best one. This mean fool has committed innumerable sins (like) these and other great sins. He has not done even a little producing auspiciousness.

64. Therefore, this great sinner is being taken to the house of torture. O best ones, the sinners are known to be punished by Yama.

65. If you are the messengers of the lord, the god of gods, then how do you wish to take this greatest sinner (to Vaikuṇṭha)?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

66-72. You have spoken the truth only. There is no doubt about it. All sinners are always to be punished by the lord of beings. (But) this one is free from sins due to his being sprinkled with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. Therefore, we all shall take him to Viṣṇu's abode. Till the drops of Gaṅgā-water, very difficult to be secured, do not touch the bodies of men, sins remain in their bodies. As by just one digit of the moon entire darkness is removed, in the same way sin is destroyed by a drop

of Gaṅgā-water. By (merely) remembering the names of Gaṅgā a sinner is freed from his sins. What wonder is there if he is freed on actually seeing her water? Even the cold Gaṅgā-water is like fire to the forest of sins, as cold water acts like fire in the case of a lotus-pond. Therefore, this one is a meritorious man, as it were, another Viṣṇu. O servants of Yama, if you desire your well-being, (then) go (back).

73-76. Listen to what we again said, after laughing loudly on hearing these words of those messengers of Viṣṇu. “Oh wonder! Oh wonder! that this abode of sins has been freed from all sins just due to the sprinkling of Gaṅgā-water. A mortal is not freed even after hundreds of crores of kalpas, without experiencing (the fruit of) the act, good or bad, done by him. We have come (here) by Yama’s order to take him (to Yama). By whose words should we leave this great sinner?”

Viṣṇu’s messengers said:

77-80. Since you do not know the merits of the daughter of Jahnu (i.e. Gaṅgā), you are evil-minded and devoid of discrimination. That act which is prohibited in (i.e. by) the Veda is said to be a sin. That act approved by the Veda is alone said to be religious. We hear that god Nārāyaṇa is evidently self-born. As Viṣṇu is, so is Gaṅgā. Gaṅgā alone destroys all sins. A bad or a good act is fixed by Viṣṇu with his own hands. When Viṣṇu is pleased, where do men’s sins remain?

81-84. You have been reduced to this state due to your sins earned (i.e. committed) in other (i.e. former) existences. O you of sinful acts, why do you even now desire (to commit) sinful acts? You censure Gaṅgā; so also you censure Viṣṇu. Therefore, we shall kill you, the sinful ones, with the edge of our discs.

Speaking like this, O best one, those messengers of Viṣṇu, with their eyes red due to anger, started fighting with us. They angrily said: “Kill (these) messengers of Yama”. Repeatedly speaking like this, they struck us with the edge of their discs.

85-87. Speaking like that, all those messengers of Viṣṇu, very fierce in battle, and being delighted at heart, suddenly blew their conches. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the three worlds were perva-

ded by our lion-like roars, like thunderings of clouds, and by our bows being expanded (i.e. strung). Then with trees, stones and showers of rocks, we split those messengers of Viṣṇu.

88-91. In that ocean (of the battle) the messengers of Viṣṇu variously struck us with missiles like double-edged swords, small javelins, arrows, so also clubs studded with iron, axes, knives, staffs and darts, swords, (missiles called) śakti, sharp arrows, maces, edges of discs, and very fierce arrows of iron, and with fearful missiles. Then all of us wounded by the missiles ran away through fear. Thousands of us fell dead in the battle.

92-96. Then those mighty servants of Viṣṇu, seeing us intent on fleeing, joyfully blew their conches. Then cutting off the bond of Kālakalpa, and putting him into an aeroplane, they went to the lord's city, O best brāhmaṇa. O best one, due to the efficacy of the sprinkling of the drops (of the water) of Gaṅgā, that very sinful Kālakalpa obtained residence in the same heaven with Viṣṇu. Having lived there for a hundred kalpas, having enjoyed charming pleasures, and having obtained knowledge there only, he obtained liberation. O lord, due to the efficacy of Gaṅgā, this our affliction has gone. O brāhmaṇa, well-being to you. Being very much pleased, go home.

97. O brāhmaṇa, having spoken like this, those messengers of Yama went to Yama's city. That Dharmasva again went to the bank of Gaṅgā.

98. Having bathed in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world, the brāhmaṇa, with the palms of his hands joined, praised that greatest goddess.

Dharmasva said:

99-112. O Gaṅgā, O mother of the entire world, O you of unsteady ripples, O you having the garland of the flowers of the very charming heads of Anaṅga etc., O you who remove the dust on both the lovely feet of the enemy of Kāṁsa, I salute you who destroy sins. O mother, O you who give happiness to all, O you best among the rivers, O you whose merits have been sung by the hosts of brāhmaṇas like Vyāsa, O you rich in virtues, O you, the boat in the fearful, great ocean in the form of the mundane existence, I salute the pair of your feet, which remove sins.

O daughter of Jahnu, with (i.e. by bowing) my head, I salute you, on having whose drop of water the king named Saudāsa, having (committed the sin of) the murder of crores of brāhmanas, obtained liberation, difficult to be obtained even by gods. O you giver of boons, be pleased. By your grace let the body of me, repeating the names like Nārāyaṇa, Acyuta, Janārdana, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Gaṅgā etc., fall into your water, O goddess, O mother, O you who remove sins in the worldly existence. O goddess of all, what is the use of austerities, muttering (the hymns etc.), (giving) presents, or of sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice? (For) even very sinful men obtain liberation, difficult to be obtained even by gods, on securing a drop of your water. O you highest goddess, O you who are the cause of the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the world, I salute you of the form of the three guṇas, viz. sattva (i.e. goodness), rajas (i.e. passion), and tamas (i.e. darkness or ignorance), who are that Svāhā (i.e. oblation offered indiscriminately to all gods), that Svadhā (i.e. offering of food made to the manes of deceased ancestors) for the great satisfaction of the hosts of gods and manes. May the entire dust from your feet be on the head of me who always wear your sand, and a vertical mark with your clay on my forehead, who would devoutly repeat your name, the abode of all tastes. May my birth remove the tie with the worldly life, after (my) having lived on your bank, O Gaṅgā, after (my) having drunk your water which removes sins, after (my) having recollected your name, and after (my) having seen your water with waves. Looking upon heaven as having a difficult path leading to it, and taking it to be very important, very happy men have a great fear about it. But O giver of nectar, it is indeed in vain, since your water acts as a staircase for going to heaven. O you goddess of all, O you giver of enjoyments, O you Gaṅgā, the chief among rivers, sins, hosts of diseases remain in the bodies (of men) till they do not bathe in your pure water. O you of an uninterrupted flow, that some call you who are the giver of the highest liberation, to reach whose greatness (gods) like Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva and hosts of gods like Indra (try hard), a (simple) river, is their ignorance! O Gaṅgā, O you who give all pleasures, lord Śiva knows a little of your importance, since he, the best of the good-minded, very devoutly holds you, the (only) goddess of the

world, on his head. O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother of the world, O highest goddess, nourish me; salutation to you; protect me, your servant. O giver of liberation, can I whose mind is confused, praise you, of the nature of the highest Brahman and the only mother of the world?

Vyāsa said:

113-116. Gaṅgā, the mother of the world, thus praised by the intelligent brāhmaṇa, suddenly appeared before him in an embodied form, O brāhmaṇa. Before him he saw Gaṅgā with two arms, seated on a crocodile, white like a kunda (flower), the moon and a conch, and adorned with all ornaments. Then, he, seeing Gaṅgā before him, saying 'O Gaṅgā, O Gaṅgā,' saluted her after touching the ground with his head. O Jaimini, infatuating him with smiling looks, that highest goddess who was very much pleased, said to him: "O brāhmaṇa, choose a boon."

Dharmasva said:

117-119. O mother, by the touch of your water even the murderer of a brāhmaṇa gets liberation. I am actually seeing you. What else have I to gain? Yet, O highest goddess, I ask for one boon: May I, while recollecting your name, die in your water. O goddess, he who praises you with the hymn composed by me, will, after enjoying all desired objects, obtain a good position in the end.

Gaṅgā said:

120-121. O best brāhmaṇa, by this devotion of you I am pleased. Undoubtedly you will soon have full happiness. Being pleased with the man who would recite this hymn composed by you, three times a day, I shall grant him the excellent liberation.

Vyāsa said:

122-128. That goddess, affectionate to her devotees, having thus given a boon to that (brāhmaṇa) named Dharmasva, vanished there only, O best brāhmaṇa. The brāhmaṇa too, having secured that boon, was as it were fortunate. O brāhmaṇa, he lived there only on the beautiful bank of Gaṅgā. Then after a long time having met a happy death in the pure water of

Gaṅgā, he reached the best position. Even that wicked-minded Kālakalpa, sprinkled with the drops of the Gaṅgā-water, obtained excellent liberation. Then what need one say of others, O brāhmaṇa? The Gaṅgā-water, even though touched unintentionally, gives fruit. I do not know what would happen to those who touch it with devotion. I say repeatedly, there is no other holy place like Gaṅgā, touching a drop of water of which one obtains the highest abode. Those, who devoutly touch in this world just a drop of the water of this excellent river, go to the position of Viṣṇu after being freed from all very fierce sins.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Love Story of Indra and Padmagandhā

Vyāsa said:

1-6. O chief among brāhmaṇas, I shall again narrate the excellent greatness of Gaṅgā. If you desire liberation, drink the nectar in the form of an account of Gaṅgā. He who has devotion for the mother of Bhīṣma, has given all gifts, has performed all sacrifices, and has worshipped Viṣṇu. O Jaimini, whatever religious rites are performed in Gaṅgā, all those become inexhaustible for him. Seeing flowing water he who gets up and goes to the water of Gaṅgā with devotion, is the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices. He who does not show devotion (i.e. does not become devoted) when Gaṅgā-water has come (to him), will perpetually have beasthood in every existence. The religious merit earned during crores of existences of him who, having come across the Gaṅgā-water, does not devoutly take it, perishes just in a moment.

7-10. He who stops one desiring to go to the bank of Gaṅgā, would, along with a crore (members of) his family, go to Raurava hell. The expiation for him who urinates or excretes on the bank of Gaṅgā is not seen even after hundreds of crores of kalpas. He who would drop phlegm, spittle, rheum, tears or dirt on the bank of Gaṅgā would be a resident of hell. He who would

throw leavings of food and phlegm into Gaṅgā goes to a fearful hell, and gets (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

11-12. The sin which a foolish man commits on the bank of Gaṅgā, would indeed be perpetual and is not destroyed at (i.e. by visiting) other holy places. A sin committed at another holy place is destroyed in Gaṅgā; (but) the sin committed in Gaṅgā is destroyed nowhere.

13-14. Therefore, those who are proficient in the holy texts should not commit a sin in Gaṅgā. They should collect religious merit through (bodily) act, (act of) mind, and through words. They are not countries, they are not mountains, and they are also not the forests where the divine river, destroying sins, would not exist.

15-19. O Jaimini, even if one has (to carry out) a hundred (pieces of) work one should not stay at any other place even for a short while after leaving the bank of Gaṅgā. Even by eating begged food one should stay at the bank of Gaṅgā, but not at other place, even for a moment, even after having obtained the status of a king. By casting his body in Gaṅgā even the killer of a brāhmaṇa is liberated. (But even) the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices at any other place would not get liberation. He who would live on the bank of Gaṅgā and be devoted to Viṣṇu's worship (would obtain liberation). He who has never worshipped Viṣṇu in any former existence, would not have devotion for Gaṅgā, the mother of the world. O men, all of you listen. I am saying this repeatedly.

20-24 Having bathed in Gaṅgā, he would go to the highest position. That man who would worship Gaṅgā by repeating the name 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', (would) freed from all sins, (live) in heaven for a myriad divine ages. O brāhmaṇa, he who would start (narration of) the account of Gaṅgā at the time of his death, would, with all his sins dropped, go to the abode of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, with the wise man who at the time of his death remembers the name 'Gaṅgā' giving liberation, Viṣṇu would be pleased. He who would, at the time of death, have a sectarian mark (on his forehead) of the Gaṅgā-clay (*mṛtpuṇḍra*), so also he who would cast his body after seeing him who bathes in Gaṅgā, would get (the fruit of) death in Gaṅgā even (if his death occurs) in a cremation ground, O brāhmaṇa.

25-26. As long as the bones of a man remain in Gaṅgā, he would, for thousands of kalpas, be honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. That wise man whose ashes, bones, nails and hair lie dipped in Gaṅgā, would live in Viṣṇu's abode.

27-28. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell (about) the fate a man has when his bones lie in Gaṅgā. I shall tell the entire fruit of it. Listen attentively. Once the lustful lord Indra, adorned with various ornaments, went along with a young woman Padmagandhā to the pleasure-house.

29-31. She who was called Padmagandhā, who had the prime of youth, contributed to great delight by giving him various pleasures. He, the conqueror, deluded by Cupid and being pleased, sat at the feet of that lady having eyes like those of a young deer, and seated on his wife's golden bed. Indra, being very much pleased and with his mind attracted by her virtues, himself prepared a tāmbūla and gave it to her.

32-33. Just at that time, very beautiful Paulomī, adorned with all ornaments, herself came to that (pleasure-)house. Paulomī, seeing lord Indra, the king of all gods, in that condition, was very angry; and she, of good marks, spoke thus:

Śacī said:

34-37a. O lord, O my husband, O king of all gods, what is this that you are doing? Giving a golden tāmbūla to one who is my maid! O lord, all gods touch your feet with their heads. Then how do you remain at the feet of Padmagandhā? A bee is solicited for its fragrance(?). It would not be its success(?). O lord, how do you, who are the lord of a crore of beautiful women, and who know all flavours, do such an extremely condemned act?

37b-38a. O you virtueless Padmagandhā, O you maid, go away. You, (as if you were) a goddess, are (lying) on the bed, and Indra is seated at your feet!

Vyāsa said:

38b-39a. Thus reproached in various ways by that Paulomī, that chaste woman of a beautiful body angrily spoke thus:

Padmagandhā said:

39b-43a. The lord himself knows my virtue and vice. O

you virtueless one, with what authority are you, after coming (here), censuring me? Others see virtues and vices even with two eyes. O you wicked-minded one, would Indra not see with a thousand eyes, since the virtue of people is not propagated as (as quickly as) their fault? Virtuous people first see the spot on the moon. You are talking nonsense, are cruel, of a bad form, void of virtues. If I am not virtuous, then let your husband resort to you.

Vyāsa said:

43b-44a. Speaking like this, that lotus-eyed Padmagandhā, acting very pitiably, angrily got up from the golden bed.

Indra said:

44b-47a. O dear one, O mistress of my life, O greatest one, leaving me where are you going? Tell me, O beautiful lady, what offence have I committed against you. O dear one, I am your servant and will serve you as a servant. The wife of a servant would be a maid-servant. Do you not hear such words?

Then Indra, with his mind overcome by infatuation, got up and again put that exquisitely beautiful woman on his lap.

Śacī said:

47b-51a. O female curlew, your life is good, (and) my life certainly fruitless. You are loved by the lord, and I, an excellent lady, am always disliked by him, till (your) religious merit (lasts). O female curlew, that religious merit will be exhausted. Being born in the family of curlew you will again suffer grief. Till then sport with the lord of gods as you please. O virtueless female curlew, after a few days (the lord) would not be yours.

Having heard her very amazing words, that Padmagandhā, giving up her antagonism, saluted that chaste lady (i.e. Śacī), and said to her:

Padmagandhā said:

51b-53a. O daughter of Puloman, O beautiful woman,

what you have said is wonderful. Tell me how I am a female curlew. I desire to listen to it carefully. Who am I? Where did I stay? How have I, a chaste woman, come here? After how much time will my religious merit be exhausted?

Śactī said:

53b-60a. O Padmagandhā, formerly you were born of a curlew. You lived on the earth, eating impure flesh and insects. On the charming bank of Gaṅgā there was a fig tree. After building a nest on it, you lived there. Once a black serpent entered the hole on the fig tree and bit you. And you, a wicked one, suddenly died. The serpent angrily ate up all your flesh. O beautiful woman, all your fleshless bones remained there only. O good one, once the tree was hurled down by a strong wind. O beautiful one, being broken it fell into the Gaṅgā along with its roots. When that fig tree fell into Gaṅgā, your bones were submerged, O best lady. As long as those bones will remain in Gaṅgā, you will always be loved by the lord.

60b-65a. O Padmagandhā, I have told you everything as to which of your religious merits has placed (even) Indra under your thumb. Blessed is goddess Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) due to whose favour, you, a female curlew, not touched even by cāṇḍālas, lie on the lap of Indra.

The daughter of Puloman, the chaste lady, being insulted even by Indra, with her lotus-face faded, went as she had come. That excellent woman Padmagandhā remained on Indra's lap only. Those words of her remained, as it were, wakeful in her heart. O brāhmaṇa, once the lord of gods very much pleased with her virtues, himself said to her: "O beautiful lady, ask for a boon."

Padmagandhā said:

65b-67a. You are the chief of all gods and the lord of crores of women. Yet, O lord, you are under my influence. (Then) what is the use of other boons? Yet, O best god, you who desire to grant (me) a boon (should) take a pledge before me with your (bodily) acts, mind and words.

Indra said:

67b-69a. O you beautiful lady, order me what I shall give you—(my) life, wealth, kingdom, clothes (or attendants). (What I promise) is true, (certainly) true, is repeatedly true. There is no doubt about it. O you fawn-eyed one, I shall certainly give you what you desire.

Padmagandhā said:

69b-70a. O lord of the three worlds, if you are indeed pleased with me, then give me the boon that I shall be born in the stock of elephant.

Indra said:

70b-74a. O beautiful lady, I who have given a promise, give you the boon. But many griefs have come to my heart. O beautiful lady, I do not get happiness if I do not see you even for a moment. Then how can I put up with the unbearable separation from you for a long time? O you of stout breasts, O you beautiful lady, if you have compassion for me, then stay with me for a few days (more).

Then enjoying the large wealth of the lord of the gods that chaste woman lived for a myriad of years in the house of the lord.

Padmagandhā said:

74b-75a. O lord of gods, give me an order to fulfil my desire. I (shall) go to the land of religious rites (i.e. Bhāratavarṣa). I salute the pair of your feet.

Indra said:

75b-76a. O you having a moon-like face, after living with me, having the measure of an ocean of love for you, for a few days, you will go as you please.

76b-78a. Then, that Padmagandhā, day and night sporting with him in the pleasure-house, lived there for three myriads of years. Then, she, full of joy, said to the lord of gods: "Give me an order. I (shall) now go to the earth."

Indra said:

78b-79a. O you beautiful one, give up your apathy. Stay with me here only. I cannot abandon you; (you are) more important than (my own) life.

Padmagandhā said:

79b-82a. O lord of gods, when, on the exhaustion of my religious merit I shall go to the earth, then I shall have separation from you for a long time. On that separation, O lord, I, having gone to the earth, desire (to come back to) heaven. O Indra, having gone to the land of religious rites, I shall employ that means by which I shall never be separated from you.

Indra said:

82b-84. O good one, when you again desire to do this, then O beautiful one, you will again quickly come (here).

Then, with his body sprinkled by tears trickling from his eyes, he embraced her, and addressing her as "O dear one", said: "You (can) go". Then by his order the chaste woman came to the land of religious rites.

85-92a. O brāhmaṇa, she was born in the stock of female elephants and remembered her former birth. She who was well-born in the stock of female elephants and remembered her account went, after a few days, to the bank of Gaṅgā. Bathing in Gaṅgā, and decorated with the mud from Gaṅgā, and uttering (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', she entered a deep pool of water. That female elephant, of the form of a mountain, remembering her own birth, went into that pool of the Gaṅgā water, and died. Seeing her boldness, all deities gladly showered her with excellent flowers like pārijāta etc. To bring her, of a dark body, Indra, of a good mind, and surrounded by all hosts of gods, speedily went (to Gaṅgā) due to a long separation from her. Telling her, of a divine body, his own agonies (while) in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) he went to his own abode, after gladly abandoning, for her sake, Śacī, Rambhā and Pramlocā and Urvaśī, that had come (there).

92b-95a. That excellent lady, increasing the happiness in the mind of Śakra, that fortunate one, dear (to Indra), stayed in the city of Indra as long as her bones remained in Gaṅgā, O

Jaimini. A hundred crores (of the members of) her family lived in Indra's abode for that period. That divine beauty became the object of the friendship of those who were kings of kingdoms in heaven due to the power of their austerities.

95b-97a. O Jaimini, such a fruit is had due to a bath in Gaṅgā. The fruit of (i.e. got by) him who casts his body in Gaṅgā cannot be described. O Jaimini, as long as the dead body and the bones remain in Gaṅgā, till that time, i.e. for a hundred crores of kalpas she resided in the abode of the god.

97b-99a. O Jaimini, listen to the fruit obtained by a man whose dead body is tossed in Gaṅgā by her currents: He, lying on a golden bed, and fanned with the breezes of charming chowries by divine ladies, becomes happy.

99b-104. I shall tell you about the abode of him whose dead body is seen on the sandy bank of Gaṅgā heated by the rays of the sun: With his entire body smeared with divine fragrant substances and sandal he always sports with divine damsels in heaven. Listen to the fruit obtained by him whose body is seen torn by crows, vultures, herons, and (other) birds in (Gaṅgā) the mother of Bhīṣma: He, with his chest embraced by the stout, high, charming breasts of divine damsels, always sleeps on a bed in heaven. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the inexhaustible fruit from me who am telling it, which he who (i.e. whose body) is surrounded by ants, insects and flies and whose bones are seen to have fallen in Gaṅgā, obtains.

105-110. He, with the dust-particles on his feet removed by the ornaments on their crowns and being saluted with their heads by the hosts of gods, behaves in heaven like Indra for a long time. That man whose body falls into Gaṅgā even against his desire, is freed from all sins, and would become Viṣṇu. He whose charcoals (burnt parts of the body) are seen to be tossed by the water in Gaṅgā, would remain in heaven proportionately with the number of the charcoals for more than a hundred kalpas. Maybe all (kinds) of religious merit are exhausted. (But) when the body has fallen into Gaṅgā, the religious merit is never exhausted. What is the use of prolixity in this matter? The greatness of him who has cast his body in Gaṅgā is not (i.e. cannot be) known. That blessed man who, on the earth, sometime devoutly touches the water of Gaṅgā, 'destroying heaps of

very strong sins, crosses the fearful ocean of the (mundane) world and goes to the (other) shore in a boat of boundless pleasure.

CHAPTER NINE

The Greatness of Gaṅgā

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, tell me again the excellent greatness of Gaṅgā. Due to its sweetness I again desire to drink the nectar of the account of Gaṅgā.

Vyāsa said:

2-9a. That too I shall tell you since you are a devotee of Gaṅgā. Those feet of men (alone) are fruitful (i.e. meritorious) that go to the bank of Gaṅgā. Those (alone) are (fruitful) ears that hear the sound of the waves of Gaṅgā. That (alone) is the (fruitful) tongue which knows the various (kinds of) sweetness of her water. Those (alone) are the (fruitful) eyes that see the charming ripples of Gaṅgā. That is said to be the (fruitful) forehead which bears a vertical mark of the clay of Gaṅgā. Those (alone) are the (fruitful) hands that are intent on worshipping Gaṅgā. That (alone) is the (fruitful) body, giving the fruit of the four goals of human life, which has fallen into the pure water of Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa. All the manes of the dead ancestors, living in heaven, (seeing their son) going to the bank of Gaṅgā, and seeing her water are delighted, and praise it, O Jaimini, saying: “Formerly we have done religious merit for obtaining a good position; and it will be inexhaustible, since we have such a son. He has now gratified us with the water of Gaṅgā. We shall go to the highest abode which is difficult to be had even by gods.

9b-15. Those substances which our son will offer to us and into Gaṅgā, will, all of them, be inexhaustible for us.” So also the manes living in hell and full of all miseries, will, on seeing their son going to the bank of Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) speak thus: “Even by the grace of (our) son, all sins that we committed and

that give the torments in hell, will perish. All of us are freed from all the torments in hell, extremely difficult to bear. Now due to the grace of our son we shall reach the highest position." The manes of that man who having undertaken a pilgrimage returns home through folly, are disappointed, and all of them go (back) as they had come. While on pilgrimage to Gaṅgā, one should avoid (eating) flesh, coitus, a swing, a horse, an elephant, so also (using) shoes, an umbrella. The trouble due to the fatigue of the journey is not regarded as painful.

16-20. At the time of bath in Gaṅgā one should not remember the pleasure from *padma* (= a mode of coitus) (that is had) in the house. One should avoid, while on the pilgrimage to Gaṅgā, false speech and contact with heretics. (One should also avoid) eating twice (a day), a quarrel, censuring others, greed, pride, anger and jealousy. While on the pilgrimage to Gaṅgā one should also avoid laughing too much, and grief. One should look upon oneself, sleeping on the ground, as sleeping on a bed. While going along the path, a man should utter the good names of Gaṅgā. The greatness of goddess Jāhnavī destroys all sins. Uttering (the name of Gaṅgā) giving happiness and liberation he goes along the path. "O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother of the world, present yourself to me."

21-27. With these gentle words he should remove his fatigue. "Oh, how I left my house; how I came here after (so much) exertion". He who would speak like this, does not have the complete fruit of it (i.e. the pilgrimage). Those men who, overcome by such sorrowful thoughts as: "Where is my bed? Where is my wife? Where is my friend? Where is my house? I am sleeping on the ground on this desolate road. How have I come here? What is the position of the things like wealth and grains in my house? After how many days shall I go back to my house?", go along the path, do not have the entire fruit of the bath in Gaṅgā, O brāhmaṇa. "O Gaṅgā, this pilgrimage is undertaken to reach your bank. O best river, due to your favour I shall succeed in it without any obstacle." Having uttered this hymn, especially at the time of the pilgrimage, he, with delight, should go from his house along with devotees of Viṣṇu, O Jaimini. He should not go with a great speed, nor very slowly.

28-30. The wise ones should not undertake any other work

during the pilgrimages to Gaṅgā. Half of the religious merit of him who carries on trade, business etc. on the bank of Gaṅgā or at Prayāga, perishes. "All my sins, small or great, committed in existence after existence will perish due to the favour of the goddess Gaṅgā." Saying so, a wise one, being very much delighted, should go to the bank of Gaṅgā.

31-35a. Seeing mother Gaṅgā, he should utter this hymn: "Today my existence is fruitful, today my life is well-lived, (since) with my eyes I am actually seeing you of the nature of Brahman, O goddess; just by seeing you the sin of me, a great sinner, produced during crores of existences, has perished." Speaking like this, he, full of devotion, should salute goddess Jāhnavī, by dropping his body (i.e. by prostrating himself) on the ground. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, he, with the palms of his hands joined, with devotion and being very much delighted, should again utter this hymn:

35b-41. "O Gaṅgā, O goddess, O mother of the world, I am touching your water with my feet. Being pleased, pardon this fault of mine. O auspicious one, your water is a staircase for going up to the heaven. Therefore, I am touching it with my feet. O Gaṅgā, O goddess. I repeatedly salute you." Then the wise one, devoutly carrying the Gaṅgā-water on his head, should, saying 'Gaṅgā', enter the stream (of Gaṅgā). "I smear my body with your mud, very soft and destroying all sins. O mother, remove my sin." With his body smeared with the mud of Gaṅgā, and uttering (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', he should bathe in Gaṅgā, destroying all sins. Then again taking the clay to the accompaniment of the hymn mentioned before, and again taking the clay to the accompaniment of the hymn that will be told (now) he should devoutly bathe.

42-43. "O Gaṅgā, O you of the nature of Brahman, I am bathing in your pure water. Give me the fruit told (in the holy texts)." Then, O brāhmaṇa, the wise one, remembering Gaṅgā, Nārāyaṇa, should, as he wishes, bathe in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world.

44. Having thus bathed in Gaṅgā, he should clean his body with (a piece of) cloth. He should not drop the water from the clothes to be worn into Gaṅgā.

45-46. A wise man should not brush his teeth in Gaṅgā. If

he does so through folly, he would not obtain the religious merit due to the water of Gaṅgā. Having done that act of brushing the teeth etc. in the morning somewhere else, he should abandon the garment worn during the night, and then should bathe in Gaṅgā.

47-48. He who without going to an external land would bathe in Gaṅgā, would also not obtain the full fruit of the bath in Gaṅgā. Having bathed, the wise one should place sectarian marks of clay at various places (on his body). Then with a steady mind he should present libations of water to the manes etc.

49-50. The manes of him who offers them libations of the water of Gaṅgā, are gratified for a period of a hundred crores of years. The manes of him who offers śrāddha to them on Gaṅgā, live pleased in the abode of gods (i.e. heaven), O best brāhmaṇa.

51-52. Observing a fast, and having performed rites like a bath etc. in Gaṅgā, he should then do acts like giving gifts, worshipping deities, (shouting) 'victory (to Gaṅgā)', which being done in Gaṅgā do not perish. Fasting and finishing the rites like bathing in Gaṅgā, he should perform the five major sacrifices (viz. *brahma-*, *pitṛ-*, *deva-*, *bhūta-*, and *nṛ-yajña*) and should worship Gaṅgā.

53-58. A wise man should bathe the image of goddess Gaṅgā, so also of Śrī Viṣṇu with the divine water of a cocoanut. In the absence of the image of Gaṅgā, he should recollecting Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) in his heart, put the cocoanut-water into the Gaṅgā-water. He should (then) devoutly worship (the images of) Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu with divine fragrant substances, bright lamps full of ghee, fragrant incense, many beautiful flowers, many very ripe fruits, excellent offerings of eatables, water for washing the feet, respectful offerings, water for rinsing the mouth with, tāmbūlas with khadira, so also with other special presents, with various eulogies, and with offerings of eatables. Then the wise one should devoutly go three times round the image of the goddess that is worshipped and (that of) Viṣṇu, the highest lord, keeping them to his right.

59-60. Then the wise one making a solemn vow through physical acts, mind and speech as "O sinless one, O daughter of Jahnu, remaining without food (today) I shall eat food the next

day (i.e. tomorrow); be my refuge", he being extremely delighted should keep awake at night after having controlled his sleep.

61-62. If the wise one is too weak to eat fruits only, then, O greatest brāhmaṇa, he should eat (very) little food, but should not have a (full) meal. O Jaimini, having worshipped (the images of) Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu in the morning, he should give presents to a brāhmaṇa according to his wealth.

63-65. "O best river, may all that—the worship, the keeping awake before you—be faultless through your favour." Speaking like this, saluting her (i.e. Gaṅgā) and having performed his daily rites, the brāhmaṇa himself should break his fast along with his relatives. O dear, listen to the fruit from me who am telling it, of the religious merit of him who thus observes the holy fast on the bank of Gaṅgā.

66-68. He is freed from sins committed during other (i.e. former) existences. He, having Viṣṇu's form and reaching Viṣṇu's city, rejoices (there) with Viṣṇu. Living in Viṣṇu's city for thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas, he enjoys all prosperity, very difficult to be obtained. Then by Viṣṇu's order he goes to Brahmā's world. In Brahmā's world he enjoys prosperity which is very difficult to be had even by gods.

69-70. Living in Brahmā's world for that much period (i.e. thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas), he, then, getting into a beautiful chariot, goes to Śiva from Brahmā's abode. There he enjoys pleasures of various kinds, which are extremely difficult to be had. He also gets the headship of Śiva's attendants. What is the use of speaking many other words?

71-78a. Then that meritorious man, after living in Śiva's abode for that much period (i.e. thousands of crores of kalpas and hundreds of crores of kalpas), would, as it were, another Indra, go to Indra's world. Then he would remain on the same seat with that virtuous (god). Having enjoyed there all his desired objects for a period of a hundred crores of kalpas, he would, like another Moon, go to the Sun's world from there. Having enjoyed nectar there, near the Moon, he would become a sovereign emperor after again having come to the earth. Having protected the earth for a long time and having conquered all his enemies,

he would, at the end of his life (-span), happily meet death in Gaṅgā. Again he, the very glorious one, himself getting into an aeroplane, goes to the city of the lord, difficult to be reached even by deities. Having enjoyed all pleasures there for four ages of Manus, he securing the highest knowledge, would obtain liberation, difficult to be secured. There is no doubt that even he who would meet death on the path when he is on his pilgrimage to Gaṅgā would go to the highest abode.

78b-84a. On the earth there was a religious and sweet-speaking king named Satyadharma during the junction of Tretā and Dvāpara yugas. The queen of that king was Vijayā by name. She was beautiful, of good character, and highly devoted to the service of her husband. Having enjoyed for seven thousand years this earth, he whose time of death had come sometime died along with his wife. Then the couple, causing fear, tied by Yama's soldiers went to Yama's abode along a painful path. Seeing them Dharmarāja also said to Citragupta: "O Citragupta, consider all acts of these two." O Jaimini, Citragupta, being (thus) ordered by him, considered their acts from the beginning, and with the palms of his hands joined, spoke:

Citragupta said:

84b-85. O king, listen. I am telling all the acts of these two. Listen, I am also telling the remedy against their ill-luck (due to) whatever good or bad act they did on the earth.

86-88. Once, O competent one, a deer frightened by tigers, came from the forest to save its life, to his assembly. Seeing it coming, he, being very curious, got up and quickly struck on its hip with his sword. The king struck the deer even though it had sought his shelter. Therefore, O lord, this king, along with his wife, should be punished by you.

89-96. There is no doubt that he, along with crores and crores of members of his family, would reside in hell for as many thousands of ages and hundreds of ages of Manu as the number of hair on his body. Listen to the religious merit of the wise one who with (i.e. at the cost of) even his life and wealth protects him who has sought his shelter. Freed from all sins, chief among them being a brāhmaṇa's murder, he would at the end (of the

span) of his life go to liberation difficult to be attained even by meditating saints.

Then by Yama's order, his messengers put the king with his wife in a very painful hell where the trees have leaves as sharp as swords. Since the leaves of the trees there resemble swords, the wise call it Asipatravana. Then living in that Asipatravipina (hell) for hundreds of crores of Yugas, he, along with his wife resorted to the hell called Vyāghrabhakṣya. (One) who enters that hell full of all troubles, would be a prey of tigers. Therefore, it is known as Vyāghrabhakṣya.

97-99a. The king, along with his wife, stayed there for thousands of crores of yugas, and at the end of his sins was born, after having gone to the earth, in the stock of frogs. The two, the male frog and the female frog, remembering their (former) births, were very much pained. Always eating insects, they lived on a bank (of a river). Once, finding (i.e. on) an auspicious day (some) men were going along the path to the bank of Jāhnavī. O brāhmaṇa, the two (frogs) saw them.

The frog said:

99b-102. Due to all those sinful acts I did due to my ignorance, even now pain does not abandon us. Casting their bodies into Gaṅgā, even the sinners would be freed. Yet, how can we experience such a kind of unhappiness? Now I desire to cast this body (of me) into Gaṅgā. O dear one, tell me, what is the remedy? I desire to cross the ocean of agony.

The female frog, having heard his words, spoke politely:

The female frog said:

103-105a. O lord, it is not possible to bear this agony. Do so quickly.

O brāhmaṇa, the couple, then, remembering Gaṅgā, giver of auspicious things, was delighted and at once undertook the pilgrimage in order to die. A poisonous, fearful deadly serpent saw them, hungry for a long time, going along the path.

The deadly serpent said:

105b-112. O sinful frogs, you, whose time of death has come, have arrived. Therefore, you should be eaten by me who am hungry.

Then the unhappy, very much frightened couple spoke with reverence to the deadly serpent, that was in front of them, these words: "In our heart, O serpent, there is not the slightest fear of death. Formerly, I was a king called Satyadharma on the earth. This was my queen named Vijayā. Through temptation I, a wicked one, resorted to her(?) Due to that act I experienced pain for a long time in the abode of Yama. To undergo the remaining (fruit of) my act I went to (i.e. was born in) the stock of frogs along with my wife. The act done by a sinner does not leave (him). O serpent, we truly desire to go to the highest abode. We are going to the bank of Gaṅgā to cast our bodies (into her). O serpent, give up your indiscrimination, causing torment in the hell. How much pleasure will you have by devouring us?

113-116. Viṣṇu dwells in our heart. (In the same way) Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) dwells in your heart also. Therefore, what enmity do we have with you, O serpent? The wise should never harm a living being. If it is done, then it is the Destiny that brings it about. Giving harm to men (i.e. causing them to commit harm) the wicked Destiny itself would take away (their) life, sons, wives, riches and glory. What is the use of mutterings (of names of deities), austerities, (giving) gifts, or sacrifices to him in whose heart the two letters 'hiṁ-sā' (i.e. harm) always remain?

117-118. That man who harms a living being just harms Viṣṇu (also). The revered lord of Lakṣmī lives in the bodies of all living beings. Lord Viṣṇu, having created himself in many ways, plays like a child in the pleasure-house of the mundane existence.

119-122. The body of a sentient being is the abode of the highest soul. Viṣṇu himself is the highest soul. Therefore, one should avoid doing harm. By destroying another's life one's own pleasure is had. (But) one's pleasure would be momentary (while) another would lose his life. This is the wonderful behaviour of people on the earth: Killing another person with great effort they

bring about their own pleasure. An intelligent one never knows himself.

123-127a. He should think in his mind: 'I am Viṣṇu. He is (also) Viṣṇu.' He, who, in this worldly existence, is pained due to another man's agony and is happy on his happiness, should be known to be actually Viṣṇu himself. Fie upon the happiness of the men deceived by delusion, and the happiness which would be had by causing harm to another (being), O serpent! Men soon get the fruits of those pleasures and pains which are given by them to a living being on the earth. Therefore, O serpent, give up (doing) harm, and be happy. When you are pleased, we shall go to the other shore of the ocean of unhappiness."

The serpent said:

127b-133a. When there would not¹ (?) indeed be a major sin (involved) in killing others, then Oh, how (i.e. why) has the Creator created those that are the preys and those that eat them? You have told the truth that harm should not be done to others. But in the case of all preys harm is not involved. Viṣṇu is of a universal form. It is the truth. There is no doubt about it. He himself has created the union of the prey and the one who eats it. He himself creates himself and himself protects himself. He himself eats himself. Such is the creation of Viṣṇu. Am I able to kill you? The creator of the form of Death, Viṣṇu himself, has sent me for this mission. That god who created you, and who always protects you, and who is of the nature of Death today kills you making me the instrument.

Vyāsa said:

133b-141. Then the serpent ate up (the couple of frogs), which was uttering, through great hunger, (the words) 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā', on the path. These two persons at every step obtained the great fruit of horse-sacrifices in their pilgrimage to the bank of the Gaṅgā. Therefore, these two noble ones have (the credit of) many horse-sacrifices. None is like them, since (even) I have

1. The word '*na*' (not) is redundant as it gives a sense not intended in the context.

performed (only) a hundred sacrifices. Indra, in his own authority depending upon another came (there) on foot with materials of worship in his hand and surrounded by gods. The beauties like Rambhā and Urvaśī, proud of their youth, said to one another: “This very handsome man of taste, the best among the meritorious, has come. With my service I shall bring him under my influence.” Someone said to someone else: “I know all arts. Therefore, only I shall be the beloved of this king.” Someone said to someone else: “Even your Indra is under my influence. Then what wonder is there that this king also will be under my influence?”

142-149. “This one is my husband. This one is my lord. This one is my master. This one is my protector.” Thus all the women, appreciating good qualities, said with great delight. O brāhmaṇa, hearing these various (talks) of them, a virtuous, appreciative woman said: “This king has taken that charming one (viz. Vijayā) belonging to Sudāsa as his wife. O ladies, (then) what is the use of quarrelling?” Then, O brāhmaṇa, those beauties, adorned with all ornaments, gave up quarrelling, and came there delighted at heart. They then worshipped that king with his sin vanished, and along with wife with (i.e. by giving him) water for washing his feet etc. Indra then spoke (to him) thus. Indra put him, along with his wife, into the chariot (decorated) with flowers. Heaven was full of noise with the sounds of kettle-drums, tabors, melodious small drums, and large drums, so also with the sounds of bracelets and clappings, and the shouts of victory given by gods. He, fanned with the breezes produced from white chowries in the charming hands of the divine ladies, and seated in a chariot with his wife, went to heaven. Then the god Indra, fearing destruction, gave that king Satyadharma half of his seat.

150-152. Due to Viṣṇu’s compassion, that king, sitting on the same seat with Indra, acted as Indra in heaven. Enjoying all pleasures for thousands of crores of yugas he got into a chariot by the lord’s order, and went to Vaikuṇṭha. Having enjoyed all charming pleasures there for a Manu period, and having obtained the highest knowledge there, he, with his wife, obtained liberation.

153-159. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you the entire fruit of this kind of (i.e. got by) him who casts his body while going on a pilgrimage along the bank of Gaṅgā. Philosophers, great sages

like Nārada, have not declared any restriction as regards time on going to the bank of Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa, whenever a man would bathe in Gaṅgā, he certainly obtains inexhaustible religious merit. It is certain that Gaṅgā destroys all sins. If a man repeatedly commits sins, Gaṅgā does not purify him. O people, if you desire beatitude, then, giving up wicked thoughts, bathe in Gaṅgā, the mother of the world. By means of which very difficult acts do men get that religious merit which they would have by means of a bath in Gaṅgā? It is possible (for a man) to count the number of sharp showers and dust particles on the earth. (But) O brāhmaṇa, he cannot narrate the merits of Gaṅgā.

160-161. Having considered all your holy texts I say: “A man gets liberation after bathing (just) once in the water of Gaṅgā. Even he who, thinking of the lord of gods, and of Gaṅgā, destroying the mass of the affliction of all the afflicted ones, and the fear of sins, bathes in the water of a well, is freed from the masses of all sins like the murder of a cow, and due to the favour of Gaṅgā, O brāhmaṇa, he would go to Viṣṇu’s city, giving all pleasures.”

CHAPTER TEN

The Efficacy of Campaka Flower

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, through your grace I have heard this (description of the) greatness of Gaṅgā. Now, I desire to listen to the fruit of Viṣṇu’s worship.

Vyāsa said:

2-3. O dear, listen to the excellent fruit of the worship of the lord of Lakṣmī, hearing which all men obtain excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the rules according to which the Eternal One should be worshipped in the twelve months like Māgha. I shall (now) tell them.

4-8. When the auspicious month of Māgha, the best of all months, comes, the best devotee of Viṣṇu should give up (eating) flesh and coitus. He should everyday bathe in the morning; he should also avoid (the use of) oils; he should avoid taking food twice (a day) and also the food of others in the month of Māgha. A man, wearing a white garment, should, with a firm mind, begin worshipping Viṣṇu in the morning after having performed the five major sacrifices (viz. *brahmayajña* etc.). With lukewarm, pure water he should give bath to (the image of) the immutable Viṣṇu. He should besmear the parts of the body (of the image) of Viṣṇu with loose (i.e. soft) sandal. He should worship these of the lord of the world, the chief of gods, the Disc-holder. He should dry the vessels that are washed.

9-11. Having bathed (the image of) the lord of the world with lukewarm water, he should carefully dry his body with a divine garment. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell about the fruit which he who bathes (the image of) Viṣṇu with lukewarm water in the month of Māgha, gets. Freed from all sins committed in former existences, he enjoys all pleasure in this world, and (to enjoy) the remaining pleasure he goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

12-14. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who, after having washed the vessels and having purified them with water, would worship the (image of) the lord of the world. Free from all diseases, he, enjoying all desired objects here (i.e. in this world), would finally dwell for thousands of yugas in Viṣṇu's abode. In the morning and in the entire evening a devotee of Viṣṇu should place a smokeless, burning fire in front of (the image of) the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

15-19. Listen to the fruit of, i.e. obtained by, that devotee of Viṣṇu, who would burn fire in the morning and in the evening before (the image of) Viṣṇu in the month of Māgha to keep off cold. He, along with his sons and grandsons, enjoys all desired objects in this world, and in the end goes to Viṣṇu's city, difficult to be reached even by deities. As is his soul (to him) so is Viṣṇu. There is no doubt about this. A man should keep away cold from (the image of) Viṣṇu sleeping on the bed as he keeps away cold from himself. What does the best god, being pleased, not give to him who would bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with milk during the month of Māgha? In the same way he

should remove the cold (of the image) of the Disc-holder with a divine garment.

20-26. I shall tell the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who would worship (the image of) Viṣṇu after bathing him (it) with cocoanut water and milk in the month of Māgha. He, having lifted up a crore of men of his family sinking due to their own acts in the ocean of hell, difficult to cross, goes to the position of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). O best brāhmaṇa, especially during the worship of Viṣṇu on the fifth day of the bright half in the month of Māgha, so also on the Ekādaśī day and the fifth day¹ (in the dark fortnight) rice boiled in milk along with a lamp should be offered to Mura's enemy, the god of gods along with (his spouse) Lakṣmī. O Jaimini, O devotee of Viṣṇu, I shall tell you about the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who, everyday in the month of Māgha, offers rice boiled in milk along with incense to the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). (Please) listen. Having at the end (of his life) gone to Viṣṇu's city, he enjoys (there) charming pleasures for four periods of Manu due to the grace of the Disc-holder. Again having come to the earth he would be a sovereign emperor. (There) he enjoys pleasures for a very long time and when dead (i.e. after death) goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

27-29. O Jaimini, a devotee of Viṣṇu, who is unable to give (rice boiled in milk) to the enemy of Mura on the fifth day, the seventh day or the eleventh day, should offer him best food. O best brāhmaṇa, the bright half is especially superior to the dark half. On the days (mentioned above) of the bright half one should give food to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is not difficult to be attained by him who would give rice boiled in milk along with cakes to Viṣṇu, the conqueror of demons, at least on one day in Māgha.

30-33. There is no doubt that whatever is offered by a man to please a brāhmaṇa in the month of Māgha, would be inexhaustible for him. O brāhmaṇa, there is no destruction of the (fruit of the) act, good or bad, done in the month of Māgha, even after hundreds of ages of Manu. He who would worship Viṣṇu with campaka flowers in the month of Māgha would, after being freed from all sins, go to the highest abode. He stays in

1. The reading should have been '*saptamyām*' in place of '*pañcamyām*', as it rightly occurs in line 27a below.

Viṣṇu's abode for as many thousand yugas as the number of campaka flowers offered to Viṣṇu by him.

34-37. That fruit which is (obtained) by giving gold equal (in weight) to Meru, is obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu with (only) one campaka flower. O best brāhmaṇa, a campaka flower is always dear to Viṣṇu. Especially in the month of Māgha it is pure and dear to Viṣṇu. He who has not worshipped Viṣṇu with divine campaka flowers, would be without gems, without gold etc. in every birth. I am specially telling you the fruit of (the offering of) a campaka flower. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to it, the excellent one, along with its history.

38-44. O brāhmaṇa, a king named Suvarṇa, knowing all holy texts, became powerful in the entire Āryāvarta¹ due to his vigour. O brāhmaṇa sage, he, mad with royal glory, knowledge and youth, was always engaged in sins. By the words of his heretic ministers, he, through his greed for money, punished the good (even) without their fault, O brāhmaṇa. He, without sacrifices and gifts (i.e. who did not perform sacrifices and give gifts), surrounded by music and musical instruments squandered all the wealth obtained unjustly. He, always deluded by sins, did not support his kinsmen, did not feed deities and brāhmaṇas, and did not gratify the suppliants. He, always attached to sins, never honoured a guest. That king, the abode of sins, everyday went (away) from a temple. Was anyone among the indiscriminate ones able to count, even for hundreds of years, the other sins which he had committed?

45-52. Once that wicked-hearted king, deluded by lust, went to a prostitute's house at night. Seeing the king coming, (the prostitute) named Ujjvalā, suddenly getting up from the bed saluted him. Having washed his pair of feet with water from a golden pitcher, she, embracing the king with her arms, seated him on the bed. That king, sprinkled with the streams of the nectar of her love, and being curious remained on that bed. Then that harlot who was quite young, herself gave, with a smile, campaka flowers to the king. A flower from the garland of

1. Āryāvarta: Abode of the noble or the excellent (Āryas). Name of the region extending from the eastern to the western sea, and bounded on the north and south by the Himālaya and the Vindhya respectively.

flowers dropped on the ground from the hand of the king, and pervaded the atmosphere with its fragrance. Seeing the flower that had fallen down, the king, through great confusion said (the words) '*Namo Nārāyaṇāya* (salutation to Nārāyaṇa)' preceded by the syllable '*Om*'. All the sins of the king perished due to (his having uttered) the word 'Nārāyaṇa' and due to the offering of the campaka flower.

53-58. All the villagers also gathered there and killed him that night in the prostitute's invincible house. Yama, who was very angry, sent his servants to take the king, the greatest sinner (to his abode). The messengers ordered by him, with their eyes red due to anger and having nooses and mallets in their hands came there very speedily. Yama's messengers exerted to take him to their abode. Then Nārāyaṇa's (i.e. Viṣṇu's) servants holding conches, discs and maces, and mounted upon Garuḍa came to take the king (to Viṣṇu's abode). Seeing the king bound by a noose, the very powerful servants of Viṣṇu struck Yama's messengers with discs and maces. Putting him into a divine chariot, they blew excellent conches.

59-61. Then the king who had got in the chariot, who was adorned with tulasī (leaves and) flowers, who had put on yellow silken garments, who was adorned with golden ornaments, who was being praised by hosts of sages, masters of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who was surrounded by Viṣṇu's messengers, came to Viṣṇu's world. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu himself got up, embraced the king with his four long arms and said to him:

The lord said:

62-65. O king, O best among all meritorious souls, tell (me) about (your) welfare. Now let us know what still remains to be attained by you. I always look after him who would even once say: 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa.' He is my brother; he is my father. I accomplish all the desired objects, like a father to his son, of the man who would sometime remember my name 'Nārāyaṇa'. O best king, you are my devotee. Therefore, disclose your desire. What wonderful object shall I give you now?

The king said:

66-73a. O ocean of pity, you have undoubtedly given (me)

everything. Even a sinner like me has reached your inaccessible place.

By these words of him Lakṣmī's lord was pleased, and he affectionately made him sit. Listen to it (i.e. that account). He, full of pity, himself adorned him with golden ornaments fashioned by Viśvakarman. Viṣṇu, the extremely tolerant one, gratified the king with various kinds of eatables, very difficult to be had even by the divine ones. In this way the king lived in Viṣṇu's abode everyday for thousands of Manu's ages and nine hundred years. The righteous king protected his subjects. With great devotion he always worshipped Viṣṇu with charming campaka flowers and various kinds of offerings of eatables. When the span of his life was over the king died in the water of Gaṅgā and obtained liberation by the grace of Viṣṇu.

Vyāsa said:

73b-78. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you this efficacy of campaka flowers. Sinful persons have been liberated after worshipping Viṣṇu with campaka flowers. O brāhmaṇa sage, revered Viṣṇu, worshipped with a full-blown campaka flower gives the highest position in a short time. Those who worship the highest soul intentionally or even without an intention are freed from all sins, and they also go to the highest position. When Viṣṇu is pleased, nobody is a sinner, since that king, even though he had committed a sin, crossed this deep worldly ocean through Viṣṇu's favour and attained liberation. That man who, abandoning sin, would, with devotion and great respect, worship Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), having large eyes like lotus-petals, with divine, fragrant campaka flowers would go (to Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

*The Rules of Viṣṇu Worship**Vyāsa said:*

1-8. O Jaimini, O brāhmaṇa sage, I (shall) tell you the mode in which Viṣṇu should always be worshipped. Listen to it attentively. A wise man, having got up from his bed in the morning and taking a pot (full) of water, and covering his head with (a piece of) cloth, should go to a place outside (the town). There, the wise man, keeping mum, putting the sacred thread on his ear, should sit in the northern direction and urinate and excrete. He should not urinate or excrete in a temple of a deity, on the way, in cowpens, places where four roads meet, on the main road, in a ploughed soil, at the root of darbhas, in a courtyard, on the sandy bank of a river, at the root of a fig tree standing on a sacred spot, so also in a forest, in lakes and wells. A wise man should urinate and excrete till he does not see the sun, the moon, brāhmaṇas and the ten quarters. To cleanse himself he should not take the clay from inside the holes dug by mice etc. or (from) ploughed soil. A wise man should purify himself with water after bringing it from (a place of) water. A wise man does not purify himself by keeping his foot in water.

9-10. A wise man should answer the nature's call at night by facing the south. Covering his head with (a piece of) cloth he should answer the nature's call. A wise man should apply one (layer of) clay to his organ of generation, three (layers) to his anus, seven to his left hand, and ten to both the hands.

11-21. The wise should apply six (layers of) clay to both the feet. A wise man should brush his teeth after having (thus) purified himself. The cleansing of the teeth along with that of the lips etc. should be done. He should not brush his teeth by facing the south or the west. If he would do so, he would be a resident of hell. O brāhmaṇa, he should brush his teeth with the middle finger or the ring-finger or the thumb but never with the forefinger. A wise man should not brush his teeth with a twig of aśvattha or fig tree or of dhātri tree; so also with that of devadāru or asura tree (for by doing so) the entire fruit of his daily rites perishes. O Jaimini, the manes of him, so also gods and

divine sages, being disappointed with him who brushes his teeth at the time of his bath go (away). The deities do not accept the worship of (i.e. offered by) him, and the manes do not accept the (libations of) water of (i.e. offered by) him who brushes his teeth in the noon or the afternoon. He who brushes his teeth at the time of his bath in a lake, should be known to be a cāṇḍāla till he sees Gaṅgā. The manes of him who brushes his teeth after the revered sun has risen, eat that stick with which he brushes his teeth and being grieved, go (away). A man brushing his teeth on a fast day or a śrāddha day does not get the fruit of it (i.e. of the fast or the śrāddha), O brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, he should clean his teeth in the morning and his tongue with (a piece of) cloth. He should have twelve rinsings with water.

22-24. O Jaimini, the man who brushes his teeth in this manner on a fast day or the day of (offering of) śrāddha to the manes, gets the entire fruit. Doing the purification in this manner, the wise one should go into his house and abandon the night-garment. Then the wise, pure one, seated at the door of the chamber of the deity should remember the infinite god, the highest lord, Viṣṇu.

25-30. 'O Rāma, O you of a dark body, O Viṣṇu, O Nārāyaṇa, O you full of pity, O Janārdana, O you abode of the world, O Keśava, remove my sin. O you wearing a yellow garment, O infinite one, O Padmanābha, O you full of the world, O Vāmana, O god, O lord, be the refuge of him who has sought your shelter. O Dāmodara, O greatest of the Yadus, O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, O ocean of pity, O lotus-eyed one, O lord of gods, O Vāsudeva, favour me. O Garuḍa-bannered one, O Govinda, O supporter of all, O holder of the mace, O you having the conch in your hand, O you having the disc in your hand, O you having a lotus in your hand, remove (my) calamities. O you pleasure of Lakṣmī, O Viṣṇu, O Hṛṣīkeśa, O best of gods, O Puruṣottama, O enemy of Kāṁsa, O enemy of Kaiṭabha, remove (my) fear. O Śrīpati (i.e. lord of Lakṣmī), O Śrīdhara, O lord, O Śrīda, O Śrīkara, O Mādhava, O highest Brahman, O highest abode, O immutable one, be my refuge.'

31. O best brāhmaṇa, having thus remembered Viṣṇu, the wise man with the palms of his hands joined, having gone into the house, speaks like this:

32-35. 'O god, O Śrīpati, O Kṛṣṇa, O son of Devakī, O lord, O master of the world, abandon your sleep. It is the morning time.' Then the wise man should think in his mind that Devakī's son along with Lakṣmī is seated on the bed after having given up sleep. Then the devotee of Viṣṇu should give to Kṛṣṇa, a divine, covered pot full of water for washing his face. The intelligent ones serve the highest lord as servants serve their master for their livelihood.

36. O brāhmaṇa sage, the desired object of him who serves the lord of the world as his servant, is soon accomplished.

37-39. As the servants serve their master through fear, so the wise ones always serve Viṣṇu, the lord. O brāhmaṇa, he who, being fearless, serves him with this desire of him, is just a bad servant. He would not be (a devotee). Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, a man desiring final beatitude, should always render service to the lord of Lakṣmī.

40-44. In the morning a devotee of Viṣṇu should take off from the body of Viṣṇu (i.e. his image) the used flowers, the garment worn during the night, and stale sandal also. Then the wise man should himself sweep the temple. He should slowly clean it with a broom. That man would live in Viṣṇu's house for as many hundred periods of Manu as the number of particles of dust that go out of the temple. Even a murderer of a brāhmaṇa, who sweeps the temple of Viṣṇu, goes to the highest position. What is the use of saying much? He should smear the temple with wool and cowdung. In that temple a wise man should recollect Viṣṇu.

45-51. O Jaimini, I shall tell you in brief about the religious merit of him who smears Viṣṇu's temple. Listen to it. He would happily live in Viṣṇu's house for as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles that perish (i.e. are removed). One who sweeps and smears Viṣṇu's temple obtains the highest abode. Then what to say about him who knows how to worship the lord? When due to a calamity due to Indra he is not able to do it himself, then he should appoint his wife in Viṣṇu's temple. Or he should appoint his devoted son of good character, or his brother or sister in the god's temple. He should himself very carefully wash the things (needed) for Viṣṇu's worship with pure water seven times or three times. There is no doubt that copper vessels are

purified with acid, the vessels of bell-metal are purified with ash, and iron-vessels with fire.

52. Viṣṇu is not pleased with a rich man who bathes Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, with water in an iron pot.

53. If (he does so) through ignorance, he is purified by means of a bath in Gaṅgā. O best brāhmaṇa, in prosperity (i.e. when one is wealthy) one should always follow a rule.

54-62a. It is laid down in the holy texts that there is no rule in adversity. O best brāhmaṇa, when a conch which is carefully washed, touches the ground, it becomes pure after washing it a hundred times. Having in this way carefully washed the materials for worship, he should take materials for his bath and should go to a lake. If he comes home without taking a bath, the hosts of his manes do not accept the libations offered by him on that day. That man who foolishly puts in an obstacle for him who goes for bathing or for taking a meal, would be a resident of hell. There is no doubt that the manes of him who, having gone to a lake for a bath, would urinate or excrete (there) would eat urine and feces. Then having bathed and offered libations according to the rules, a wise man, remembering Viṣṇu, should come home. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the best brāhmaṇa after having washed both his feet in the courtyard should enter the temple of the deity. The religious merit earned during a year, of him who would enter the temple without washing his feet, perishes that moment only.

62b-67. Therefore, a wise man, having come after having bathed, should wash his feet in the courtyard and then enter the temple of the deity. Having sat down, the wise man should wash the pair of his feet with his left hand. Then he should carefully wash both his hands, O brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī certainly abandons the fool who washes one of his feet with another or with his right hand. Then the intelligent one, having sat down, and with full concentration should commence the worship of Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects. After sitting upon a pure seat of deer-hide or tiger-hide, or merely on a cloth-seat, or also on the seat of darbhas or of flowers, he should worship Lakṣmī's lord.

68-79. A learned brāhmaṇa should never worship Viṣṇu (after sitting) on a wooden seat. 'O Earth, you are held by Viṣṇu,

you sustain all people. Therefore, O you who bear everything, give me an excellent seat to stay.' Speaking like this the worshipper of Viṣṇu should sit on the seat after spreading it out. He should never worship Viṣṇu by facing the South. Having poured water very fragrant and purified with a hymn into a conch, he should bathe the master, Lakṣmī's lord, along with Lakṣmī. O best brāhmaṇa, Jaimini, I shall tell you the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who bathes (the image of) the revered Janārdana with (water from) a conch. Listen. Being free from the sins of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, a cow, a woman, or of causing abortion or drinking liquor, he goes to Vaikuṇṭha, and (there) enjoys all pleasures. O brāhmaṇa, if a man on seeing (the image of) Viṣṇu, would worship (it) him, he quickly obtains whatever (he desires) through the grace of Lakṣmī's lord. O best brāhmaṇa, a wise man should, in the absence of a conch, put the fragrant water and tulasī (leaves) in a pot, and should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu. Then having bathed (the image of the) god and having put (it) him on an excellent seat, he should smear his entire body with fragrant sandal. The man who treats the body of the Disc-holder with the mire of tulasī wood (tulasī-plant), has Viṣṇu always pleased with him. 'O lord of the world, this garland of tulasī leaves, giving pleasure by means of its fragrance is offered to you. Always be very well pleased.' O best brāhmaṇa, what does the great Viṣṇu, adorned with the garland of tulasī leaves to the accompaniment of this hymn, and pleased, not give? Then he should make the solemn observance with the hymns from the Veda.

80-89. The wise ones should then fix the directions with hymns from the Purāṇas: 'May Kṛṣṇa protect in the east. May Devakī's son protect in the south-east. May the enemy of demons protect in the south. May Madhusūdana protect in the south-west. May the Śrīmat (i.e. having Lakṣmī) protect in the intermediate directions. May Śrīdhara protect upwards. May the universal soul, of the form of the tortoise and full of pity protect from below. May all those who cause obstacles at the time of (Viṣṇu's) worship, go away, being struck by the missile of Viṣṇu's name.' Having thus fixed the directions he, bowing and with his palms joined, makes a solemn vow by means of the hymn to be told (hereafter): 'O god of gods, O Janārdana, make this wor-

ship commenced by me free from obstacles and successful. Be pleased, O highest god.' Having made a solemn vow (like this) a devotee of Viṣṇu, knowing everything, should assign the various parts of his body to different deities, and should meditate, with his heart on god Viṣṇu, resembling a fresh cloud, having eyes like lotuses, wearing a yellow garment, having a very charming, smiling face, adorned with the garlands of kadamba flowers, having very large arms, having ear-rings with the row of peacock's feathers on his head, deluding the ten directions with the sweet sound of his flute, surrounded by cowherdresses, and living in the charming Vṛndāvana. Having thus meditated upon the lord of gods, Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects, the devotee of Viṣṇu should then devoutly invoke him.

90-92a. The wise one should then offer water for washing his feet, materials of worship and water for sipping to Kṛṣṇa who is invoked and who grants the four goals of human life. The wise one should worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Devakī's son and the lord of all gods, with tender tulasī leaves or charming flowers.

92b-101. 'Salutations to Matsya (incarnation), to Kūrma incarnation. Repeated salutations to Varāha (incarnation). Salutation to you, Hari; repeated salutations to Vāmana. Salutation to the powerful Rāma, Rāma, Rāma. Repeated salutations to pure Buddha (the enlightened one), having pity. Salutation to you, Kalki; salutation to you of many forms. Salutation to you, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, the holder of the Śārṅga bow, to Dāmodara, to the lord, to the god of gods. Salutation to Hṛṣīkeśa, to Śānta (the tranquil one), to Vyomapāda (whose feet are extended in the heaven). Salutation to the lord of Lakṣmī. Salutation to (you) having lotus-like eyes. Salutation to you Ananta, to you having mace in your hand, to you, Garuḍa-bannered (one), to you having the disc in your hand. Repeated salutations to you having the lotus in your hand, to Acyuta. Salutation to you, the enemy of demons and giving all desired objects. I always salute Mādhava, Sureśa (lord of gods), Viṣṇu, the highest soul, the one having a crown and ear-rings. Salutation to you, the revered one.' The wise one (should) invoke Viṣṇu's vehicle called Garuḍa with the hymn: 'Salutation to Garuḍa. Salutation to (his) conch, to (his) disc. Repeated salutations to (his) mace. Repeated salutations to (his) lotus, to his sword Nandaka.'

102-104. Having thus worshipped the lord of gods along with his consort and vehicle and weapons, the wise one should repeat the eight-syllabled formula. The wise one having then devoutly repeated the eight-syllabled formula, should offer Viṣṇu many excellent eatables. The devotee of Viṣṇu should also offer god Viṣṇu incense, lamp, tām̐būla and other presents.

105. The desired object of him who would offer Viṣṇu excellent incense made fragrant with sandal and agaru, is accomplished quickly, O best brāhmaṇa.

106. O brāhmaṇa, he who offers Viṣṇu incense made fragrant with ghee, would, after being free from crores of sins, go to Viṣṇu's abode.

107. He who would offer Viṣṇu incense made fragrant with resin, goes to the highest abode, inaccessible even to gods.

108. Viṣṇu in a moment removes all the sins of him who offers him a lamp with ghee or sesamum oil.

109. O best brāhmaṇa, O Jaimini, he who would give a tām̐būla made fragrant with camphor to Viṣṇu, gets liberation.

110. He who gives a tām̐būla with khadira, ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's place after having enjoyed all pleasure here (i.e. in this world).

111. A man, after offering a tām̐būla with ṣaṣṭimadhurikā (?) and nutmeg to Viṣṇu, would obtain heaven.

112-113. O Jaimini, the devotee of Viṣṇu, should go round him (i.e. his image) after keeping water in a conch, to the accompaniment of the hymn which will be told (now). 'O Janār-dana, friend of the world, O you protector of those who seek your refuge, O lord, give me the status of the servant of the servant of your servant.'

114-119. O Jaimini, I shall tell you in brief the fruit of the religious merit of him who would go round (the image of) Viṣṇu with (i.e. repeating) this hymn. At every step of the going round (the image of) Viṣṇu sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and (other) major sins perish. For as many thousands of kalpas a man rejoices with Viṣṇu as the steps he would devoutly walk while going round Viṣṇu. When a man slowly walks step by step while going round Viṣṇu, he obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice at every step. A crore-fold greater fruit would be obtained by going round (the image of) Viṣṇu than the fruit (obtained by) go-

ing round all (other images) in the worldly existence. Even he who goes round himself in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu, gets the same fruit. What is the use of many other words?

120-123. An intelligent man, while going round (the Liṅga of) Śiva, should not cross the receptacle for receiving the water with which the Liṅga has been bathed. By crossing it (i.e. if a man crosses it) his worship (of Śiva) would be fruitless. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would even once go round Viṣṇu, would certainly become a sovereign emperor in every birth. O brāhmaṇa, he who would go round Viṣṇu twice, obtains Indra's position within three days. There is no doubt about this. The man who would go round (the image of) Viṣṇu twice, would enter, after being freed from all sins, Viṣṇu's body.

124-125. O Jaimini, he who after entering a temple, would wave a conch over (the image of) Viṣṇu, would be honoured by gods. The sin in the body of him who would salute (the image of) Viṣṇu (by prostrating himself) like a staff on the ground, is reduced to ash that moment only.

126. Lakṣmī's lord Viṣṇu gives him who would salute Janār-dana with his palms joined and placed on his head, the highest position.

127-129a. O brāhmaṇa sage, listen to the efficacy which I am telling, of the religious merit of those men who drop their entire body (i.e. prostrate themselves) on the ground and salute Viṣṇu. For as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles with which their bodies are decorated, these men stay with Viṣṇu. Then the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu are offered to the devotees of Viṣṇu.

129b-131. I shall tell you about these devotees of Viṣṇu. O best one, O Jaimini, listen. 'May Śuka, Sūta, so also Vyāsa, Nārada, sage Kapila, Prahlāda, Ambariṣa, so also Akrūra and Uddhava, Bibhiṣaṇa, Hanūmān, and other devotees of Viṣṇu also accept the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu, giving all desired objects.'

132-133. Saying so the devotee should drop on the ground the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu. Then he himself devoutly accepts the flowers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, he on whose head are seen the excellent flow-

ers taken off from (the image of) Viṣṇu, should be known to be actually Viṣṇu himself.

134-138. All deities take the offerings of eatables to Viṣṇu, and flowers taken off from (the image of) him, which are difficult to be had, and which destroy sins. Then what need one say about human beings? O Jaimini, all the sins remaining in the body of the devotee of Viṣṇu, who smells a tulasī leaf, perish. The diseases in the body of him, into whose nose the fragrance of a tulasī leaf enters, instantly perish. O best brāhmaṇa, joy always exists in the house of him who rejoices after smelling the fragrance of a tulasī leaf. A wise man, with his palms joined, having praised the lord of the world with eulogies, should recite this hymn:

139-140. 'O Nārāyaṇa, O you of the form of the world, O you lord of the world, go home. O god, go to your place. Always be pleased. O lord of the world, O you full of the world, may the worship which I offered according to my capacity be faultless through your grace.'

141. Then the wise one should devoutly take the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu, the highest soul, and destroying all sins.

142. He who carries (on his body) even a drop of water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, has bathed at all holy places. I have told you the truth.

143. He should touch the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. It would give him the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā, since the water of Gaṅgā is the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu.

144. For him who would touch the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet there is no untimely death nor any fear from a disease.

145-147. May even sinful men drink everyday the medicine of the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu for the destruction of their sins and diseases. O brāhmaṇa, the sin in the body of that man who would drink the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet perishes just in a moment. As by a medicine (the disease) in a human body is very much destroyed, in exactly the same way all the sin is destroyed by the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet.

148-149. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you about the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who would carry on his head the

pure water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet along with a tulasī leaf. He, freed from all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and assuming Viṣṇu's form, ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's city and rejoices with him.

150. A greater fruit would be obtained by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet than by giving gold equal to the measure of Meru (mountain).

151-154. A man who touches the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet obtains that fruit which men get by giving a crore of horses, or which one would get by giving the earth with the seven islands to brāhmaṇas. A greater fruit would be obtained by touching the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu than the one that would be (obtained) by performing thousands of horse-sacrifices. A man would get a bigger fruit by touching the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu than the religious merit declared (to be got) by giving a hundred wells. What is the use of speaking much in this matter? I shall tell it in brief.

155-160a. A man becomes free due to the touch of the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet. O best brāhmaṇa, I am repeatedly telling (this) firmly. He who touches the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, does not get rebirth. He who would devoutly eat the remnants of the eatables offered to Viṣṇu, which destroy all the sins, would go to the highest position. The body of him who, O best brāhmaṇa, eats the eatables offered to Viṣṇu, which are difficult to be had, abandons the sins even like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The land of liberation, difficult to be obtained even by deities like the greatest god, would be obedient to him like a maid, who eats the articles of food offered to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu soon takes him to his own body, who worships Viṣṇu without abandoning any of the eatables offered to Viṣṇu.

160b-169. How can I tell you the efficacy of the eatables offered to great Viṣṇu, on the enjoyer of which even Viṣṇu is dependent, O lord of brāhmaṇas? O brāhmaṇa, he who would devoutly offer excellent worship to Śrī Viṣṇu in this manner, even without the proper religious ceremony, every month, also would be dear to Viṣṇu, and would obtain the same fruit which he who knows the religious ceremony would get after performing the worship of Viṣṇu with the proper religious ceremony. O brāhmaṇa, O lord, if there is no devotion, then the lord would not be

pleased even if he is worshipped with many offerings of eatables. There is no doubt that one gets as much fruit as is his devotion to the god. That worship of Viṣṇu which men perform without devotion would be a worship at a wrong time, O best brāhmaṇa. Knowledge is the root of devotion. Devotion is the root of Viṣṇu. For the coming up of the liberation due to worship, the root is the propitiation of Viṣṇu. All that, even very little which a man does with faith, would be inexhaustible, O wise one; (for) every act is accompanied by faith. O brāhmaṇa, he who devoutly worships Viṣṇu even (with) little water, obtains the position of Viṣṇu, since Viṣṇu is dependent on his devotees.

170. O brāhmaṇa, this entire world is worthless. Worship of Viṣṇu is the only truth. Therefore, a man desiring his good should worship Kṛṣṇa of infinite forms.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Greatness of the Holy Fig Tree

Vyāsa said:

1-2. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu should everyday in (the month of) Phālguna devoutly worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa saluted by gods. Listen properly to the fruit which I shall tell, of (i.e. obtained by) him who would bathe Devakī's son with clarified butter in Phālguna.

3-6. He, having received the fruit of all sacrifices and of all gifts, and freed from all sins goes in the end to Viṣṇu's place. Having enjoyed pleasures in Viṣṇu's abode for thousands of crores of yugas, he, having obtained excellent knowledge, obtains liberation there only. He who offers, in winter, sweet-meat made of sesamum-seeds to Kṛṣṇa, of the form of a cowherd, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. He who would offer sweet balls made with ghee to Viṣṇu, the highest soul, would drink nectar in heaven for a period of hundreds of Manu's ages.

7-9. Viṣṇu, with his mind pleased, cuts off the bond of the mundane existence of him who offers pleasing candied sugar to

Viṣṇu, O Jaimini. O brāhmaṇa, a man should offer a beautiful fruit to the god. In the end he goes to Indra's city and would be honoured by gods. What does he who, the devoted one, would offer pure sugar to Kṛṣṇa, not obtain through Vāsudeva's grace, O brāhmaṇa?

10-12. Listen to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a very ripe, sweet, badari-fruit to Kṛṣṇa in the month of Phālguna? Along with his sons and grandsons he enjoys all pleasures here (i.e. in this world), and getting into a beautiful chariot, goes to Viṣṇu's abode in the end. A man should not give a badari-fruit with jaggery to Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, if, through ignorance, he would give it, he would be a resident of hell.

13-16. O brāhmaṇa, listen from me who am telling it, to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a very ripe pomegranate to Viṣṇu in the month of Phālguna. The lucky one stays for as many ages of Manu as there are seeds in the pomegranate in Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a mixture of flour and molasses ground and boiled together to Viṣṇu in the month of Phālguna, should be known to be the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices. O best brāhmaṇa, the man who would bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with honey in the month of Caitra, obtains the highest position of Viṣṇu.

17-18. The Sun's son (i.e. Yama) never makes an inquiry of him who would bathe (the image of) Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya with honey (in the month of Caitra). The name of him who would bathe (the image of) Lakṣmī's lord with a kiṁśuka flower, is not written by Citragupta in his record.

19-21. When in Caitra Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the worlds, is worshipped with tilaka flowers by a man, then he is not reborn on the earth. A man worshipping Kṛṣṇa, the crest-jewel of all gods, with a black aśoka flower, never meets with a calamity. He who with a pleased mind, worships in the spring, the lord with fragrant vernal (flowers), is honoured even by gods.

22. The lord, seated on the altar, himself gets up and honours him who would worship Viṣṇu with divine, unbroken sprouts.

23-24. A man who would worship Viṣṇu with fresh, tender dhātri leaves, soon obtains his desired object. He who would

worship lord Viṣṇu with bilva leaves, with flower of white thorn-apple and flowers of sun-plant, crosses the ocean of the worldly existence.

25. O brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra day and night honour him who would offer an excellent plantain fruit to Viṣṇu.

26. O brāhmaṇa, he who would devoutly offer wheat-flour to Viṣṇu of the form of a cowherd, is freed from all sins.

27-32. When the sacred month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, arrives, a devotee of Viṣṇu should abandon flesh, coitus and oil. In the month of Vaiśākha a devotee of Viṣṇu should bathe in the morning, should avoid the food of others, and should not eat twice (a day). In the morning, O brāhmaṇa, he should worship Viṣṇu according to the mode mentioned already. In (the month of) Vaiśākha he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with water made fragrant with flowers. Till twilight he should bathe (the image of Viṣṇu) in cold water. Thrice a day (i.e. at dawn, in the noon and at sunset) he should devoutly worship the lord with various offerings of eatables. O brāhmaṇa sage, what would the lord of Lakṣmī, the highest god, decorated with the garlands of damana in Vaiśākha, and (therefore) pleased, not give (to the devotee)? Which wise man is able to measure the religious merit of him who would offer barley-food to the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the month of Vaiśākha?

33-34. All that is offered to Viṣṇu only in the month of Vaiśākha to please him, would be inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇa, any other good act done in the month of Vaiśākha to please Viṣṇu, does not perish.

35-38. A man who puts up a place where water is distributed to travellers in the month of Vaiśākha to please Viṣṇu, everyday gets the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. Vaiśākha is a month difficult to be had. It gives the fruits of all acts. Abandoning even hundreds of other acts Viṣṇu should be worshipped during that month. He who worships Viṣṇu even for a day in Vaiśākha, obtains that fruit which is obtained by having worshipped Viṣṇu for six years. A man should worship Viṣṇu of the form of the holy fig tree everyday in Vaiśākha for securing the four goals of human life.

39-42. He who would worship the holy fig tree with a handful of water, would, after being free from crores of sins, go to the

highest place. What would the lord in the form of the holy fig tree not give to him who binds the roots (i.e. puts up a platform around the roots) of the holy fig tree with stones etc., O brāhmaṇa sage? He also, who, on seeing the holy fig tree, salutes it, goes to the highest place. (The span of) his life increases. There is no doubt about this. O Jaimini, there is no want or excess in the rite which, O brāhmaṇa, a man performs at the root of the holy fig tree.

43-55. O Jaimini, all holy places like the Three-streamed (Gaṅgā) are present there where even one holy fig tree, the best among the trees, stands. O brāhmaṇa, he who would worship the holy fig tree, worships Viṣṇu, since the lord himself is of the form of the holy fig tree. There is no act in the world doing which he who, a fool, through disrespect, hurts the holy fig tree, is purified, O best brāhmaṇa. This holy fig tree, the lord of trees, is glorified to be Viṣṇu's form. Therefore, there is no savior of those who hurt a holy fig tree. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu would remove the sin remaining in the body of him who seeing a holy fig tree, afterwards touches it and salutes it. Yama himself extracts with fish-hooks the eyes of him who sees him who harms a holy fig tree, and though capable, would not ward him off. Yama himself cuts off with a knife the tongue of him who, a fool, would not say: 'Do not cut off the holy fig tree.' That man who hurts even one small branch of a holy fig tree, obtains the fruit of a crore of murders of brāhmaṇas. That fierce sin which is involved in the murder of a brāhmaṇa, in violating the wife of one's preceptor, in drinking liquor, so also in snatching others' deposits, that sin which is involved in causing an abortion, in killing a cow, in the murder of a woman, in adultery, in killing him who has sought one's refuge, so also in killing one's friend, in not speaking in confidence, in killing one's husband, in censuring others, in eating on a day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, is committed by men by cutting off a holy fig tree. No sinner, comparable to him who hurts a holy fig tree, Viṣṇu's form, is heard on the earth.

56. I am telling the importance of the holy fig tree along with its history. O best brāhmaṇa, O dear, listen to it attentively.

57-63. O brāhmaṇa, formerly in Tretāyuga there was a brāhmaṇa devoted to Viṣṇu and engaged in the welfare of all

beings. He was always delighted in honouring his relatives; he was always delighted in offering a lamp (to Viṣṇu). He spoke the truth; he had conquered his anger. He was harmless and without religious hypocrisy. O best brāhmaṇa, he, striving after final emancipation, always worshipped lord Viṣṇu, the highest god, with great devotion. The lord, knowing his very firm devotion, took away his entire wealth with some motive. Yet that very intelligent, best brāhmaṇa, everyday worshipped the noble Viṣṇu with great devotion. O brāhmaṇa, all his wealth earned with difficulty, perished. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, seeing that also with grief that cannot be conceived by mind, gave up eating (food) after making his mind firm in the worship of the great Viṣṇu.

64-67. Knowing the devotion of that brāhmaṇa Viṣṇu, giving tranquillity, also again brought about the destruction of his relatives. O best brāhmaṇa, the brāhmaṇa's relatives, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, always commenced doing harm (to others). The brāhmaṇa accomplished by means of restrictions and pleased, always worshipped Viṣṇu with great devotion. The brāhmaṇa, having made arrangement to secure money for the worship of Viṣṇu, (worshipped) Mādhava, the lord of the world, and gave up grief for his relatives.

68-69. O Jaimini, great Viṣṇu, though kind to him, being curious, took away even his sons day by day. Yet that best brāhmaṇa everyday worshipped Viṣṇu, the destroyer of distress, with double the former devotion.

70-73. O brāhmaṇa, then his wife, extremely distressed due to grief and affliction, and being deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, went to her father's house. That lonely brāhmaṇa, highly given to Viṣṇu's devotion, never minded any calamity on account of his good heart. O best brāhmaṇa, once he, the best among Viṣṇu's devotees, taking an axe on his shoulder went to a forest. The brāhmaṇa, having no clothes, warded off cold everyday in winter after bringing wood from the forest.

74-77. Once the best brāhmaṇa was unable to go to the forest. (So) he cut off a branch of a holy fig tree standing in the courtyard (of his house). Meantime great Viṣṇu, the best of gods, with his mind distressed by agony came out of the holy

fig tree. In front of him the brāhmaṇa happily saw Viṣṇu, the highest god, having four arms, large eyes like lotus-petals, having worn a yellow garment, having ear-rings, good hair, and having his weapons like the lotus etc., resembling a new cloud, very much reddened in the evening, due to large streams of blood flowing (from his body), (resembling) fire, and invisible (even) to the hosts of gods. The brāhmaṇa with his pair of eyes charming due to streams of tears of joy, praised (him) with soft words.

The brāhmaṇa said:

78-85. O Hari, Murāri, the only lord of the world, Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava, lord of Lakṣmī, Keśava, enemy of Keśin, Nārāyaṇa, infinite one, lord, be pleased. How can I describe your advent? In this world there is none else except you. O Acyuta, having given one the entire world full of virtues or having given compassion whereby one looks upon one's own (persons) and others as equal, why do you, O Viṣṇu, why do you take away the devotion for you, which resides in one's body? By getting (i.e. if I get) wealth I shall give (i.e. part with) my joy. Devotion given to the great is very blessed. Since I constantly look upon the greatest sinner as a noble one, a sinner (like me) never sees your pair of feet meditated upon by gods. Though I am the greatest among the unhappy, yet I myself, with my eyes, am actually seeing you, like Indra, the soul of the worlds. I do not know even a small worship of you. Nor have I ever given any wealth to you. Yet, O Keśava, in front of me you, the only adorable one, are seen in a bodily form. You have given me this tree of devotion. It is full of piety, material welfare, and desire of sensual enjoyments. O lord, it, sprinkled with the water of your sight, has today borne the fruit of final emancipation. O Keśava, O you of a universal form, of all the heads in the world my head will be the best. O god of gods, my mind now goes to the couple of your lotus-like feet.

Vyāsa said:

86. That brāhmaṇa, having thus praised Jagannātha (i.e. lord of the world), Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, again, with the palms of his hands joined, devoutly spoke to him thus:

The brāhmaṇa said:

87-88. O god of gods, O lord of the world, O you who favour the world, with these strokes of the whip your body is wet with blood. In a battle you killed the members of the family of the demons. O lord, on the earth who is able to kill you? This is very wonderful.

The lord said:

89-90. O dear, you have undoubtedly spoken the truth. Neither a demon nor a fiend can kill me. O brāhmaṇa, I am just of the form of the holy fig tree. You cut me off with an axe. Therefore, there was now bleeding from my body.

Vyāsa said:

91-94. Hearing these words of him the brāhmaṇa, distressed with fear, censured himself in many ways. "Fie upon me, the unfortunate one and the greatest among sinners, who caused great grief to the heart of the lord of the three worlds. Viṣṇu removes all sins and he was hurt by me. Who can make me go beyond this sin? He, on whose being pleased sinners are honoured by gods, is distressed due to the trouble given by me. Oh, I am doomed!

95-96. I, a sinner, have caused pain to the heart of him whom gods like Brahmā please with great devotion. What is the use of austerities, mutterings of hymns, or life in the house to me, (since) this only giver of piety, material welfare, of sensual enjoyments and liberation is distressed with pain."

97-98. O best brāhmaṇa, speaking like this he decided to put that axe only at his throat (i.e. to cut off his throat with that axe), to please Viṣṇu. Seeing his great devotion, the kind lord of Lakṣmī, loving his devotees, quickly took it away from his hand.

The lord said:

99-100. O dear, how (i.e. why) do you do such a very dreadful act? I am never pleased with men who commit suicide? I am very much pleased with your devotion. O best one, do not entertain fear. O best brāhmaṇa, choose a boon that is in your mind.

The brāhmaṇa said:

101. O highest god, I caused great pain to you. O lord, may it not remain in your body. This is the boon I choose, O lord.

The lord said:

102-105a. O dear, O brāhmaṇa, you did this act through ignorance. You should not, therefore, even regard it as a great offence. I am always obedient to you, since you are the greatest among devotees. Everyday I know your errors (i.e. you erred). Yet your devotion for me always increased. Therefore, O dear, I now desire to be free from your debt. Giving up all fear, choose a boon in front of (i.e. from) me.

The brāhmaṇa said:

105b-106a. O Viṣṇu, O best god, may I have very strong devotion for you in every birth.

Vyāsa said:

106b-108a. Hearing these words of him spoken due to affection for Viṣṇu, (Viṣṇu) being pleased, then gave him the garland that was (put) around his own neck. Then as a father embraces his son, he embraced the brāhmaṇa, with his four long arms, and spoke (these) soft words (to him):

The lord said:

108b-114. O brāhmaṇa, since you are my devotee, therefore you will soon have all prosperity. O brāhmaṇa, O best one, everyday propitiate me in the form of the Aśvattha tree with the employment of (proper) rites. I shall accomplish all your desired objects.

Speaking like this to the best brāhmaṇa and embracing him again, Viṣṇu, the abode of compassion, disappeared just there. That best devotee of Viṣṇu, that brāhmaṇa, having received the garland from the neck of Viṣṇu, regarded himself as having done his duty and remained in his own house. Then, O brāhmaṇa sage, Kubera himself, by Viṣṇu's order, showered much wealth into his house. The architect (of gods) Viśvakarman fashioned for him, by Viṣṇu's order, an excellent palace like that of Indra.

It was having male and female servants. It was adorned with various things.

115-118. His abode crowded with crores of elephants and horses, shone. Even his relatives who were dead, were (again) united with him. His wife who had disrespected him, came home of her own accord. O brāhmaṇa, his wife whose sons were dead, had stable progeny due to the favour of Viṣṇu, and she was highly devoted to her husband. That best brāhmaṇa, having, for a long time, along with his sons and grandsons, enjoyed all pleasures, attained at the end of his life along with his wife liberation.

Vyāsa said:

119-120. The excellent, holy fig tree is actually Viṣṇu himself. Those men who worship it, never face any calamity. O best man, Viṣṇu, being pleased, gives him who, meditating upon Viṣṇu, worships the holy fig tree, the highest position.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Viṣṇu's Worship with Lotuses: The Story of Prajā

Vyāsa said:

1-4. O best brāhmaṇa, in the month of Jyeṣṭha (a man) should devoutly worship lord Viṣṇu after having bathed him (i.e. his image) with cold water. Everyday in summer unguents, fragrant āmalaka, fragrant oil should be offered to Viṣṇu. In a pavilion (having free access) to people he should everyday install (the image of) the lord of Lakṣmī in a temple which is made very fragrant, which is cool and very charming. One should not install (the image of) the lord of Lakṣmī in a hot place, in a place full of smoke or fuel, or in a lying-in chamber.

5-11. O best brāhmaṇa, what does the lord of Kamalā, very much pleased when fanned with very long, white chowries in Jyeṣṭha, not give? O best one, Viṣṇu fanned with fans made of the

feathers of peacocks in the summer soon gives everything that is desired. All those who fan Viṣṇu with breezes from a fan or from a pure (piece of) cloth, go to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, one who in summer, when it arrives, smears the body of Mādhava with fragrant pastes or with sandal, enters his body. There is no doubt that he is liberated. One should install (the image of) Viṣṇu in a garden with blossoming flowers, so also in a tulasī-grove, having gentle breezes at twilight. He who has adorned Viṣṇu with pāṭala flowers in Jyeṣṭha, should be known to be the performer of a thousand horse-sacrifices.

12-16. Viṣṇu would give that man the position of a king in every birth, who would give a necklace of pearls to him in summer. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the fruit of the religious merit of him who decorates Śrī Kṛṣṇa with jewelled necklace, from me who am telling it. He, decorated with a jewelled necklace, would live in Viṣṇu's city till Brahmā creates the entire world, O Jaimini. He also, who decorates Kṛṣṇa with golden or silver ornaments in summer, would get the (same) fruit. He who gives god Viṣṇu a beautiful bed with a pillow, is never unhappy. In summer heavy garments should not be given (to Viṣṇu).

17-21. O best brāhmaṇa, light, pure silken garment should be given to Viṣṇu (in summer). He who would worship Viṣṇu with divine, fragrant fruits of acyuta (*Morinda Tinctoria*), would in the end go to Indra's city, and would gladly drink nectar (there). He too, who would worship Lakṣmī's lord with the divine fruits of priyāla (*Buchanania Latifolia*), would get the (same) fruit. What is the use of speaking so many words? That devotee of Viṣṇu, who devoutly offers in summer very cold rice-gruel with sauce (does not again drink the milk from a mother's breasts, i.e. is not reborn). O best brāhmaṇa, that wise man also, who, in the month of Āṣāḍha, would devoutly worship Viṣṇu, after bathing him (i.e. his image) with curd, does not again drink the milk from a mother's breasts (i.e. is not reborn).

22-23. O brāhmaṇa sage, he who at the advent of rainy season worships (Viṣṇu) dark like a cloud with kadamba flowers, would obtain the highest position. That brāhmaṇa whose pavilion looks like fire with garlands of kadamba flowers, would have the fruit of a horse sacrifice, O greatest brāhmaṇa.

24-25. O best brāhmaṇa, the lord of Lakṣmī worshipped

with fragrant ketakī flowers does remove all miseries of human beings. Lord Viṣṇu worshipped with divine, very ripe bread-fruits mixed with ghee, would give excellent affluence.

26-33. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring liberation, should devoutly offer boiled rice mixed with curd to Viṣṇu everyday in the month of Āṣāḍha. That devotee of Viṣṇu who offers butter to Kṛṣṇa, is purified from all sins, and goes to Brahmā's world. He who would worship the highest soul with the flower of śephālikā (Vitex Negundo) and jasmine flowers, would go to the highest position. He who would worship Viṣṇu with full-blown fragrant, jasmine flowers, would not be (born) due to the religious merit on account of that, O brāhmaṇa. The man, worshipping Viṣṇu, the friend of the world, with kanda (Amorphophallus Campanulatus) flowers, obtains all his desired objects. Viṣṇu is always pleased with him who would worship Viṣṇu with large flowers and full-blown Barleria flowers. He who worships Viṣṇu with sairiyaka (Barleria Cristata) flowers, herb-flowers, and karavira (Terminalia Arjuna) flowers, goes near Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, all-round prosperity exists in the house of him who would offer parched grain with ghee to Viṣṇu in Śrāvaṇa.

34-35. O greatest brāhmaṇa, a wise man should devoutly worship Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, giving the four goals in human life, in the month of Bhādrapada. He should install (the image of) lord Viṣṇu having lotus-like eyes in a house newly constructed and free from every obstacle.

36-37. A man should not install (the image of) Viṣṇu in an old house crowded with gad-flies, mosquitoes and flies etc. A wise man should not install (the image of) the highest lord Viṣṇu in a house with mud, with its doors and walls falling down.

38-39. O best brāhmaṇa, a man who fashions a beautiful candrātapa (a hall with a roof only) in Viṣṇu's temple, goes to the world of the Moon. At night at the time of worship he should drive away, with many kinds of incense in the lord's temple, gad-flies and mosquitoes.

40. In rainy season he should install (the image of) Viṣṇu lying on a bed in a divine temple at night after covering him with emeralds. -

41-42. He who desires liberation, should, everyday in the month of Bhādrapada worship the lord of gods with fresh, fragrant lotuses. He should not worship Viṣṇu with ketakī flowers in Bhādrapada, since in the month of Bhādrapada ketakī is like liquor.

43-45. He who worships Yadunandana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) with ripe, divine palmyra fruits, does not again have the great trouble of remaining in the womb (i.e. being born). That man who devoutly would offer a ripe palmyra fruit mixed with ghee and milk to Viṣṇu would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu should offer, in the month of Bhādrapada, palmyra powder along with ghee to Viṣṇu in order to obtain the Absolute.

46. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, desiring liberation, should not eat any vegetable in the month of Bhādrapada. He should not eat at night.

47-49a. O best brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī's lord accepts that water as nectar which people offer to him, O brāhmaṇa, and which removes distress, in the forenoon (of a day) in the month of Āśvina.

49b-50. O best brāhmaṇa, that water which is offered at midday to Viṣṇu, should be known as water, and he accepts it (as water). That water which is offered to Govinda in the afternoon, would be like blood. Viṣṇu does not accept it. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, one should worship Viṣṇu in the forenoon.

51-54a. Due to Viṣṇu's compassion one gets all desired objects. O best brāhmaṇa, one should not worship Viṣṇu while having (just) one garment on one's body. If one performs (Viṣṇu's) worship like that, Viṣṇu does not accept it. That worship of Viṣṇu which one performs, with the garment on one's body not washed, is fruitless; and Viṣṇu is not pleased. Those who, without tying the tuft of hair on the crowns of their heads, perform the worship of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), do not obtain the fruit of the worship. It would be accepted by hogs.

54b-56a. O best brāhmaṇa, that worship of Viṣṇu which is performed in a house that is not purified, would indeed be accepted by hogs. O brāhmaṇa, a wise man does not bathe, worship deities, give gifts or honour his manes without having (sectarian) marks (on his body).

56b-57a. That entire holy act which is done without having

sectarian marks on his body by a devotee, is reduced to ash. And the doer would be a resident of hell.

57b-60. O best brāhmaṇa, he whose body is marked with (the marks of) a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, should be known to be Viṣṇu himself. There is no doubt that he who would draw (the marks) of a conch and a lotus on his right hand, and (the marks of) a disc and a mace on his left hand is Viṣṇu (himself). All sin of him who would draw (the mark) of a lotus upon (the mark of) the conch perishes in a moment.

61. Even gods like Indra salute him who would draw (the mark of) a mace upon (that of) the disc, O brāhmaṇa. A wise man should also draw (the marks of) the couple of the feet of Viṣṇu on his forehead.

62-67. Seeing him, even a sinner becomes free from his sin(s). That best devotee of Viṣṇu who would draw on his chest the eight-syllabled great formula, (the marks of) a fish and a tortoise purifies the three worlds. Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the world, gives him whose body is everyday marked with drawings of Kṛṣṇa's weapons, the highest position. All that act, auspicious or inauspicious, that a man whose body is marked with (the drawings of) the weapons of Kṛṣṇa, would be inexhaustible. Seeing him having marks of the weapons of Kṛṣṇa on his body, all demons and fiends, so also spirits and vampires, goblins, serpents, yakṣas, vidyādhara, kinnaras, guhyakas, evil demons, young evil demons seizing upon children, so also (goblins called) kuṣmāṇḍas, female goblins, so also others that bring about obstacles, run (away) through fear.

68-70a. Elephants, tigers, so also other inhabitants of the forest, run away through fear on seeing him who is marked with (the drawings of) the weapons of Kṛṣṇa. Severe diseases like jaundice causing the fall of the body (also go away). That man, who devoutly sees the body (of a man) marked with (the drawings of) the weapons of Kṛṣṇa, gets the fruit equivalent to that of seeing Kṛṣṇa.

70b-72a. The progeny of him who would worship Viṣṇu in Āśvina with three-bladed dūrvā grass, proceeds without any interruption. O brāhmaṇa, in the heart of him who would offer a karkatī (Cucumis Utilissimus) fruit to Viṣṇu in the month of Āśvina, unhappiness is never produced.

72b-73a. A wise man should devoutly worship Dāmodara, god of gods, when the auspicious, the best of all months, viz. Kārtika has arrived.

73b-75a. O best brāhmaṇa, a wise man should bathe in the morning in the proper manner to please Viṣṇu in the month of Kārtika. He who would give up (eating) flesh, copulation in the month of Kārtika, goes to the highest position after being freed from sins committed during existence after existence.

75b-77a. O best brāhmaṇa, when the Sun enters the Libra sign of the Zodiac, a bath in the morning, offering of clarified butter and celibacy destroy great sins. O best brāhmaṇa, he who enjoys flesh, copulation in the month of Kārtika would become a village hog in existence after existence.

77b-79a. When the month of Kārtika has arrived, a devotee of Viṣṇu should, even with effort, avoid eating twice (a day), food of others and oil. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell (you) in brief the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a lamp to Viṣṇu in Śrāvaṇa. (Please) listen.

79b-80a. Being freed from agonising sins like those of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, he goes to the city of Dāmodara and would stay (there) for a period of a crore of yugas.

80b-81a. Seeing a lamp burning (before Viṣṇu's image) in Śrāvaṇa, all gods like Indra, being delighted, say to one another:

81b-82. "This one highly devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu is the best among the righteous souls, since he offers a lamp to the Disc-holder (Viṣṇu) in the month of Kārtika. O best brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu is always pleased with him in the month of Kārtika.

83. That man who would continuously offer a lamp in Viṣṇu's temple in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice everyday.

84. That man who would worship Viṣṇu with lakhs of tulasī leaves in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of a lakh of horse-sacrifices.

85. He who would worship the immutable Viṣṇu with a lakh of bilva-flowers, obtains liberation due to the favour of the lord of the world.

86. Whatever is given after dedicating it to Viṣṇu in Kārtika, all that would be inexhaustible. This is the truth told by me.

87. O brāhmaṇa, he who would offer the sura leaf smeared

with ghee everyday in the month of Kārtika, remains in front of Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa.

88-90. What is difficult on the earth for the best brāhmaṇa who would worship Lakṣmī's lord with a white or black lotus that is full-blown? What has he who has offered a lotus to Viṣṇu in the month of Kārtika, not given to Viṣṇu, the conqueror of the demons? What does the revered lord of Lakṣmī not give to him who just takes a lotus and offers it to the enemy of Kaiṭabha?

91. Lakṣmī (i.e. Prosperity) does not stay during existence after existence in the house of him who has not worshipped Viṣṇu with lotuses in the month of Kārtika.

92-93. He who would offer lotus-seeds to the magnanimous Viṣṇu, is born in a brāhmaṇa family in every existence. He, born in a brāhmaṇa family, would be the friend of the four Vedas, be wealthy, have many sons and maintain the members of his family.

94-95. O Jaimini, I tell you the truth: There is no (other) flower like a lotus with which even a sinner having worshipped Viṣṇu enjoys liberation. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall especially tell the greatness of lotus, along with its history. Listen to it attentively.

96-100. There was a brāhmaṇa named Prajā, who knew all branches of holy literature, and the bee of whose mind always remained in the lotus of Viṣṇu's feet. (Abandoning) hundreds of acts fit and unfit to be done, he always worshipped deities, brāhmaṇas and preceptors (or elderly persons). To him the wealth of others was like poison. Wives of others were to him like his own mother. He did to his enemy what he did to his friend. That brāhmaṇa, knowing the sublime truth, did not have much regard on seeing a best brāhmaṇa as a guest or a suppliant. Desiring to cross the fearful, boundless ocean of the mundane existence, he performed all (kinds of) sacrifices and observed all vows.

101-102. Once that best brāhmaṇa, highly given to devotion for Viṣṇu, thought in his mind about his death and birth: 'Who was I formerly? What act have I done formerly? How have I got this (birth)? Where shall I go again?'

103.- Thinking like this and sighing repeatedly, that

brāhmaṇa went to a place sacred to Śiva to know his former account.

104. There, the brāhmaṇa with the palms of his hands joined, praised god Śiva with great devotion and with sweet words.

The brāhmaṇa said:

105-115. O great god, salutation to you. O highest god, salutation to you. O Śaṅkara, O Īśāna, O you giver of boons, O you lord, salutation to you. Salutation to you, of the form of knowledge; salutation to you the giver of knowledge. Salutation to you living in the lotuses of the hearts of all beings. Salutation to you, the creator of the world. Repeated salutations to you, the father of the world. Salutation to you, the destroyer (of the world). Salutation to you, the lord of beings. Salutation to you, Vahninetra (having fire-like eyes). Salutation to you Vahnicaṣus (having fire in your eye). Salutation to you, having the moon and the sun as your eyes. Salutation to you, decorated with ash; salutation to you, wearing a hide; salutation to you, having a string of bones; salutation to you, Nīlakaṇṭha. Salutation to you, Pañcavaktra (having five faces); salutation to you having the trident in your hand; to you who destroyed the pride of Cupid; and to you of a fierce form. Salutation to you, god of gods; salutation to you, Tripura's enemy. Salutation to you, the lord of Pārvatī; salutation to you, of a fierce form. Salutation to you whose mind was very much pleased with Bāṇa's devotion. Salutation to you of many forms and of a universal form. Salutation to you, Gaṅgādhara (who sustains Gaṅgā on his head); to you, the destroyer of Dakṣa's sacrifice. Salutation to you, the lord of the evil spirits; to the holder of (the bow) Pināka. Salutation to you, Īśāna; salutation to you, Maṇīśa. Salutation to you, the visible and the invisible one. Salutation to you who can and cannot be discovered. You alone are Brahmā; you alone are the lord of gods, Viṣṇu; you alone are the Sun. You alone are the Moon, removing all afflictions. Repeated salutations to you, the highest god.

116-118. Having heard his eulogy, Śaṅkara, the highest lord, who brings about the welfare of the world, was pleased, and suddenly manifested himself (before him). The very devout

brāhmaṇa, seeing him, saluted by all gods to have manifested himself, saluted his feet. The best brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of joy and with the palms of his hands folded, also again praised Mahādeva, the lord, who grants boons.

119-122. "I actually see him, the lord of gods, whom even gods including Indra do not (i.e. are unable to) see. This is my great fortune. I actually see that highest god who cannot be seen with the mind set upon meditation. What else have I to accomplish? I see that lord by merely remembering whose name even great sinners go to the highest position. I am blessed, I am blessed, I am blessed, and I am fortunate. O highest god, repeated salutations to you. Be pleased."

Mahādeva said:

123. O best brāhmaṇa, with these words of you I am pleased. O glorious one, ask for a boon. I indeed desire to grant a boon.

The brāhmaṇa said:

124-127. O lord, I am actually seeing you, the highest soul, who cannot be seen even by deities. What is the use of other boons? Yet, O great god, you, full of pity, desire to grant a boon. O highest lord, I ask you something. Tell (i.e. answer) it. O god, who was I formerly? What acts did I do formerly? O lord, how have I fallen into this ocean of worldly existence? A body is obtained through acts. A man is smeared with sin. Again as a result of the sin, miserable position is had.

128-130. Due to which acts have I obtained this existence full of many miseries? O Śaṅkara, be pleased, and tell it. This existence is the root of sins. Existence is the cause of misery. Therefore, I desire to know my former account. Due to the maturity of my acts, I, tormented by the digestive fire of the stomach, remained in my mother's womb mixed with urine and feces.

131-134. In the worldly existence no other affliction is said to be equal to that due to remaining in the womb. O lord, O you who remove the misery of your devotees, how did I experience it? O Śiva, O lord of the worlds, how have I fallen into this very fierce, worthless, limitless mundane existence which is full of various miseries, which is deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, which has

supported sins, which is difficult to cross, which is without kinsmen, which is full of desire for sexual union and anger, which gives affliction and attachment, which also gives birth and death? O lord, if you favour, then tell (i.e. explain) all this to me.

Mahādeva said:

135-136. O best brāhmaṇa, even though this is a great secret among secrets (i.e. the greatest secret), and (therefore) is not to be divulged, yet I shall tell it to you (my) devotee. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly you were born in the family of mountaineers. You were known as Daṇḍapāṇi, and you lived by giving trouble to good people.

137-138. Abandoned by discrimination, and having abandoned the fear of the other world, you took to the livelihood of bandits, which caused great affliction and agony to those who were distressed. Seeing you, the extremely cruel one, to have taken to the livelihood of a robber your other brothers also became robbers.

139-143. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell you the names of your brothers with whom you formerly committed robbery: These six—Daṇḍin, Daṇḍāyudha, and Dattavān, Dattabhū, Sudaṇḍa, Daṇḍaketu—are said to be your brothers. Along with those very fierce and cruel brothers of yours, you always frightened all people with a club. O brāhmaṇa, due to greed for money, you, along with those wicked brothers of yours, killed hundreds of thousands (of people) in the forest on a desolate road. O brāhmaṇa, you, remaining in the forest, and killing with sharp arrows (cows), always ate the raw flesh of cows along with liquor.

144-145. Then all traders gave up using vehicles. A great calamity always befell (travellers) in that forest. When you took to robbery, the wealth of a man did not remain his wealth, the house of a man did not remain his house, and the wife of a man did not remain his wife.

146. In this way in that very great forest, you, along with those brothers of yours (once) after being fatigued due to the journey went to a lake for bathing.

147-148. O best brāhmaṇa, having bathed there you along with your brothers, being hungry, ate lotus-stalks and (drank)

water. O greatest brāhmaṇa, O best one, there you ate, through curiosity, many full-blown lotuses.

149-150. Just at that time, a brāhmaṇa, known as Sarva-vedas, roaming in the forest, came there for bathing. The religious-minded one, having bathed there, and desiring to worship Viṣṇu, politely asked you for your lotus.

151-154. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, you gave him, with great devotion, a very clean lotus for the worship of the lord of Lakṣmī. That best brāhmaṇa was pleased with the lotus given by you. And just there he worshipped Viṣṇu, bringing about everything. Seeing that brāhmaṇa absorbed in worshipping Viṣṇu, you too laughed and saluted Viṣṇu, the good giver of desired objects. That brāhmaṇa, having worshipped duly the highest soul, the giver of the fruit of the four goals of human life, went as he had come.

155-156. O best one, due to the present of the lotus and the salutation, and due to seeing Viṣṇu's worship, all your sin perished. O excellent brāhmaṇa, after a few days you, whose death was imminent, died in that great forest only.

157-159. The lord, the abode of compassion, pleased with just that act of yours gave you the highest place, very difficult to be obtained even by gods. Due to the favour of Lakṣmī's lord you enjoyed various pleasures there for thousands and hundreds of Manu-periods. Then at the end of (i.e. after the fruit of your) acts (was enjoyed), you came to this land of religious rites and were born in a brāhmaṇa family due to the fruits of that religious merit.

160-162. O best one, having secured a birth in a pure brāhmaṇa family, you obtained steady devotion for Viṣṇu, which is the abode of all virtues. The lord, the great Viṣṇu propitiated by you with the yoga of (ritual) acts, will give you special knowledge. And you will be liberated by means of (that) knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, being very much pleased, go home. Well-being to you. You have obtained my sight. You are freed from the bond of the worldly existence.

Vyāsa said:

163-164. O brāhmaṇa, having spoken like that, the lord of the world vanished there only. That brāhmaṇa also, being satis-

fied, went home. To glorify the highest lord Viṣṇu he with effort worshipped him day and night with lovely lotuses.

165-169. Having worshipped Viṣṇu with lotuses, beautiful, good flowers, he slept for a long time. Having obtained knowledge, he attained liberation through the favour of the Garuḍa-bannered (god). If such is the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers a lotus to Viṣṇu even unintentionally, then what would be the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who offers it intentionally? I am telling the truth. I am again telling the truth (only). By worshipping Viṣṇu with lotuses one obtains the highest position. He who offers a lotus (even) once to Mura's enemy, is not reborn in this fearful worldly existence. Those full of major sins, even great sinners who worship Viṣṇu giving desired objects with full-blown lotuses even one day, go to (i.e. obtain) liberation.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Prohibition regarding and Fruit of Viṣṇu Worship

Vyāsa said:

1-10. A devotee of Viṣṇu should devoutly worship the immutable Viṣṇu along with the great Lakṣmī in Mārgaśīrṣa, O best brāhmaṇa. So also he should not worship Viṣṇu in a Mleccha region, in the house of a fallen person, or at a place full of bad odour, O best brāhmaṇa. He should not worship Viṣṇu near the heretics or great sinners, so also near those who tell lies. He should not worship Viṣṇu near those who are crying, who are quarrelling or at the place of those who are ridiculing. He should not worship Viṣṇu at the place of those who are engaged in accepting gifts, so also in the house of misers and of those who are greedy of others' wealth. So also he should not worship Viṣṇu in the house of those whose nature is deceitful. O brāhmaṇa, being highly devoted, he should, giving up attention to any other thing, be intent on meditating upon Viṣṇu at the time of worshipping Viṣṇu. He should not worship Viṣṇu, when there is loud wailing, when there are sighs, when there is a

doubt, or a talk with the heretics, O best brāhmaṇa. Viṣṇu receives that flower which is offered even into ash by him whose mind is concentrated, to the god of gods, the lord of the world. O brāhmaṇa, the lord does not receive that flower which a man fatigued due to hundreds of thoughts, offers even on the discs of the (śālagrāma) stones. With an undivided mind a wise man should worship Viṣṇu.

11. That act which is done with a confused mind is fruitless. Every act depends upon the mind. The three worlds depend upon the mind.

12-16a. Therefore, after making his mind steady he should worship Lakṣmī's lord. O best brāhmaṇa, he who worships at one place, but whose mind is somewhere else, would not get the fruit of his act even after hundreds of crores of kalpas. He who has become (bodily) pure with effort, and engaged in Viṣṇu's worship, is taken to be like a cāṇḍāla if he is without the purity of mind. O brāhmaṇa, that penance which is duly performed for a long time, but without devotion, would all be fruitless, and would only purify the body. That gold, (even) as much as the measure of Meru (mountain), which is given without devotion to a brāhmaṇa with family for (securing) beatitude leads to the loss of the desired object.

16b-25a. Therefore, a devotee with a concentrated mind and full of faith and devotion, should give in his house vegetables with a dwelling etc. to Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a very ripe, divine, orange to Viṣṇu is honoured by us. A devotee should devoutly and with effort give a new thing dear to Viṣṇu, to him, the enemy of Mura, in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. The devotee of Viṣṇu should bathe with divine sugarcane juice (the image of) god Viṣṇu, the lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who grants boons, when the month of Pauṣa has come. O best brāhmaṇa, he who bathes (the image of) Viṣṇu with sugarcane juice, enjoys all pleasures here (i.e. in this world) and after death goes to the Ikṣu-sāgara. So also he who would offer the sugarcane as an eatable to Viṣṇu, the god of gods, obtains the same fruit. What is the use of uttering many (more) words? A man by giving rice parched and flattened along with milk or with curd to Viṣṇu, would obtain all desired objects. Having removed the old garment (from Viṣṇu's image), he should offer him a new (piece of) cloth for

keeping off cold, O brāhmaṇa, when the Sun passes from one Zodiacal sign to another. In Pauṣa (when he is in the Puṣya asterism), a man desiring liberation should give to Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī, a seat of ten colours.

25b-31a. O dear, I (shall) tell (you) the fruit of the religious merit of him who, after worshipping the lord of Lakṣmī, would blow a conch. Listen to it. Being freed from all sins like illicit intercourse, he in the end goes to Viṣṇu's city and rejoices with him. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell you about the religious merit of him who sounds at the time of (Viṣṇu's) worship a bell marked with Garuḍa. He, being freed from all sins like eating articles that are prohibited, goes after getting into a charming chariot to Viṣṇu's abode. Having enjoyed there all desired objects for a period of hundreds of crores of kalpas, he again comes to (i.e. is born on) the earth as a best brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the four Vedas. Having enjoyed there all desired objects for a period of hundreds of crores of kalpas, he again goes to Viṣṇu's city and obtains excellent liberation.

31b-36a. That man who plays upon the lute at the time of worship of the lord, would become the chief among the learned in every existence. The lord, being pleased with him who beats a tabor at the time of the worship of the enemy of Kaiṭabha, gives him immense fruit. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. got by) him who beats a small drum shaped like an hourglass, a small drum, or who sounds sweet cymbals, or beats a tabor, a large kettle-drum, a large drum, a sindhuvāraka (?), a gong of bell-metal, or claps, or plays upon a lute, at the time of (Viṣṇu's) worship; being freed from sins like theft, he goes to the abode of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

36b-37. Getting the highest knowledge (there), he is freed there only. O best brāhmaṇa, I tell (you) about the religious merit of him who would produce sweet sound at the time of the worship of the lord of the world, or would play on the wind-instrument. With crores and crores (members) of his family, he goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

38-42. Having obtained knowledge, he would obtain inexhaustible liberation there only. O best brāhmaṇa, he who devoutly dances in the temple of Viṣṇu, goes to that highest position of Viṣṇu. He who devoutly sings songs in front (of the image) of

Viṣṇu, becomes a king in cities of gandharvas. With that devotee of Viṣṇu, who devoutly praises the lord of the world with hymns of praise, the lord is pleased and gives him all his desired objects. O brāhmaṇa sage, that Viṣṇu soon favours him who would worship Viṣṇu in this manner every month.

43. All those men who desire to cross this mundane ocean which is very deep and which gives all afflictions, should worship the pair of the lotus-like feet of the Supreme Spirit, that is charming and served by the hosts of gods.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Efficacy of Rāma's Name

Vyāsa said:

1-3. O brāhmaṇa, listen. I (shall) again tell you about the greatness of Viṣṇu, having heard which a man becomes free from all sins. O best brāhmaṇa, this entire world is a portion of Viṣṇu. Therefore, those wise men who desire the highest knowledge, look upon it as full of Viṣṇu. All gods like Brahmā, Śaṅkara, Rudra are Viṣṇu's portions. Therefore, worship offered to all gods, goes to Viṣṇu alone.

4-6. By this means or that no inauspicious (things) ever take place in the case of those who remember Viṣṇu's names, removing all sins. O best brāhmaṇa, everything is said to be a sin due to the act (involved in it). (But) the recollection of Viṣṇu is indestructible and destroys sins. A devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring liberation, should, while sleeping, eating, speaking, remaining (at one place), getting up, walking constantly remember Viṣṇu.

7-8. No exalted sages have laid down any restriction about time, destroying all afflictions, on the recollection of Lakṣmī's lord. O brāhmaṇa sage, I (shall) tell (you) in brief about the efficacy of the name of the magnanimous Viṣṇu, along with its history. Listen.

9-10. Formerly, in Kṛta age, there lived a vaiśya named Paraśu, who was the greatest in the family of vaiśyas and who

had mastered all virtues. O brāhmaṇa, due to (ill) luck, that vaiśya, suffering from cough and asthma, died in his youth.

11-14. His wife of a beautiful waist and quite young, and named Jivantī, went to her father's house after her husband was dead. O best brāhmaṇa, since that Jivantī was proud of the prime of her youth, she went to paramours, though checked by her relatives. She, in the prime of her youth and with her heart attached to the paramours, gave up observing vows and domestic duties. O best brāhmaṇa, she of beautiful buttocks and stout breasts, was blinded by lust, and never followed a religious path.

15-17. Her father, devoted to piety, seeing her of a bad character, was afraid of infamy, and being very angry, spoke to her thus: "O wicked one, O sinner, having secured a birth in my family, without any blemish, why do you commit (this) sin? If you have (set) your mind on (committing) a sin, then there is no (food here for you) to eat. O you inauspicious one, go (away) from my house. Leave my house."

18-19. Thus addressed by her father, she, with her eyes red through anger, left her father's house and went as she pleased. Then that woman moving with a desire for (having) a paramour, and being shameless, lived after resorting to the way of a prostitute.

20-21. A pulinda, a mountaineer or even a cāṇḍāla came to her house, and the unchaste woman, with pleasure sported with him. That prostitute never properly entertained in her mind the fear of the next world, O brāhmaṇa.

22-28. O best brāhmaṇa, sometime a fowler, carrying the young one of a parrot, came to her house to sell it. That prostitute too took (i.e. bought) that excellent young one of a parrot with great delight after honouring the fowler with much wealth. Out of curiosity the prostitute everyday nourished the parrot by (giving) proper food. The prostitute who was childless, nourished that young one of a parrot, looking upon it as her own son. O best brāhmaṇa, that bird too by her order always behaved affectionately with her like her relative. Then that prostitute always taught the parrot that had developed devotion for her the name of Rāma with beautiful letters. That parrot always repeated the name of Rāma, the highest Brahman, great and superior to all (other) gods, and destroying all sins.

29-30. Due to just uttering the name of Rāma the entire, very fierce sin of the parrot and the prostitute perished. O best brāhmaṇa, that prominent prostitute, so also the parrot, both died at the same time.

31-32. Then king Dharma (i.e. Yama) sent his servants like Caṇḍa to bring the two who had committed all sins (to him). Then all those very speedy servants with nooses and mallets in their hands came (there) by Yama's order.

33-34. All the servants of Viṣṇu, as valourous as Viṣṇu (himself), (also) came (there). Seeing the two bound by nooses and lying on the ground, the angry servants of Viṣṇu said to the unconquerable messengers of Yama these words:

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

35-37. Oh, strange are the words heard by us (coming) from your mouths, O messengers of Yama, that these two though devoted to Viṣṇu, are being punished by (Yama) the Sun's son. Oh, the behaviour of the wicked is never excellent, since even with efforts they always harm the good. Wonderful is this behaviour of the wicked who have committed sins.

38-41. The religious-minded ones always look upon the entire world as sinless. The sinners do not look upon it like that. They look upon the entire world as having committed sins. The religious ones rejoice on hearing about the religious merit of the righteous; (but) the sinful persons are delighted on hearing about the sin(s) of the sinful ones. The sinful ones are not so much gratified after getting hundreds of bhāras of gold, as they are after hearing the discussion about sins. Oh, powerful is the Māyā (Illusive Power) of the noble, great Viṣṇu, (since, due to it) sinners commit a sin (in spite of its being) painful to their selves, O brāhmaṇa.

Vyāsa said:

42-43. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu's messengers, highly engaged in devotion for Viṣṇu, cut off their bonds with the edge of their discs, O brāhmaṇa. Then Yama's servants got angry. They, resembling fire, all of a sudden showered heaps of burning charcoals there.

Daṇḍa (Caṇḍa?) said:

44-45. To take the parrot and the sinful prostitute I have arranged like this; and you have (also) come. It is simply wonderful. O best ones, if you desire to take these two, then now fight with us.

46-47. Speaking like this, all the strong, haughty messengers of Yama, who had held weapons, filled the quarters with lion-like roars. So also the magnanimous messengers of Viṣṇu like Supratika, made the world full of sound with very charming sounds of conches.

48-53. In that very fierce battle, the great messengers of Yama then covered those messengers of Viṣṇu with arrows discharged from (their) bows. In that great ocean (of battle) some angrily discharged spears, some discharged (the missiles called) śakti, some discharged thousands of arrows and some discharged discs. The messengers of Viṣṇu, the great deities, pounded with weapons like maces the great missiles discharged by them. Then the followers of Viṣṇu cut off the feet of certain messengers of Yama and the hands of some with the edge of their discs. Some with their heads cut off, some with their chests pierced, some with very amazing wounds, some with their mouths wide open, dropped dead (on the ground). The followers of Yama, with one foot of some cut off, with one hand of some cut off, suddenly left the battle, and fled away from it.

54-55. Seeing those messengers intent on fleeing, Caṇḍa holding a mallet, angrily entered the battle. Caṇḍa, the greatest among the host of Yama's messengers, and very brave, struck with mallets Viṣṇu's servants in hundreds.

56-57. Then Viṣṇu's messengers quickly showered Caṇḍa of a fearful valour with showers of sharp weapons. Then Caṇḍa with his body wetted with flowing blood, struck separately Viṣṇu's messengers.

58-68. The lord's messengers, struck by that Caṇḍa in the battle, gave up their spirit and went behind Suprakāśa. Then that angry and very strong Suprakāśa, having eyes (red) like the japā-flowers, taking a mace in his hand, entered the battle (going on) on the battlefield. He who was angry, and who resembled Viṣṇu in valour, struck (him). From the mallet in Caṇḍa's hand, which

frightened the onlookers, a (column of) smoke having the smell of pus, rose. From him who was struck by the quick Caṇḍa, very fearful shower of sparks of fire was discharged. Then the angry Caṇḍa, struck, with that mallet only the very powerful Suprakāśa, O brāhmaṇa sage. Then, O brāhmaṇa, that Suprakāśa who was angry, forgot his pain and struck Caṇḍa, Yama's servant, with a mace. O Jaimini, Caṇḍa, struck by him, was wetted with blood, and he, resembling the young sun, fell unconscious on the ground. Then those messengers of Yama took Caṇḍa, who was in a swoon, and making a loud wailing, and being afraid of the battle, fled away. O brāhmaṇa, O Jaimini, O best brāhmaṇa, all the messengers of Viṣṇu, being very much delighted, blew (their) conches. Then those servants of Yama, wetted with streams of blood, overcome by fear and crying, approached Yama.

Yama's messengers said:

69-72. O Sun's son, O you of large arms, we are obedient to you. Yet the messengers of Viṣṇu have reduced us to such a miserable plight. O lord, though the two (i.e. the prostitute and the parrot) were greatest among sinners, they went to Viṣṇu's abode due to the efficacy of Rāma's name. Even those wicked sinners who are fit to be punished by you, go to Viṣṇu's city! What is your authority then? Oh, the messengers have not done this insult to us. It is, O lord, your insult only, since we are (just your) servants.

Yama said:

73-74. O messengers, they recollect the pair of letters—Rāma's name. So they are not to be punished by me. Viṣṇu is the lord of the two. Listen, O servants, there is no sin in the worldly existence, which does not instantly and thoroughly perish by recollection of Rāma.

75-80. O soldiers, those men who everyday devoutly remember the names which destroy heaps of sins, of Viṣṇu, worshipped by the best among the wise, are not at all fit to be punished by me, even though they are sinners. Those men who, on the earth, utter constantly and devoutly (the names) Govinda, Keśava, Hari, Jagadīśa, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, affectionate to those who are humble, and Mādhava are not fit to be punished by me, even

though they are great sinners, O soldiers. O soldiers, those men who, on the earth, constantly utter (words like) 'O destroyer of the affliction of (your) devotees', 'O lord of gods', 'O friend of the distressed', 'O lord of Lakṣmī', 'O you destroyer of all sins', are not fit to be punished by me even though they are great sinners. O messengers, everyday I salute even those in (i.e. by) whose mouths words like 'Dāmodara', 'Chief of gods', 'One who is fit to be served by the hosts of gods', 'Śrī Vāsudeva', 'Puruṣottama' (and) 'Mādhava' are uttered. O best soldiers, I am always subservient to those men whose very kind heart is always engaged in the reflections on Viṣṇu, Mura's enemy, and the only lord of the world, and who resort to the form of the lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu). O soldiers, even though those who are engaged in Viṣṇu's worship, who are devoted to Viṣṇu's devotees, who are engrossed in the Ekādaśī vow, who are free from fraud, who carry on their heads the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, are great sinners, they are not fit to be punished by me.

81-82. O soldiers, I salute them who enjoy the remains of the offerings of eatable made to Viṣṇu, which destroy the entire heap (of sins), and who always carry on their ears and head, a tulasī-leaf. O soldiers, I am always dependent on them who are eagerly engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa's feet, who are engaged in honouring brāhmaṇas, who resort to virtues, who give great joy to the hearts of the distressed people.

83-85. O soldiers, those men who are always given to speaking the truth, who are dear to people, who are like regents of the quarters to those who have resorted to them, who always look upon others' wealth as poison, are not fit to be punished by me. O messengers, they who are engaged in offering food, who offer water (to the thirsty), who give land, who desire the good of all people, who gratify those people who have no livelihood, who have curbed their senses, who are tranquil, are never to be punished by me. I never make any inquiry of them who speak pleasing word, whose minds are free from hypocrisy, anger, pride and jealousy, who do not have a sinful attitude, and who have controlled their senses.

Vyāsa said:

86-89. When the servants of Yama were thus informed by

Yama, they knew the incomparable glory of Viṣṇu, the lord of the world. O best brāhmaṇa, names of Viṣṇu are superior to (the names of) all (other) gods. The knowers of Brahman have declared Rāma's name to be the best among them. O brāhmaṇa, the couple of letters, viz. Rā-ma, is superior to all magical formulas, by just uttering which a sinner goes to the highest position. Śiva alone and none else knows the efficacy of Rāma's name (which is) the worship of all deities.

90-92. A man gets the same fruit even by recollecting Rāma's name as he gets by reciting the thousand names of Viṣṇu. Oh, wonderful is said to be the behaviour of men, that the wicked-hearted ones do not recollect the name 'Rāma' which gives liberation. To utter it there is not the least effort. It is very charming to hear. Yet the wicked-hearted ones do not utter (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma'.

93-94. In the world, liberation which is attained with great difficulty, is attained by Rāma's name only. What other (better) act can be there? So long as men do not recollect Rāma's name giving pleasure, sins remain in their bodies.

95-97. A wise man desiring the fruit of that act should devoutly remember (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma' at a śrāddha, at the time of offering oblations to the manes, at the time of offering a portion of the daily meal to all creatures, so also at a festival, at a sacrifice, at the time of (making) a present, at the time of a vow, so also at the time of the worship of a deity, so also at other Vedic rites. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would mutter the formula '*Namo Rāmāya*' (salutation to Rāma) preceded by Omkāra, obtains absorption into Viṣṇu.

98. A man worshipping Viṣṇu with (this) formula of six letters, obtains all his desired objects through the grace of the Disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

99-103. O greatest brāhmaṇa, that man who at the time of death would remember (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma' obtains liberation, even though he is the most sinful. There is no doubt that the wise ones who remember the name Rāma while on a pilgrimage, would get success in everything. O brāhmaṇa, he who would remember Rāma's name in a forest, on a desolate road, or even at a frightful cremation ground would not face calamities. A man remembering Rāma's name at the royal gate, at a difficult

place, in a foreign country, in front of bandits, on seeing a bad dream, so also at the time of trouble caused by Planets, at the time of fear due to portents, so also at the time of fear due to the disease of gout, meets with nothing unfortunate, O Jaimini.

104-105. The wise should always remember Rāma's name which removes all calamities, which gives desired objects and liberation. O brāhmaṇa sage, that moment at which Rāma's name is not remembered, would be only useless. I am telling the truth.

106. Men, remembering Viṣṇu's names, do not sink down; and a man desiring the destruction of sins (committed) during crores of existences obtains affluence on the earth, and constantly remembers with devotion the very sweet name of Viṣṇu, giving liberation.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Cakrika's Story

Vyāsa said:

1. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I am again describing the greatness of Viṣṇu, the highest soul, which destroys all unhappiness. (Please) listen.

2-3. Those brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and others belonging to the lowest castes, who resort to Viṣṇu's devotion, are fortunate. There is no doubt about this. A brāhmaṇa who is not a devotee of Viṣṇu, should be known to be inferior to a cāṇḍāla, while a cāṇḍāla who is devoted to Viṣṇu, should be known to be superior to a brāhmaṇa.

4. How can he who is without devotion for Viṣṇu, be a brāhmaṇa? And how can he, in whose mind there is devotion for Viṣṇu, be a cāṇḍāla?

5. One should look upon that cāṇḍāla when he honestly worships Viṣṇu, to be superior to a brāhmaṇa knowing (all) the four Vedas.

6-16. Formerly in the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a mountaineer named Cakrika, who tilled (others') land and who did not have a good birth (i.e. birth in a good family) but was without a good livelihood. He talked like brāhmaṇas, had curbed his anger, was free from harming others, kind, without hypocrisy, and highly devoted to his father and mother. He had not talked about Viṣṇu; he had not learnt the holy texts about liberation. Yet there arose in his mind steady devotion for Viṣṇu. Everyday he remembered names of the Disc-holder (Viṣṇu) like Hari, Keśava, Govinda, Vāsudeva, Janārdana. He, born in a mountaineer's family, first put into his own mouth whatever wild fruit he had obtained. He then knowing its sweetness and taking it out of his mouth again and being very much pleased, everyday offered it to Viṣṇu. He did not discriminate between what is defiled (by being tasted by the mouth) and what is not. The habit of one's own class always remains at the top (i.e. prevails). O greatest brāhmaṇa, once he, while roaming in a forest, found a ripe fruit of priyāla tree. He, not finding (such) a fruit (before), was delighted, and to know (its taste) he hastily put it into his mouth. O Jaimini, just when he put the fruit into his mouth, it got into his throat, O brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, holding (his throat) carefully with his left hand, he arrested (the downward movement of the fruit through) the entire cavity of his throat with his right hand.

17-20. Then Cakrika, solely absorbed in devotion for Viṣṇu, thought: 'If I do not offer this fruit to that enemy of Mura, then no sinner like me is born in the worldly existence.' Meditating on Viṣṇu in various ways he then decided. Yet that fruit did not come out of his throat, O brāhmaṇa. That exclusive devotee of Viṣṇu cut his throat with an axe. He brought (out) that fruit (from his throat) and offered it to Viṣṇu. He, thinking about him only in his heart, approached him.

21-22. And with his entire body wetted with blood, he fell on the ground. Seeing him dead, lord Viṣṇu was distressed. "There is no (other) devotee like him, since, he having cut his throat, pleased me.

23-25. Since this devoted one has done a good act, what object can there be, by giving which I can be free from his debt? He is blessed, he is very blessed. He is undoubtedly blessed.

Even sacrificing his life, he has pleased me. I do not know whether I (should) give him the position of Brahmā, or of Śiva or an emperor and be free from his debt.”

26-27. Saying so, and being very much pleased, the Garuḍa-bannered god touched his head with the lotus in his own hand. Due to the touch of the lotus in his hand, that mountaineer, freed from the anguish, solely devoted to Viṣṇu, got up with great vigour.

Vyāsa said:

28-29. Then Viṣṇu cleaned the dust on the body of that greatest devotee with his own garment as a father (cleans the dust on the body of his son), O brāhmaṇa. Cakrika, seeing Viṣṇu in an embodied form, humbly bent down his head, and with the palms of his hands joined, praised him with sweet words.

Cakrika said:

30-32. O Govinda, Keśava, Hari, Jagadīśa, Viṣṇu, though I do not know (i.e. find) words proper for your praise, yet my tongue desires to praise you. O lord, be pleased; remove this enhanced blemish. O lord of everything, O you having the disc in your hand, those men who, leaving you, worship another god in the world are just fools, since you are favouring even me who am the abode of the heap of sins only. Though I who am extremely sinful and who have been born in a mountaineer's family, know you (only) through devotion for you which removes the bond of the mundane existence of men, yet the lord is very much pleased with me, O you, the only lord of the world.

33-37. O lord, I have today gained the touch of your charming, lotus-like hands which even hosts of gods led by Brahmā do not obtain. There is no one (more) kind than you to his servants. Salutation to you, the most auspicious (god), who, the lord, for the good of the group of gods like Indra, formerly (killed) the demon Kāṁsa, the first enemy of gods, and Nimi's son who had committed all sins. Salutation to you resembling a fresh cloud, who, the very powerful son of Vasudeva and the best god killed the twin Arjuna trees, so also the wicked Kālayavana in a battle, so also Dhenuka. O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, O Dāmodara, O Ananta, salutation to you, the best in Yadu family, who, the lord, the highest

god, formerly gave steady prosperity to the lord of gods (i.e. Indra). Repeated salutations to you who took away the pārijāta tree, who vanquished Indra and easily conquered Maheśa.

38-40a. Making Bhīma the instrument you knocked down Jarāsandha. The arms of Bāṇāsura struck by you, perished. I always salute him who killed Śiśupāla. Constant and repeated salutations to him who, the noble one, having killed the kṣatriyas through his Māyā, removed the burden of the earth.

Vyāsa said:

40b-41a. O Jaimini, Viṣṇu, thus praised by the magnanimous Cakrika, being very much pleased, said to him: "Choose a boon."

Cakrika said:

41b-47. O highest Brahman, O highest abode, O highest soul, O you full of pity, I am actually seeing you. What is the use of other boons, O twice-born? I did not meditate upon your form. I did not worship you with offerings of eatables, divine flowers, divine incenses or lamps. I never recollected your names. O lord, I never held on my head the water (flowing) from your feet. I did not eat the offerings of eatables made to you, nor did I observe any vow (in honour) of you. Yet I (am able to) see you. What shall I do with other boons? I am born in a mountaineer's family and am excluded from all religious rites. Yet I have today secured your lotus-like feet difficult to be secured even by deities. What (then) is the use of other boons to me? Yet, O lord of Lakṣmī, when you desire to grant a boon, (then) let my heart remain on you; let it not sink from (want of) your favour.

The lord said:

48-49. I, a sinful servant, have got great satisfaction by this shower of nectar that you have offered, O large-hearted one. O dear, I am very much pleased with this excellent lotus that you offered me. Being delighted (i.e. gladly) I accept your devotion.

Vyāsa said:

50. Speaking like this, Viṣṇu who accepted devotion and who was full of pity, embraced the devotee with his four long arms.

The lord said:

51-52. O dear, O Cakrika, O best one, I am pleased with your devotion. O dear, whatever I have given will certainly come off.

The universal soul, the protector of the universe, the highest lord, having again embraced that great devotee, vanished there only.

53-54. That Cakrika, highly intent upon devotion for Viṣṇu was very much pleased, and abandoning his sons, wife etc. went to the city of Dvārakā. Having, due to the favour of Lakṣmī's lord, thus gone there, he, at the end of his life, attained liberation, difficult to be had even by gods.

55-56. Therefore, god is dependent upon his devotees. He is pleased merely by means of devotion, and not by means of hymns of praise, wealth, austerities or muttering (a deity's names). O best brāhmaṇa, though he gave (Viṣṇu) the fruit that had been defiled by him (by tasting), yet Viṣṇu, knowing his steady devotion, was pleased with him.

57-58. Therefore, in this world those who desire liberation, (should worship) god Viṣṇu. Those men, who worship with a firm devotion the pair of Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet, fit to be worshipped by great deities like Indra, go to (i.e. obtain) liberation.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Bhadratanu's Story

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, again tell me the greatness of Lakṣmī's lord. Who is satisfied after drinking the nectar of Viṣṇu's account?

Vyāsa said:

2-3. There is no one pious like you in the mundane existence, since you desire to listen to Viṣṇu's greatness with devotion. O best brāhmaṇa, the charming tale of Viṣṇu does purify

the three worlds—(it purifies) the listener, the questioner and the speaker.

4-6. O dear, listen to the greatness of Lakṣmī's lord, which destroys sins. I shall narrate it, giving the four goals of human life, in brief. Viṣṇu would instantly remove the sin, committed during crores of births, of him who would worship Viṣṇu very devoutly even one day. How can he be (called) pious who has not worshipped Viṣṇu? How can he be (called) a sinner who has devotion for lord Viṣṇu?

7-8. There is the best city called Puruṣottama, a city endowed with all qualities and resorted to by hosts of all gods. It is said to be the greatest of all holy places, since in that charming city Viṣṇu actually lives.

9-14. Formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa named Bhadratanu. He was handsome; he spoke pleasing words; and was born in a pure family. The handsome brāhmaṇa, on attaining youth, was deluded by passion of love; and giving up the fear of (not attaining) the other world, he was attached to a prostitute. He did not study the Vedas, nor did he at all study the Purāṇas. Due to the company of heretics he abandoned the excellent Gāyatrī hymn. That brāhmaṇa, highly attached to sins, accepted gifts not fit for sacrificial purposes, snatched others' wealth, and censured religion. He, the mean brāhmaṇa, abandoned the conduct of brāhmaṇas, so also devotion to truth, and also the worship of elderly persons (or preceptors) and guests. He did every act that was more and more sinful. O Jaimini, he never did the most meritorious act.

15. Once that brāhmaṇa who had committed sins and who was not ashamed and afraid of people, performed a śrāddha without faith in it.

16-25. Having gone to the prostitute's house at night he said to her:

The brāhmaṇa said:

O you of large buttocks, this is the day of the śrāddha to be offered to my manes. Yet, bound by your virtues I have come to your house. O dear one, see this night fearful to all people. The sky, (right) from the ground, has multitudes of clouds dropping water, and is covered. Even at this night, at which the way is

lost due to fresh clouds, I, with my mind attracted towards your qualities, have come (to you), with the lamp of lightning in the clouds and my longing directing me to the object. O dear one, I, with anxiety about and relying upon your qualities have come (to you) at night. Not seeing you even for a moment, I am not happy. O slender one, I have come to see you with difficulty. O dear, what have I to do with a bath with the water of a holy place? Sprinkled with the holy water of your love I have reached heaven. What fruit would I get by exerting for pleasure in the other world (i.e. heaven)? Due to your favour, O dear one, I get heaven even while alive. O dear one, I performed the śrāddha-rite at home for fear of bad name. I do not have the slightest faith in this śrāddha. O beautiful lady, you are my muttering of prayers, my penance, and my prudence. O beautiful lady, I have resorted to you only in this mundane existence with full devotion. I always belong to you. Order (me) what I (should) do.

Sumadhyamā said:

26-34. With you as his son, your father has become like one who is sonless. You desire to have coitus even on the day of the śrāddha (offered) to the manes. O wicked one, the manes of him who has coitus on the day of (the śrāddha offered to) his manes, and he also eat semen. If a fool, through folly, has coitus on the day of (the śrāddha offered to his) manes, the śrāddha is fit to be received by demons. There is no doubt about this. I have clearly told you. What would one not get if one's mind in accordance with that (i.e. what I have said) would be (set) on Viṣṇu? The life of living beings remains within (the control of) Yama's staff. Yet, O fool, you, being fearless are always committing sin(s). O fool, life perishes in a moment like a water-bubble. Then thinking that it is eternal, why do you always commit (sinful acts) secretly? How does he, on whose head the couple of letters 'mṛ-tyu' (i.e. death) is written, commit a sin, giving pain to all? Oh! wonderful is great Viṣṇu's Māyā on the earth, since, O brāhmaṇa, a sinner is always delighted. The sacrifice performed in the stage of a householder, burning like fire (says:) "Give place to (your) sin in my body, difficult to be resorted to."

Vyāsa said:

35-40. Due to the sin impelled by destiny that good prosti-

tute spoke like this. The brāhmaṇa who had committed sins, thought in his mind. 'Fie upon me a great sinner, a fool, the greatest among sinners! I, a wicked one, do not have that knowledge which the prostitute has. I, having got birth in a pure brāhmaṇa family, have everyday committed great sin(s), destroying myself. How do I still commit sin(s) through indiscrimination, when death is certain, and Yama is my master after my death! When I have not muttered (the names of Viṣṇu), when I have not observed penance, so also when I have not performed a sacrifice, when I have not studied the Vedas, when I have not practised the conduct of a brāhmaṇa, when I have not honoured guests, when I have not been devoted to my preceptor, when I have not honoured brāhmaṇas, so also when I have not offered a śrāddha to my dead ancestors, so also when I have not offered worship to Lakṣmī's lord, how can I have an excellent position (after death)?'

41-43. That brāhmaṇa, having saluted like (i.e. prostrating himself like) a staff on the ground, the illustrious Mārkaṇḍeya, the best among the knowers of religious rules, praised him with (proper) words. "Salutation to you, O greatest brāhmaṇa. Salutation to you, O long-lived one. Salutation to you the illustrious one, of the form of Viṣṇu. Salutation to Mṛkaṇḍu's son, desiring the good of all people. Salutation to you, the ocean of knowledge. Salutation to you, the immutable one."

44. Thus praised by the brāhmaṇa, the great ascetic Mārkaṇḍeya, master of the significance of all holy texts, being very much delighted, spoke (thus):

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

45. O very blessed one, I am very much pleased by your devotion. Choose a boon. I shall instantly accomplish your desired object. (This will) not (be) otherwise.

The brāhmaṇa said:

46-48. I am the greatest of sinners. I am without (i.e. I do not follow) the practices of a brāhmaṇa. I am always connected with doing harm to others. I am always interested in others' wives. O best brāhmaṇa, I, a fool, always committed great sin(s). I have never done any pious act with regard to the other world.

How can I, a great sinner, cross the fearful ocean of the worldly existence which causes pain and which is very fierce?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

49-51. O best brāhmaṇa, even if you have committed sins, you are the best among the pious, since (in you) has arisen this knowledge difficult to be found in the world. The liking for religious merit of the pious ones increases everyday. The liking for sins of the sinful ones (also) increases everyday. Though you are a sinner, you (can) keep off your thought for sins. Therefore, the lord indeed appears to be pleased with you.

52-53. They call the man to be the best, who having first committed a sin, turns away from it (afterwards), and who has worshipped Viṣṇu in his former existence(s). Lord Viṣṇu, the great one, seeing his devotee attached to sins, gives him broad understanding, so that he gets felicity.

54-55. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, you who have worshipped Viṣṇu in every existence, will soon have good fortune. There is no doubt. (But) O brāhmaṇa, since now it is time for me to perform my religious rites, you will not hear from me (the answers to) whatever you have asked me.

56-62. There is a brāhmaṇa named Dānta, who knows the truth of every object. He will tell you all that. Go to his hermitage.

Advised by that intelligent Mārkaṇḍeya, the brāhmaṇa quickly went to the pure and very beautiful hermitage of Dānta. It was adorned with trees like aśvattha, campaka, bakula and priyaka, so also other flowered trees and was very charming. The atmosphere was filled with the fragrance of full-blown flowers. It had swarms of humming bees. It was very much resounding with the sounds of (i.e. produced by) fruits. Breezes gently blew there. The water there was cold. It was crowded with hundreds of wild beasts, and with pupils and their pupils. That brāhmaṇa, having entered that very charming hermitage, saw Dānta who knew the true nature of Brahman and who was surrounded by the hosts of his pupils. That best brāhmaṇa, having praised that best brāhmaṇa, Dānta, of the nature of Viṣṇu, saluted his feet with (i.e. by bowing) his head.

Dānta said:

63. O good one, who are you that have come (here)? What is your intention (in coming over) here? Tell the truth. With what motive are you praising me now?

Bhadratanu said:

64-65. O distinguished one, I am a brāhmaṇa without (i.e. not following) the practices of a brāhmaṇa. I am known by the name Bhadratanu, and have committed all sins. O brāhmaṇa, since you know the true nature of Brahman, tell me this: How can I, a sinner, destroy the sins (I have committed) in the world?

Dānta said:

66-72. O brāhmaṇa, listen to a great secret. Through affection for you I tell it, by which the fetter of the worldly existence of men is cut off. Give up the company of heretics. Always resort to the company of the good. Give up lust, anger, delusion, greed, pride and jealousy. So also, O brāhmaṇa, carefully avoid falsehood and doing harm to others, while always recollecting the names of the magnanimous, great Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, in the same way clean and also besmear Viṣṇu's temple. Adorn the path leading to it, and put lamps in it. Always giving water (to the thirsty) and performing the five great sacrifices, serve the brāhmaṇas and your relatives. Listen to the tale of Viṣṇu. Mutter the formula of twelve syllables. O best one, you who will be doing all these acts, will have excellent knowledge, and due to knowledge you will obtain liberation.

The brāhmaṇa said:

73-76. O brāhmaṇa, explain these good (qualities) which you talked about. (Tell me:) What is *moha*, what are religious hypocrisy and jealousy? What is falsehood? What is (doing) harm (to others)? What is pity? What is tranquillity? And what is control? What is said to be impartiality? What is (said to be) the worship of Lakṣmī's lord? What is said to be the day and the night? What is recollection of Viṣṇu? What are the five great sacrifices? What is twelve-lettered formula? O best brāhmaṇa, give me the full explanation of these, so that through your favour I shall reach the highest place.

Dānta said:

77-86. Those who, giving up acts approved by the Vedas, do other acts, and who are without their own practices (i.e. who do not follow practices laid down for their own caste) are declared to be heretics. Those who follow their practices (i.e. practices laid down for their caste) approved by the Vedas, and who are without sins and greed are declared to be good people. O best brāhmaṇa, that constant longing for women and for obtaining wealth is said to be *kāma*, desire of sensual enjoyments. That torment which is produced in one's heart after hearing one's censure should be known as anger. It destroys all virtue. That desire which is produced in one's mind to take others' wealth on seeing it, is said to be greed, O best brāhmaṇa. The feeling of mineness as 'This is my mother, this is my father, this is my wife, this is my house', is said to be *moha* (attachment). The (feeling viz.) 'I am noble, I am rich, nobody is comparable to me on the earth,' which is produced in one's mind is called pride. 'People always censure me. Fie upon my life!' He who says like this to himself (has) contempt for himself. Such contempt is (called) *matsara*, self-condemnation. That which is the statement of facts and which delights all people should be known to be truth. The opposite of it is falsehood. Such a thought—when will his affluence, wife, sons perish?—which is produced in a man's heart is called *himsā*, harm.

87-95. That desire which is produced in the heart to remove the affliction of others even with an effort is said to be pity, O best brāhmaṇa. The satisfaction that is produced in the heart is called tranquillity. Taking away the heart from a censured act is declared by the wise to be self-control and is approved by those who see the truth. O best brāhmaṇa, that contentment which always prevails in misery or happiness, so also viewing an enemy or a friend as equal is called impartiality. O brāhmaṇa, that is said to be the worship of Viṣṇu, when reverence is paid to Viṣṇu with faith by means of offering of eatables, sandal, flowers etc. Abstinence from taking food observed during the day and at night on the first and the subsequent day is known as fast. O best one, the unification of oneself and of Viṣṇu is said to be the recollection of Viṣṇu. Teaching and reciting the Vedas (*brahmayajña*), reception of guests (*nṛyajña*), sacrifice to the superior

gods made by oblations to fire (*devayajña*), obsequial offerings (*pitryajña*), an oblation to all created beings (*bhūtayajña*), are said to be the five sacrifices. The wise call this—*namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya* (Salutation to the revered Vāsudeva) preceded by (the syllable) *Om* to be a great formula of twelve syllables. O best brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you what was asked by you.

96-97a. Hearing it all men get excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, therefore, having everyday recited the one hundred and eight names of the lord of Lakṣmī, you will obtain liberation which is difficult to be obtained.

Bhadratanu said:

97b. (Please) tell (me) the hundred and eight names of Viṣṇu, the lord of Lakṣmī.

Dānta said:

98-102. O brāhmaṇa, listen. Having drawn the essence of the thousand names of Viṣṇu, the highest soul, I shall tell you the mode of meditation, having meditated in which way the hundred and eight names destroy great sins. Having meditated upon the excellent face of Kṛṣṇa, which has the form of a hemp-flower, of Kṛṣṇa whose eyes are like full-blown lotuses, the entire body of whom (i.e. of the lord) is adorned with the dust from cows' feet, whose excellent head is adorned with the beautiful hair of a cow's tail, the lord who has put on his charming lips the beautiful sound of the flute (i.e. the sweet-sounding flute), who is surrounded by children living in cowpens, who has put on a yellow garment, whose face is like that of Cupid, one should repeat the hundred and eight names of Viṣṇu.

103-117. (He should repeat it in the following way:) 'Om, salutation to him. Of the hundred and eight names of Kṛṣṇa, the seer is Veda Vyāsa. The metre is anuṣṭup. The deity is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Application is to the muttering: Salutation. Kṛṣṇa, Keśava, Keśi's enemy, Sanātana (ancient), Kāṁsāri (Kāṁsa's enemy), Dhenukāri (Dhenuka's enemy), Śiśupāla-ripu (Śiśupāla's enemy) Prabhu (the lord), Devakīnandana (Devakī's son), Śāuri, Puṇḍa-rīkanibhekṣaṇa (having lotus-like eyes), Dāmodara, Jagannātha, Jagatkartā (creator of the world), Jaganmaya (full of the world), Nārāyaṇa, Balidhvamsi (destroyer of Bali), Vāmana, Ditinandana

(Diti's son), Viṣṇu, Yadukulaśreṣṭha (the best in Yadu's family), Vāsudeva (son of Vasudeva), Vasuprada (giver of wealth), Ananta, Kaiṭabhāri (enemy of Kaiṭabha), Mallajit (conqueror of Malla), Narakāntaka (destroyer of Naraka), Acyuta, Śrīdhara, Śrīmat (possessing abundance), Śrīpati (Lakṣmī's lord), Puruṣottama (the highest Brahman). Govinda, Vanamālin (who wore a garland of wood-flowers), Hṛṣikeśa, Akhilārtihā (who removes all afflictions), Nṛsimha, Daityaśatru (enemy of demons), Matsyadeva (the Fish-god), Jaganmaya (full of the world), Bhūmidhārin (sustainer of the earth), Mahākūrma (the great tortoise), Varāha, Pṛthivipati (lord of the earth), Vaikuṇṭha, Pītavāsas (who wears a yellow garment), Cakrapāṇi (who has a disc in his hand), Gadādhara (who holds a mace), Śaṁkhabhṛt (who holds a conch), Padmapāṇi (who has a lotus in his hand), Nandakin (who holds the Nandaka sword), Garuḍadhvaja (the eagle-bannered god), Caturbhuja (having four arms), Mahāsattva (very powerful), Mahābuddhi (very intelligent), Mahābhuja (having large arms), Mahotsava (very joyful), Mahātejas (very lustrous), Mahābāhupriya (liking the large-armed i.e. mighty ones), Prabhu (the lord), Viṣvaksena (Aniruddha), Śārṅgin (having the Śārṅga bow), Padmanābha, Janārdana, Tulasī-vallabha (lover of Tulasī), Aparā (unlimited), Pareśa (the highest lord), Parameśvara (the highest god), Paramakleśahārin (remover of great affliction), Paratrasukhada (giving happiness in the next world), Para (the highest one), Hṛdayastha (remaining in the heart), Ambarastha (remaining in the sky), Mohada (causing delusion), Mohanāśana (destroying delusion), Samastapātaka-dhvaṁsin (destroying all sins), Mahābalabalāntaka (destroyer of the power of the very mighty ones), Rukmiṇīramaṇa (Rukmiṇī's husband), Rukmipratijñākhaṇḍana (who broke Rukmi's pledge), Mahat (the great one), Dāma-baddha (who was tied with a rope), Kleśahārin (who removes affliction), Govaradhanadhara (who held up the Govardhana mountain), Hari, Pūtanāri (Putanā's enemy), Muṣṭikāri (Muṣṭika's enemy) Yamalārjunabhañjana (who broke the twin Arjuna trees), Upendra, Viśvamūrti (of a universal form), Vyomapāda (having his foot in the sky), Sanātana (the eternal one), Paramātmān (the highest soul), Parabrahman (the highest brahman), Praṇatārtivināśana (destroying the affliction of those

that bow to him), Trivikrama (having three strides), Mahāmāya (having great divine power), Yogavid (knowing the Yoga), Vistaraśravas (far-famed), Śrīnidhi (treasure of wealth), Śrīnivāsa (abode of glory), Yajñabhoktr (enjoyer of sacrifices), Sukhaprada (giving happiness), Yajñeśvara (lord of sacrifices), Rāvaṇāri (Rāvaṇa's enemy), Pralambaghna (killer of Pralamba), Akṣaya (inexhaustible), Avyaya (immutable).

118-120. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you these one hundred and eight names (of Viṣṇu) (selected) from his thousand names, for pleasing Viṣṇu. All of them destroy sins. They destroy (the effect of) bad dreams. They destroy the trouble due to Planets. They destroy all diseases. They give great affluence also. They destroy all harms. They give the fruits of all acts.

121-125. With him who, three times everyday, would repeat these hundred and eight names before Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu is always pleased. The dead ancestors of him, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who would devoutly recite these hundred and eight names at the time of a srāddha, are pleased, and go to the highest position. He who would recite them at the time of a sacrifice, at the worship of a deity, at the time of giving (gifts), during a pilgrimage, would (also) obtain that fruit. By repeating this hymn, one who has no son gets a son, one longing for wealth gets wealth, one desiring knowledge gets it. Never any evil befalls them on the earth who devoutly recite these hundred and eight names of Viṣṇu.

Dānta said:

126-131. O brāhmaṇa, go. Well-being to you. Having very devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu in the manner as told by me, you will obtain the highest happiness.

Thus advised by Dānta, the knower of Brahman, he was engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu in that excellent holy place. O Jaimini, that brāhmaṇa devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the manner as told by Dānta everyday for five days. Knowing his very firm devotion, Viṣṇu, full of compassion, and lustrous like a crore of suns, appeared before him. Seeing that lord of the worlds, Acyuta, dear to Lakṣmī, the brāhmaṇa saluted his pair of feet by (bowing) his head. Then the greatest brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of joy, praised Lakṣmī's lord by joining the palms of his hands.

132-134. “O Viṣṇu, you have taken my intellect disposed to sins to your kind devotion giving auspicious objects. Therefore, I, a rustic, who has done abundant sins, have been today made a (gentle) man. O highest lord, I have known this much only: When you whose pair of feet is saluted by the three worlds, are angry, then man’s intellect goes towards a sin. And when you are pleased, the same goes to good acts. O lord, I tell you about the efficacy of remembering you, due to which I who have committed all sins, went, after getting into an aeroplane covered with pure gold, to the highest place.

135-136. The hunter Kanika, who was rich in virtues, (but) who had committed sins, knows (the efficacy) of the water (flowing) from your lotus-like feet. O you, the only lord of the world, king Yajñadhvaja, honoured by gods, knows the fruit of smearing the abode of you, the lord, O Mura’s enemy, O you the cause of the creation, the maintenance and the destruction of the world. Yajñamālin, his brother Sumālin who is afraid of sins (also) know it, O you having on your banner (Garuḍa) the enemy of serpents.

137-140. Dharma alone, and none else in the three worlds, knows that fruit which would be (obtained) by going round you, Viṣṇu. O lord, on the earth who is able to describe your heart and your kindness? A hunter, having pierced you with arrows, went to the highest place. O lord of the world, even after censuring you Śiśupāla obtained liberation. (Then) what to say about your devotee? May my mind delight in you who, in the form of Brahmā, created this world, O great Viṣṇu.

141-153. O Viṣṇu, the entire destruction of the world is done by you in the form of Rudra in this mundane existence. Salutation to you who are that. Salutation to you, than whom the world is neither smaller nor larger, and who has occupied the entire world. Salutation to you, from the eyes of which god the Sun that causes the day is produced; and from whose mouth fire is produced. O best god, O Keśava, I always salute you, from whose ear airs and vital airs also have sprung up. Salutation to you, (embracing) the chest of whom, of a dark body, Lakṣmī was very happy as the lightning is (after resorting to the body) of a cloud. Salutation to you, the limit of whose greatness even gods like Brahmā have not been able to reach. Salutation to you who

would be born in every yuga for establishing righteousness and destroying sinners. Salutation to you who, the noble one, has deluded this world, and due to whose delusion Śiva destroys it. Salutation to you who are pleased by means of devotion alone, and not by means of wealth, eulogies, gifts and austerities. Salutation to you who bring about the welfare of and who favour cows, brāhmaṇas and the good. Salutation to you, the god, who remove the affliction of the helpless, the kinsmen, and the meditating saints. Salutation to you who behave equally with all men, gods and elephants. Salutation to you, on whose being pleased even a mountain suddenly becomes (soft) like grass, and on whose being angry grass becomes (hard) like a mountain.

154-156. May I have my (mind) on you (i.e. may I think of you), as the meritorious ones have theirs on religious merit, as the father has his (mind) on his son, or as the chaste ladies have theirs on their husband. May I have my (mind) on you (i.e. may I think of you) as that of the hungry on food. May I have my (mind) on you (i.e. may I think of you) as those that are tormented by heat have theirs on the moon, as those that are afflicted by cold have theirs on the sun, or as those oppressed by thirst have theirs on water.

157-186. May the sin of cohabiting with my preceptor's wife, which I, who am seeing you, committed, perish. May the sin of the murder of those who did not merit it, who was deluded by (your) Māyā and who am seeing you, committed by me perish. O highest lord, I drank (liquor etc.) that is prohibited. May that sin of me who am seeing you (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed (when) I emitted my semen in water or in a vulva (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, when I, sprinkling (i.e. dropping) my semen on the earth, caused an abortion, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, by unintentionally deceiving (others), perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed when I told lies every moment (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed when I censured the good and always harmed others (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed (when) I kept phlegm in my mouth (perish). May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I cut off a tree which had some life in it, perish. May the sin which I who

am seeing you, committed, (when) I urinated or evacuated feces on a path, in a temple of a deity or in a cowpen, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I had no devotion to my father and mother, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed (when) I stopped (a person) going for a bath or for a meal, perish. O best god, may the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I took a meal on the Ekādaśī-day (perish). O lord, I did not honour a guest coming to my house. May that sin of me who am seeing you, perish. May that sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I twice took meals on Dvādaśī (the twelfth day) and Daśamī (the tenth day of a month), perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I stopped cows running to drink (water), perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I gave up a vow without completing it, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I gave a false testimony due to my love for my friends, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you, committed, (when) I did not approach my wife during the time favourable for conception, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I took meals in an unhallowed house, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I followed the livelihood of a beggar, perish, O Nṛhari. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) O lord, I showed ascendancy when I was being punished by the king, perish. May the sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I put up an obstacle in the (narration of) the tales from the Purāṇas, perish. May that sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I listened to the account of the consequences of acts done by others, perish. May that sin which I who am seeing you committed, (when) I cut off the holy fig tree and the dhātrī tree, perish. May that sin which I committed, (when) I sold curd, milk and ghee, perish. May that sin which I committed, (when) I gave hope to others, and made it fruitless (i.e. disappointed them), perish. May that sin which I committed, when I cast an angry glance at brāhmaṇas and mendicants, perish. May that sin which I committed, (when) through anger I reproached those who gave me means of livelihood, perish.

187-189. What is the use of speaking much in this regard?

The sins of me who am seeing you, have perished. There is no doubt that I am fortunate, I am fortunate, I am fortunate. O Lord of the world, salutation to you, salutation to you, salutation to you." O Jaimini, having spoken like this, that brāhmaṇa, with his body horripilated due to devotion, fell at the charming pair of the feet of Viṣṇu.

The lord said:

190. Rise, get up, O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased with you by your devotion. Tell me what is desired by you. I shall certainly give it to you.

Bhadratanu said:

191-193. O highest lord, O Govinda, O kind one, O greatest one, O Acyuta, who will get on the earth what I have received now? Yet, O enemy of Mura, I ask for one boon from you. O lord, may I have firm devotion to you in every existence. You, being pleased, will give everything desired by that man who would devoutly recite this hymn composed by me.

The lord said:

194-195. O brāhmaṇa, the boon is given to you. There is no doubt about it. Yet, O wise one, I desire to form friendship with you. I do not deserve to have a servant (like you), since you are just like (i.e. equal to) me. Therefore, I have now displayed this friendship with you.

Vyāsa said:

196-201. O Jaimini, then that kind god Viṣṇu, loving his devotees, formed friendship with the pious one. Viṣṇu gladly gave him the garland put round his own neck. The brāhmaṇa also devoutly gave Viṣṇu a garland of tulasī (-leaves). Having spread out his four hands, Viṣṇu embraced him. The brāhmaṇa also joyfully embraced lord Viṣṇu. Having thus formed friendship with that brāhmaṇa, kind Viṣṇu, accepting devotion, vanished there only. Then Viṣṇu everyday played with the brāhmaṇa with a ball in that holy place (called) Puruṣottama. O brāhmaṇa sage, once, seeing the brāhmaṇa (to be) weak, Viṣṇu, full of pity, said (these) words to the brāhmaṇa with affection:

The lord said:

202. O friend, how have you become weak? Who snatched away your wealth? What is the anxiety in your mind? Friend, please tell it.

Bhadratanu said:

203. O lord of the world, to please you I practise penance everyday. Due to that, O lord, my body has become weak.

The lord said:

204-209. I am not so much pleased with anyone else as I am pleased with you. (Then) O best brāhmaṇa, why do you trouble your body again? Seeing you weak, anxiety is produced in my heart. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, give up this trouble to your body.

The brāhmaṇa was adorned by the lord of gods with his own upper garments, with his own garments and ornaments, with very charming golden rings, and with bracelets shining round his own hands. Lord Kṛṣṇa took the crown from his own forehead, the pair of anklets from his own feet, a golden necklace from his own neck, and gave them to the best brāhmaṇa. The pious brāhmaṇa, adorned with those ornaments given by Śrī Hari, and knowing the game with a ball would always play with Kṛṣṇa charming like a black lotus. Once Dānta saw him who had adorned his body with ornaments, whose pair of lips was bright due to the redness of tāmbūla, who had put on a divine garment and a very beautiful upper garment and who had a smiling face.

Dānta said:

210-219. O good Bhadratanu, you still do not give up sinful notions. All people, even after seeing your act, condemn it. Since I made you my disciple, all the ornaments are mine. An egotist, one of a bad character, a cruel one, one addicted to sins, one who destroys the teacher's fame, are five defiled disciples. So also, one having no faith, one who is garrulous, one of a fickle mind, one who censures the preceptor behind his back—these are said to be mean disciples. The wise ones should make a disciple after ascertaining his excellent character, since knowledge going to the wicked always causes pain to the preceptor also. Those sciences which are declared by the philosophers to bring fame, instantly

destroy the tree of the teacher's fame, when they are taught to the wicked. The sinful ones never like pious deeds, as the flies do not like fragrant sandal. As donkeys are not gratified by eating sweet meats, in the same way the wicked are not gratified by pious thoughts. Lakṣmī and piety, giving all desired objects, would never resort to a wicked one for fear of infamy. Or if they resort to him, they perish. And by chance he obtains, through (good) luck, highest knowledge; (if) he obtains it, (good) fortune leaves him.

Bhadratanu said:

220-221. O brāhmaṇa sage, you are speaking the truth. I am not proficient in the holy texts. You will never have infamy due to me (as) your disciple. O best brāhmaṇa, since, through your favour, I accomplished all my desired objects, you alone are difficult to be secured on the earth.

Dānta said:

222. O brāhmaṇa, tell (me) which desired object you accomplished. How did you terminate your penance just in a short time?

Bhadratanu said:

223-227. O preceptor, I gave up my daily rites etc. by the order of Viṣṇu whom I was able to see with little trouble. O best brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu was so much pleased with me that he gave me his upper garment, (another) garment, two golden pitchers, the bracelet(s) (worn) round his hand(s), the crown on his forehead, the anklet(s) from his feet, and his own necklace. He who removes the affliction of his servants, has formed friendship with me. O preceptor, I constantly play with him the game with a ball. Though I do not go after (your) having heard these words of me, yet I have told with conviction in your presence.

Dānta said:

228-231. Lord Viṣṇu did not appear before me though I have propitiated him for seven thousand years with great devotion. Oh, having worshipped Viṣṇu only for five days, O best one

you had his audience, difficult to be obtained even by gods. You are blessed; you are fortunate. You are (i.e. should be) called actually a god, since the lord affectionately formed friendship with you. O best brāhmaṇa, when you have affection for me, (then) tell me, O brāhmaṇa, how seeing Viṣṇu is difficult for me.

Vyāsa said:

232-233. Thus addressed by his preceptor, the wise, amazed brāhmaṇa, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, went to his own hermitage. Then the next day he went (to Viṣṇu) and played (with him) with a ball. And full of politeness, he said these words to the kind lord of the world:

Bhadratanu said:

234-235. O lord of gods, O kind one, O lord of Lakṣmī, my preceptor desires to see you. Tell me who am here, what your order is. O you having lotus-like eyes, the brāhmaṇa is extremely devoted to you. Therefore, O best god, please appear before him.

The lord said:

236-238. O best brāhmaṇa, you worshipped me with great devotion during many births. Therefore, now I appeared before you. That wise brāhmaṇa, having worshipped me, (should) desire to see me, invisible even to deities, after a few days. He too is my great devotee. He is very much interested in worshipping me. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, he will sometime have my audience.

Vyāsa said:

239. Having heard these words the brāhmaṇa again devoutly spoke to Viṣṇu, the destroyer of afflictions:

Bhadratanu said:

240-241. O lord of the world, O you who love your devotees, if you favour me, then appear before him in my presence. O god, my preceptor has asked for your audience as his fee. (Therefore,) O lord, having granted him audience, protect me.

The lord said:

242-245. When you laid out as his fee my audience, then bring your preceptor and make him see me.

Thus ordered by him, Bhadratanu went to the excellent hermitage of his preceptor. The preceptor came joyfully. When that brāhmaṇa Dānta, the best among donors, came (there) Viṣṇu showed himself endowed with all (good) marks to him. Then that brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee, with his eyes full of tears of joy, joined the palms of his hands, and praised him.

Dānta said:

246-249. O kind one, O lord of Kamalā, O you who protect those who seek your shelter, salutation to you, salutation to you, salutation to you. Today my existence is fruitful; today my penance is fruitful; today everything of me is fruitful, (since) I saw you. O lord of Lakṣmī, O master, I have put before you, deep like crores of oceans, those words which I have thought out before. There is no eulogy of the lord of speech, the master of the world, which will produce love for you in my mind. O lord, protect me, protect me; be pleased, O lord of the world. Choose me even as the servant of the servant of the servant of you.

Vyāsa said:

250. O Jaimini, then that lord of gods, who accepted devotion and who was full of pity, laughed, put his lotus-like hand on his head, and spoke thus:

The lord said:

251. O best brāhmaṇa, you are my devotee. You have seen me. You will have all welfare due to my favour.

Vyāsa said:

252-257. O brāhmaṇa, having affectionately embraced Dānta and Bhadratanu, the greatest god suddenly disappeared just there. In that excellent holy place Puruṣottama, difficult to reach, Dānta, having seen Viṣṇu by means of *kriyāyoga* (employ-

ment of rituals), went to the highest place. That brāhmaṇa Bhadratanu very much interested in devotion to Viṣṇu also obtained at the end of his life liberation, difficult to be obtained even by gods. The sin committed during many existences by him who would devoutly worship the highest lord even for a day, (perishes. His) love for Viṣṇu increases. Even today all gods like Brahmā do not know the power of Viṣṇu's devotee on the earth, O Jaimini. O brāhmaṇa, this land of religious rites (i.e. Bhāratavarṣa), where having worshipped Viṣṇu men would be honoured by gods, is more difficult than heaven to be secured.

258-263. O best brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra, afraid of losing their great religious merit, constantly say to one another: "When shall we just again go to the land of religious rites? When shall we worship there the lord of Lakṣmī? These people are very fortunate and are greater even than we, (since) they worship lord Viṣṇu in Bhāratavarṣa, difficult to be reached. Oh, who can describe the merits of Bhāratavarṣa where having formerly worshipped Viṣṇu we have attained godhead?" O best brāhmaṇa, in this way all hosts of gods like Indra always praise the Bhārata region, giving happiness. In this mundane existence no one like him who, after getting a birth there, has not worshipped Viṣṇu, is either seen or heard of.

264-265. I am telling the truth. I am again telling the truth only. Those men who, without being tired, and with firm devotion, even once worship the lord of the universe in this land of religious rites, are freed from sins easily committed, and quickly reach beatitude.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Greatness of Puruṣottama

Jaimini said:

1. O preceptor, if you favour me, then tell me about the greatness of Puruṣottama which you said to be the greatest holy place.

Vyāsa said:

2-6. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the greatness of Puruṣottama (told by me) in brief. Who else but Viṣṇu is able to tell it in the world? O best brāhmaṇa, the city called Puruṣottama is (situated) on the shore of the Lavaṇa sea (the Salt-sea), and it is more difficult to be reached than even heaven. Since Śrī Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu) lives in that city, therefore those who are conversant with the name have called it Puruṣottama. O brāhmaṇa, that rare holy place is ten yojanas (in area) on all sides. The men living there are seen to have four arms by gods. While entering the holy place, all would have the form of Viṣṇu. Therefore, the wise should raise no doubt about it.

7-9. O best brāhmaṇa, since Viṣṇu is a cāṇḍāla there, the food of (i.e. offered by) cāṇḍālas should be accepted by brāhmaṇas (at that holy place). There Lakṣmī cooks the food, and Viṣṇu himself eats (it). Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, the boiled rice there is difficult to be had even by deities. For those men who eat the pure food left over after it is eaten by Viṣṇu, salvation is not difficult to be had.

10-11. All gods like Brahmā everyday come (there) and eat that food which is very difficult to be had. Then what can be said about human beings? All great sages call him the hater of Viṣṇu, whose mind does not take delight in that food which is very difficult to be had.

12-19. O brāhmaṇa, as the water of Gaṅgā is pure everywhere, in the same way that food, destroying sins, is pure everywhere. O best brāhmaṇa, though that food is delicate, divine, and of the size of a partridge's belly, it is capable of removing sins. The sins committed formerly of (i.e. by) him whose devotion proceeds to that food, very difficult to obtain, perish. O best brāhmaṇa, he whose religious merit earned in many existences perishes, does not develop devotion for that food. Those mortals, full of devotion, who bathe in the lake of Indradyumna, in the large and deep pool of Mārkaṇḍeya, in Rohiṇī, in the sea, so also in the water of Śvetagaṅgā, are not reborn on this earth. O brāhmaṇa, the dead ancestors gratified with the water of the Salt-sea, are free from all afflictions, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. The wise ones have declared this sea to be the king of holy places. Therefore, every act done there would be inexhaustible.

20-25. There is no doubt that whatever act—honouring dead ancestors, giving gifts, worshipping the feet of the lord, muttering prayers, or any other act which a man performs in that charming holy place Viṣṇu would be fully inexhaustible. Those men who see (the idols of) Balabhadra, Subhadrā, and lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, have nothing that is difficult to be got. A man, even performing hundreds of acts of religious merit, does not get liberation without seeing (the idols of) Śrī Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Bala(rāma). O best brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra salute him whose body has become red due to stroke(s) of cane there. O brāhmaṇa, all hosts of gods like Indra, remaining in the atmosphere and moving in aeroplanes, and being very delighted speak like this to one another:

26-28. ‘When will Lakṣmī’s lord give us the existence of a man? Then like a man we shall go to see lord Viṣṇu. When will our bodies be red due to the stroke(s) of cane in that holy place Śrī Puruṣottama?’ O best brāhmaṇa, all gods like Indra always long for the stroke(s) of cane in that holy place, granting boons.

29-32. Those men who see there the Akṣaya Vāṭa (the inexhaustible fig-tree) with devotion, are freed from sins committed during crores of existences, and go to the highest position. The liberation of those who see (the idols of) Subhadrā, Balabhadra, Jagannātha, Anāmaya (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), the white Mādhava—the lord of gods, so also the deep and large pool of Mārkaṇḍeya, Jyāmeśvara, Hanūmat, the Akṣaya Vāṭa with devotion, is eternal. Listen to the religious merit of those men who there see Govinda rocked to and fro in a swing in the month of Phālguna.

33-38. Freed from all sins they go to Viṣṇu’s abode in the end. Having obtained knowledge there only, they attain beatitude, very difficult to be secured. O Jaimini, he who sees Jagannātha in the west in the month of Caitra, would enter Viṣṇu’s body after he is dead. That man who would see the lord of the world on the Ekādaśī of the bright half of Caitra, so also on the Tṛtīyā, is surely liberated. O brāhmaṇa sage, all the desires of that man who would enter (the place of) the great bath of the lord of the world, are fulfilled, in the sky. All gods like Brahmā, remain in the sky, and full of devotion, observe the great bath of the lord of the world. O brāhmaṇa sage, a mortal on seeing (the

idol of) Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, on the great full-moon day, obtains that highest position of Viṣṇu.

39-41. There is no doubt that he who would see (the idols of) Lakṣmī's lord and Balabhadra going to the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa (the pavilion called Guṇḍikā) in Āṣāḍha, is liberated. He who sees (the idol of) the lotus-eyed lord of the world seated in a chariot, does not get rebirth in the mundane existence, giving every (kind of) affliction. The lord cuts off the painful bond of the worldly existence of those men who devoutly see (the idol of) Subhadrā mounted on a chariot.

42. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who is sonless, or whose son is dead and who sees (the idol of) Subhadrā, has many children, and her children live (long).

43-55. An unfortunate lady (deserted by her husband) that has but one child would indeed become fortunate in the matter of her lord and would have many children. That man who sees (the idol of) Kṛṣṇa that is in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, so also (those of) Balabhadra and Subhadrā, goes to the highest position. O Jaimini, a sick person or an unhappy person who would see (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, is instantly free from the disease or the affliction. O best brāhmaṇa, he who, being sonless, would see (the idol of) Viṣṇu that is in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, would obtain a son who is Viṣṇu's devotee. One desiring knowledge gets it. One longing for wealth obtains it. One wanting a wife gets her. One desiring liberation would get it. O brāhmaṇa, that king who is deprived of his kingdom and who sees with devotion (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa gets it (back). The enemies of him who, troubled by his enemies, devoutly sees (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, perish, O brāhmaṇa sage. He who, very much harassed by the king, sees (the idol of) Viṣṇu in the Guṇḍikā-maṇḍapa, would instantly bring the king under his control. Of all pilgrimages the one to Guṇḍikā is said to be the best. Therefore, even by abandoning hundreds of other activities, men should undertake it. That man who in that charming holy city sees Viṣṇu at the time of going to bed or getting up, is honoured even by gods. On the earth who can describe the importance of Puruṣottama, by entering which (holy place) a man would become Viṣṇu? What is the use of prolixity? I tell in brief: Of all holy

places Puruṣottama is the best. He who desires to cross this ocean of worldly existence, which is very deep, which causes pain, which is the resort of dangerous hosts of sins, should see Viṣṇu, the best of gods, in the holy place called Puruṣottama, giving all pleasure.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

What Pleases Viṣṇu; What Makes Him Angry?

Vyāsa said:

1-2. O best brāhmaṇa, those men who, full of devotion, resort to Viṣṇu, never face a disaster. I will once more narrate the greatness of Lakṣmī's lord, hearing which all men obtain the highest position.

3-4. Devotees of Viṣṇu are satisfied with listening to the greatness of Kṛṣṇa. Heretics, suffering from trouble in a hell, are not satisfied. O best brāhmaṇa, the excellent greatness of Viṣṇu should not be narrated in the presence of heretics. It should be told in the presence of Viṣṇu's devotees.

5-9. O Jaimini, formerly in Tretā yuga there lived a brāhmaṇa, Urviśu by name. He was always engaged in sinful acts, and was highly given to the censure of religion. He snatched brāhmaṇas' wealth. O best brāhmaṇa, he was always bent upon cohabitation with another's wife. He ate cow's flesh. He drank liquor. He had an ardent longing for the amorous gestures of prostitutes. He harmed him who sought his shelter. He always censured others. He was a traitor. He harmed his friends. He harassed his kinsmen also. He told lies. He was cruel. He used to have the company of heretics. He cut off the livelihood of brāhmaṇas. He took away deposits. Seeing him cruel and highly attached to sins like that all his kinsmen who were angry came to his house.

The kinsmen said:

10-14. O fool, the eminence which our ancestors had earned in our pure family is (now) being destroyed by you. Giving up the righteous path, you are always committing sin(s). You are

born as the destroyer of the fame of our family and as one giving pain to your kinsmen. In you (i.e. with regard to you) the Creator's creation is thought to be causing wonder. Poison came up from that sea from which the moon had come up. Oh, it is not possible to measure the power of bad sons. In a moment they destroy the fame gathered by many men (i.e. their ancestors). Even a low family becomes the greatest when the best son is born (in it). But even the best family is degraded when a mean son is born in it.

Vyāsa said:

15-20. O brāhmaṇa, speaking like this all the kinsmen, getting angry due to the fear of infamy, deserted that greatest sinner. He, deserted by all his kinsmen and reproached by all people, was sorry, and deprived of all his affluence, became a bandit. All (the members of) the community seized him who did that act of a robber, cruel and harmful to others, and reported him to the king. O best brāhmaṇa, the king, due to affection for his father, did not kill him, (but) expelled him from his country. Then the cruel one, resorting to a forest along with many (other) haughty bandits, remained (there) for snatching the wealth of travellers. O Jaimini, he, fatigued while roaming in the forest, sometime went, along with (other) bandits, for a bath to a river-bank.

21-22. This wicked one saw in that river many blessed brāhmaṇas highly devoted to the lord's worship. Then all the brāhmaṇas, having worshipped Viṣṇu, spoke to one another with great curiosity:

23-29a. "I have today dropped those campaka-flowers (in honour of Viṣṇu)." Someone (else) said: "I have offered tām-būla to Viṣṇu. In my life I shall never eat a tām-būla. Today I have offered the best banana to Viṣṇu. Birth after birth I would eat a banana." Someone said: "I have offered a pomegranate to Viṣṇu." Someone said: "I have offered an excellent mango (to Viṣṇu)." Having heard these words of them talking to one another, Urviśu thought, 'What shall I offer to Viṣṇu? I cannot give all those things that are eatables in the worldly existence to Viṣṇu. (Then) What shall I offer to him? I, a thief, overcome by the fear of the king, always stay in the forest. I am never entitled to getting into a cart.'

Vyāsa said:

29b-33. O best brāhmaṇa, the thief, repeatedly speaking like this, gave a cart to Viṣṇu, the giver of the four goals (of human life). Then all the brāhmaṇas went as they had come. That thief also went to his abode along with (other) thieves. Once a traveller carrying a basket of jaggery came to that region of the impudent (thieves) along the same path. Then this fearless bandit, harming others, snatched that basket of jaggery of the traveller. Then the robbers broke the basket of jaggery.

34-36. As his share Urviśu obtained a cart fashioned from jaggery. O best brāhmaṇa, Urviśu, having obtained that jaggery-cart thought in his mind recollecting the words (of those brāhmaṇas): 'Formerly I myself have presented a cart to Viṣṇu. Therefore, in this existence, I should not take a cart.' Thinking like this in his mind he intended to give the cart (to a brāhmaṇa).

37-42. To please Viṣṇu he gave it to some brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, knowing that devotion of that great sinner, Viṣṇu who was pleased, instantly removed all his sin. O brāhmaṇa, on the same day all the angry citizens entered that great forest and killed that Urviśu. To take him (to his own abode) the lord sent an aeroplane made of gold, so also messengers adorned with various ornaments. Then those messengers of the lord, having put that Urviśu who was dead, into the aeroplane, instantly went to Viṣṇu's city. Then the best one among the pious obtained Viṣṇu's proximity. After living near Viṣṇu for a hundred periods of Manu, and after securing the highest knowledge, he entered Viṣṇu's body.

Vyāsa said:

43-44. A man who, somehow or the other, is devoted to Viṣṇu, goes, like a royal swan beyond the ocean of the worldly existence. He in whose heart there is devotion for Viṣṇu even for a moment, goes to the highest position. Even though he is a sinner, he goes (to the highest position).

45. One should, after offering even the best thing to Viṣṇu, afterwards enjoy it for the appeasement of the sin.

46. The thing that is offered to Viṣṇu should be given to a brāhmaṇa. The wise should not enjoy any remnant of it themselves.

47. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu should not enjoy whatever things and sweets without offering them to Viṣṇu.

48-51. I shall again tell, along with its history, the greatness of eatables offered to Viṣṇu, which destroy all sins. O brāhmaṇa, being attentive, listen to it. There was a brāhmaṇa, Sarvajani by name, who was born in a pure family. He was calm, controlled, kind and honoured his preceptors (or elderly persons) and brāhmaṇas. He was absorbed in Viṣṇu's worship, and was exclusively devoted to remembering Viṣṇu. He removed the affliction of those who sought his shelter; he was truthful, and had curbed his senses. He (everyday) bathed in the morning. He followed the practices of his own (caste); he abandoned harm (to others); he was absorbed in (observing) the Ekādaśī vow; he was intent upon honouring his kinsmen.

52-54. Once that best brāhmaṇa saw in his dream lord Viṣṇu who was dark, whose eyes were like dustless lotuses, who had a smiling face, who had put on a yellow garment, whose body was bright due to golden ear-rings and anklets and a crown, whose chest shone with the Kaustubha (gem), who was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers. He had four arms, had held a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, and had worn a golden sacred thread.

55. Having seen the lord of the world in the dream, the brāhmaṇa joined the palms of his hands, and with his body horripilated, gladly praised him.

56-64. "I salute you, (i.e.) Viṣṇu, who are the lord of the entire world, who destroy the grief, fear and diseases of good people, who are dear to Lakṣmī's heart, who give the nectar of piety, material welfare, and sensual enjoyment. O Murāri, I, being arrogant through folly committed all sins. I am, therefore, frightened. Giving the boat of your devotion, take me out of this deep ocean of (the existence in) the world. O Viṣṇu, though I know that a man quickly obtains sin and delusion on the earth, yet I am always gladly committing sins. Therefore, there is no man here (i.e. on the earth) who is foolish like me. O Viṣṇu, do I who have committed sins, not know that the tree of religious merit suddenly gives the fruit of happiness, O Nṛhari? O lord, I have no wealth to (undertake) the act of offering you a tree having flowers. Be pleased. O lord, what shall I do? O god, this

bee of my heart, leaving the pair of your lotus-like feet, the place of the best nectar, constantly moves to a woman's face—misunderstanding it for a lotus which causes death and which is full of the phlegm of deceit. (My) hand is bereft of (giving) gifts. (My) mouth tells lies. (My) ears are always intent upon listening to sinful things. O Viṣṇu, remove these faults of me, your servant, since, O lord, you always destroy the blemishes of him who has sought your shelter. O Nṛhari, at one time, I have, in this world, obtained the very strong boat of your devotion in (order to cross) this fearful ocean of the worldly existence. Even in that case, I, under the sway of Destiny, remain a wicked-hearted person. I am constantly having an unhappy time. Is there a bright path, kind, pleasant and free from all afflictions, for crossing the mundane existence? O Viṣṇu, my eyes blinded by a great darkness in the form of delusion never go to you in this world. O destroyer of Keśin, O you whose lotus-like feet are saluted by all gods, since I see you today, this mind of me, even of a wicked nature, destroying the trouble of people that are tormented, has perished."

Vyāsa said:

65. Thus praised by him, the revered god, the lord of Lakṣmī, knower of words and saviour from the ocean of the worldly existence, said (these) words:

The lord said:

66-67. O best brāhmaṇa, I am constantly pleased with your devotion. Therefore, you will have full happiness soon. O brāhmaṇa, I have formerly emancipated you, though a sinner. Now you are my devotee. You will not face a calamity.

The brāhmaṇa said:

68-69. O Viṣṇu, who was I formerly? What sin did I commit? How did you formerly emancipate me, though a sinner? Since you are always kind, O lord, tell me all this—How was I born, and how was I created by you in this mundane existence?

The lord said:

70-73. O best brāhmaṇa, though this secret is not to be

divulged, I am telling it through affection for you. Listen. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly due to the ripening of your acts you were born in a region on the earth in the stock of a bird. You, always oppressed by hunger and thirst, wandered, eating insects and (drinking) the hot water of springs. You, born in the stock of a bird, always experiencing various afflictions formerly lived for four thousand years on the earth.

74-77. Once, a brāhmaṇa named Kulabhadra, knowing the full truth, devoutly worshipped me with offerings of eatables etc. on the bank of a river. The best brāhmaṇa, having offered me rice as the offering of eatables, again went home after leaving it just there. Then you, a hungry bird, having come down from the tree, ate all that rice offered as an offering of eatables to me. On just eating it you were instantly freed from very fearful sins. Once, on the completion of your life, you died, O brāhmaṇa.

78-80. Then by all means I sent my messengers to bring you (to me). Then putting you whose sins had perished, into a chariot, the hosts of messengers instantly came to the highest place. Enjoying all pleasures, difficult to be had even by gods, you stayed with me for thousands of crores of yugas. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, you went to (i.e. were born in) a pure brāhmaṇa-family.

81-84a. There (i.e. in that existence) also, very firm devotion for me was again produced in you. O excellent brāhmaṇa, having everyday worshipped me with employment of rituals, you will obtain my position at the end of your life. O brāhmaṇa, when I am pleased, you, though a sinner, will enjoy liberation. When sometime I am angry with a man, he is a sinner, even though he is pious; (but) O brāhmaṇa, when I am pleased, a man, though he is a sinner, obtains liberation. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, O you of a good vow, may you have welfare. You are my devotee. I shall give you that place which cannot be obtained even by gods.

The brāhmaṇa said:

84b-86a. O lord, due to your grace, I have heard my former account. Now I desire to hear something. O lord, tell it. O lord, with whom are you pleased? O best of gods, with whom are you angry? With great favour please tell me all this.

The lord said:

86b-94. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall tell (you) all that in brief, due to which act pleasure is produced in my heart and due to which anger is produced. O best brāhmaṇa, with him who acts for my sake and who is without egotism, I am always pleased. With him who, full of piety and devotion, speaks calmly for me, I am always pleased. With that man who having secured sweet-meat gives it to me and who is equanimous in honour and insult, I am always pleased. With the man who knows me to be present in the bodies of all beings and who avoids harm to others, I am always pleased. With him who repeatedly thinking well, does his acts and who desires the good of cows and brāhmaṇas, I am always pleased. With him who would, with great effort, keep the word uttered by him, and who goes to him carefully who has sought his shelter, I am always pleased. O best brāhmaṇa, with him who always gives gifts to those who do not oblige him, and whose heart is always in me, I am always delighted. I have told (you) in brief with which act I am pleased.

95-111a. O brāhmaṇa, I (now) tell the act due to which I am angry. Listen to it. He who is engaged in harming others, who is cruel to all living beings, who is egoistic, who is always angry, makes me his enemy. He who tells lies, who is cruel, who is given to censuring others, who destroys the mode of the living of the wise, makes me his enemy. The fool who, through delusion, abandons his parents whose faults are not noticed, so also his wife, brother, sister, makes me his enemy. A dull-witted man who reproaches his parents, who insults his preceptor, makes me his enemy, O brāhmaṇa. Those who destroy groves, who destroy lakes, who destroy villages, make me their enemy. With those people who, on seeing another's wife are dejected, who listen to sinful discussion, I am always angry. With those who hate the lord, who snatch the wealth of the unprotected, who are traitors, I am always angry. With those who take away the price of cow's milk, who are the husbands of Śūdra women, who harm the holy fig-tree, I am always angry. With those who make a distinction among Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, and who are very much attached to other's wives, I am always angry. With those men of sinful minds, who eat on the Ekādaśī day through greed and who censure the Vedas, I am always angry. With those who are attached

to sinful thoughts and to plotting against their friends, and who destroy the dhātrī-tree I am always angry. With those who, deluded by lust, cohabit by day and who cohabit with a woman in her menses, I am always angry. O best one, those who, through folly, approach a woman who has not attained puberty, so also the rogues who approach a woman observing a vow, make me their enemy. I am always angry with them who take a meal at night on the new-moon day, so also with them who take two meals on Sundays. O brāhmaṇa, with those who do not avoid cohabitation, flesh, oil on new-moon day, I am always angry. What is the use of talking much in this matter? I (shall) tell you in brief. So also I am always angry with them who censure Viṣṇu's devotees.

Vyāsa said:

111b-117. Speaking like this lord Viṣṇu suddenly vanished. And that brāhmaṇa, having abandoned his sleep, got up from his bed. Due to the words uttered by Viṣṇu the brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, gave up all (other) activities and was engaged in the employment of rituals. This is the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) them who even eat the articles of food (after they are) offered to Viṣṇu. I do not know how much fruit would be theirs who have worshipped Viṣṇu. O best one, O Jaimini, I (shall) tell you in brief. Listen. A man, having performed Viṣṇu's worship (but) once, obtains the highest position. In the world manhood is difficult to be obtained. Even in it worship of Viṣṇu is (difficult to be had). O best brāhmaṇa, there also devotion is declared to be difficult. That respectable man in whose mind there is a desire to cross the ocean of the mundane existence, should everyday devoutly worship Viṣṇu with all rites.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Great Efficacy of Giving (Charity)

Vyāsa said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you in brief the fruit of Viṣṇu's worship. Now I shall tell (you about) the presents. Listen attentively.

2-3. Of giving presents and penance, giving presents is said to be superior. Due to penance, it is said, there is sin. In the act of giving presents there is no sin. Penance is (said to be) the best in Kṛtayuga. And meditation is (said to be) the best in Tretā (yuga). Worship is (said to be) the best in Dvāpara (yuga). Giving presents is (said to be) the best in Kali (yuga).

4-6. Therefore, the wise desiring the highest position, should always make presents for pleasing Lakṣmī's lord in Kaliyuga. As the moon waxes digit by digit, similar is said to be the condition of giving gifts and of penance by the wise. O best brāhmaṇa, wealth should be stored (beginning) with even a straw. A wise man should use his stored wealth in giving gifts.

7-8. A man who, though having wealth, does not enjoy or give it, should be known to be a poor man, deprived of giving gifts or of enjoyment. O brāhmaṇa, with whom does wealth come? Who goes with it? When death comes, that which is given before in this world comes (to a man's help).

9-11. Those men who become poor due to repeatedly giving gifts should not be known to be poor. They are the great lords in the next world. Those who save wealth due to miserliness should be known to be very unhappy. O Jaimini, at the end, giving it up all, they, being disappointed, go (i.e. die). O best brāhmaṇa, a man bereft of a good, strong power (lives) in the other world devoid of wealth and relatives. Whatever is not given by a man, does not stand by him there.

12. O best brāhmaṇa, the devotees of Viṣṇu, having devotion and faith, should everyday devoutly give small gifts.

13-19a. O best brāhmaṇa, the wise have declared the gift of food as the best of all gifts. So also the gift of water. Vital airs cannot stay in the body without food. (Therefore) one who gives food should be known to be the giver of life. (And) the giver

of life is the giver of everything. Therefore, the giver of food obtains the fruit of all (kinds of) gifts. O Jaimini, giving water is similar to giving food. Food would not exist without water. Therefore, water is given. O best brāhmaṇa, hunger and thirst are said to be equal. Therefore, the wise have said the gift of water to be the best. Water is the life of men. Life is not their life. Therefore, for the protection of life, a wise man should give water. O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given food and water on the earth, has given all gifts. There is no doubt about it.

19b. Listen to the greatness of the gift of food and the gift of water:

20-26a. In the city of Hastināpura itself there lived a prostitute beautiful like a divine damsel, rich like Kubera. She was known as Ratividagdhā, and had all the marks (of a beautiful lady). There (also) lived a brāhmaṇa lady, named Kṣemaṅkarī, born in a great family. That daughter of a brāhmaṇa, who possessed all virtues, was a widow. O best brāhmaṇa, that brāhmaṇa lady had her mind attached to paramours. She, doing prohibited act (s) became thoughtless. O brāhmaṇa, the brāhmaṇa lady, being near the prostitute, formed friendship with her, and took to the life of a prostitute, O Jaimini, the prostitute and the brāhmaṇa lady together, joyfully, everyday committed innumerable sins. Then that Ratividagdhā attained old age. The brāhmaṇa lady of a bad character also (became old). Sometime that chief prostitute who was aging, who was very much amazed, and who was full of modesty, said these words to her friend, O brāhmaṇa:

Ratividagdhā said:

26b-32a. O friend, along with you, I committed many fearful sins. Even now I have a great thought (i.e. a strong desire) for (committing) sins. All my beauty and strength has been taken away by old age. (The condition) like this causing ill-health, does not make (me) give up hope. I, who have committed sins, have secured very great real estate. Seeing this my death, as it were, has approached. Who will protect my wealth obtained through sins which I committed, when I die issueless? Therefore, O friend, if you consent, I desire to give to brāhmaṇas all my wealth obtained unjustly.

The brāhmaṇa lady said:

32b-34. See, I have always given to unworthy recipients all the wealth which I had collected. Therefore, I am without wealth. What shall I give to a brāhmaṇa? If you have wealth, then make a present of it quickly.

Hearing these words of her, the prostitute was very much glad.

35-43. With all her wealth she made a present of food. There was an excellent brāhmaṇa named Hariśarman, who very devoutly always worshipped lord Viṣṇu. He who had curbed his senses and his anger, who was free from harming (others) and hypocrisy, practised a great (i.e. severe) penance to please Lakṣmī's lord. With sandal, flowers, offerings, incense, ghee and lamps he everyday worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of gods. Even though the brāhmaṇa was rich he was always afraid of spending money. O best brāhmaṇa, in the house of the miser, ants, rats and other living beings, were always hungry. O best brāhmaṇa, he, without (i.e. not doing) the act of giving gifts, himself enjoyed everyday all the wealth that he had earned. For fear of being requested (to give) money, he never conversed with his friends and his brāhmaṇa relatives. O best brāhmaṇa, counting his very large wealth in his own house, he, regarding himself as the greatest, delighted himself. O brāhmaṇa, at the time destined for death, that very rich brāhmaṇa, that prostitute and that brāhmaṇa lady died at the same time.

44-45. Then, very fierce messengers, with nooses and mallets in their hands, of god Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) came to take them (to him). Then, O Jaimini, those messengers like Caṇḍa, took them and instantly went to Yama's city along a difficult path.

Caṇḍa said (to Yama):

46. O lord of life, by your order Hariśarman is brought here. So also the prostitute, the brāhmaṇa lady (are brought here). Look at them standing before you.

47. Seeing them, the lord of life laughed, O best brāhmaṇa, and spoke thus to Citragupta skilled in all jobs:

Yama said:

48. O wise, very intelligent Citragupta, think over, from the beginning all the good and evil acts of these.

49. Then by Yama's order, the wise Citragupta considered all their good as well as evil acts.

Citragupta said:

50-56. O god, listen I shall tell (you) their religious merit and sins, which this prostitute, this brāhmaṇa lady and Hariśarman did. It is not possible to narrate the sins which this prostitute called Ratividagdhā, of a very wicked heart, committed. O Sun's son, this one, when she became old, gave food with all her wealth that was unjustly earned. Due to the efficacy of the gift of food, she was abandoned by all her sins committed during crores of existences, which would have resulted in her residence in houses of torments (i.e. where torments are inflicted). O great king, those who, even though they are sinners, give gift of food on the earth, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. As many sins of (i.e. due to) brahminicide perish as the number of foods given by men on the earth. There is no doubt about it. Sin, leaving the bodies of the givers of food, goes to the vessels of those receiving it, O Sun's son.

57-58. Therefore, the wise ones do not accept the food of sinners. Those fools who accept it through delusion are sinners only. O lord, I have told the good and evil acts of the prostitute. Listen to the good and evil acts of the brāhmaṇa lady.

59-67a. O lord, this brāhmaṇa lady named Kṣemaṅkarī, born in a pure family, and the wife of Bhadrakīrti, committed evil acts. Abandoning the acts of (i.e. suited to) the stage of life, she, proud of her youth, ardently longing for union with paramours, became most sinful. O king, once in her childhood, while playing with (other) children, she dug a ditch having four corners on the road. On the same day clouds showered water. O lord, that ditch made by her was filled with water. O king, at noon, a thirsty bull scorched by the sun's heat drank water there. Due to the efficacy of the act of giving water only, all her great sins perished, O wise son of the Sun. Freed from all sins, she went to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of gods, this wicked brāhmaṇa lady who

the devotee) gets happiness. I have obtained your proximity. What greater happiness is there than this?

Vyāsa said:

78-80. Hearing his words spoken through affection, the lord gave the brāhmaṇa his similarity (i.e. assimilated the brāhmaṇa into himself). The lord of Lakṣmī, gave him all happiness difficult to be obtained; but remembering his miserliness, did not give him his measure of food. After a couple of days, the brāhmaṇa, being without food (and therefore) overcome by hunger, and being humble through modesty, said to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods:

The brāhmaṇa said:

81-90. O lord, as the fruits of many austerities I have secured your position. O lord, even here how am I everyday suffering from hunger? Even on beds I am fanned with breezes from white chowries by celestial hosts of divine maidens who have attained the prime of youth? O lord, like the best king, I am adorned with large garlands of fragrant flowers and my entire body is smeared with sandal. O Viṣṇu, by your order, everyday ladies with beautiful bodies dance to the accompaniment of songs before me. Everyday, gods like Indra always carry the dust-particles from my feet (on their heads), which beautify the crowns on their heads. And, O lord of the world, gods, divine sages, (other) sages, always praise me with eulogies like (my) servants. I have become Viṣṇu, having four arms, dark, holding a conch, a disc, a mace, and a lotus, having eyes like full-blown lotuses, wearing a yellow garment, and fine ear-rings. I am having a golden sacred thread, a crown and also ear-rings. By gods I am seen to be another Garuḍa-bannered (god) like you. O lord, you have given me all these pleasures difficult to be obtained. (Then) O highest lord, how (i.e. why) do you not give me food? As a tree is burnt by the fire in its hollow, my body is being very much scorched by the fire of hunger.

91-93. O Viṣṇu, with the digestive fire of the stomach blazing, I, whose body is afflicted, do not like this happiness given by you. None else worshipped by hosts of gods, except you, the lord of the world, has ever been worshipped by me through

(physical) acts, mentally, or through speech. I have not been devoted to him (i.e. any other god than you) even in a dream. (Then) due to which fault (of mine), O lord, you are not giving me food?

Vyāsa said:

94-95. Then lord Viṣṇu, full of joy, said to him: "Well-being to you, O brāhmaṇa. Go quickly to Brahmā."

Hearing these words, the brāhmaṇa quickly went to Brahmā. Pointing out to him his miserliness, Brahmā said to him:

Brahmā said:

96-97. There is no doubt that (the fruit of) an action, obtained with difficulty, which is not given to a brāhmaṇa nor enjoyed by oneself, perishes. I have told you the entire cause of your affliction. O brāhmaṇa, well-being to you; you who have come from Yama, (now) go without any doubt.

The brāhmaṇa said

98. Through your grace I have heard fully (about) this maturity of my acts. Now tell (me) which gifts should be given by men.

Brhamā said:

99-101. There are many (kinds) of gifts. (All) cannot be described. O brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell (about them) in brief. Listen attentively. O best brāhmaṇa, the pious one who has made the gift of land, the best of all gifts, should be known to be the giver of all (kinds of) gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives (a piece of) land measuring a gocarman,¹ would, being freed from all sins, go to the highest place.

102-107. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. earned by) him who gives land along with the crop to a poor brāhmaṇa, O best brāhmaṇa. Freed from all sins, he would go to Viṣṇu's city. There he enjoys all happiness as long as fourteen Indras (rule).

1. Gocarman—A particular measure of surface thus defined by Vasiṣṭha:
 daśahastena varṣṇena daśavarṣṇān samantataḥ/
 pañca cābhyādhikān dadyādetadgocarma cocyate//

Again obtaining land, he would be a sovereign emperor. That man, enjoying the entire earth for a long time, would become Viṣṇu. Since, brāhmaṇas should accept the land, even after abandoning (i.e. not accepting) hundreds of (other) gifts, the giver of the land and its receiver both go to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, that dull brāhmaṇa who would reject the gift of land, would be very much afflicted in every existence. Even with him Viṣṇu is pleased and gives the highest position to him who would give a gift of land, even after obtaining it from others.

108-110. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who gives or causes (someone else) to give a village to a poor brāhmaṇa. The wise one would live in Viṣṇu's world for as many periods of Manu as there are dust-particles on the earth or as there are drops in showers. O brāhmaṇa, I am telling you about the religious merit of the noble one who gives a milch-cow along with her calf (to a brāhmaṇa). Listen.

111-121. A man who gives a cow to a brāhmaṇa would obtain that fruit which one would get by giving the earth with the seven islands along with the crop (on it). He who gives a bull to a brāhmaṇa with a family, is freed from sins and goes to Rudra's world. For as many thousands of kalpas as the number of small hair on the body of the bull, he rejoices with Rudra. He who gives a cow to one proficient in the Vedas, never returns (to this world) from Rudra's world. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a bull with sesamum seeds (to a brāhmaṇa) would live in Rudra's abode in accordance with the number of the sesamum seeds. He who gives gold even of the measure of a sesamum seed to a brāhmaṇa, goes, along with crores (of the members) of his family to Viṣṇu's abode. He who would devoutly give silver to a poor brāhmaṇa, reaches the world of the Moon and drinks nectar (there). O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a diamond or a pearl or a coral or any (other) gem, goes to Indra's world. O best brāhmaṇa, he, the generous-minded one, who gives the gift of a horse (to a brāhmaṇa) obtains the kingship of kings of gandharvas. There is no doubt about it. He who gives a young elephant without blemishes, would become a partner in the kingdom of gods like Indra, O brāhmaṇa. He too, who would give a palanquin carried by men, along with presents, to a brāhmaṇa,

would also, having secured Indra's position, live there for four kalpas.

122-126. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell, in brief, (about) the religious merit of (i.e. got by) him who gives the gift of śālagrāma stone to a brāhmaṇa; (please) listen. The giver of a śālagrāma stone obtains the same fruit as one obtains by giving the earth with the seven islands and with mountains and forests. The giver of a śālagrāma stone would get a crores times greater fruit than the one which men obtain by giving gold, jewels or other valuable things equal to their own weight.¹ O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given a śālagrāma stone has indeed given the fourteen worlds. O best man, that man who gives gold etc. equal to his weight, (lives) in heaven wearing divine garments, and (becomes) a king.

127-130. He is not born again in (i.e. from) the mother's womb. That best man who gives his daughter adorned (with ornaments, in marriage, to a worthy groom), would go to Viṣṇu's abode without (being required) to be born again. That foolish man who through delusion, sells his daughter, would go to the fearful hell called Purīṣahrada. O brāhmaṇa, that son that is born from the daughter (thus) sold, should be known like a cāṇḍāla, expelled from all religious rites. A man knowing the holy texts, should never see the face of him who sells his daughter.

131-136. If through ignorance he sees it, he should look at the Sun. O brāhmaṇa, all that auspicious act that is done in the presence of him who sells his daughter, would become fruitless, O brāhmaṇa. For the seller of his daughter there is no escape from hell. The one who gives his daughter (in marriage) does not again return from heaven. What is the use of talking much in this regard? I shall tell (it to you) in brief. The fruit of (the gift of) a diamond, (a piece) of land, and a daughter is hundred times more. Listen to the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by) him who gives a pair of shoes, an umbrella on the earth. I shall tell it to you in brief. Endowed with all affluence he would live here (i.e. in this world) for a hundred years. Reaching Indra's city after death (he would live there) for four hundred kalpas. He who gives a new garment goes to the best position.

1. Tulāpuruṣa—Gold, jewels or other valuable things equal to a man's weight (given to a brāhmaṇa as a gift).

137-147. He who would give an old garment, or an aging¹ cow or a girl in her menses, would always go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, a man who gives (the gift of) a fruit, goes to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven). There he enjoys the fruit like nectar for thousands of kalpas. O brāhmaṇa, the giver of vegetables goes to the position of lord Śiva. There he enjoys, along with gods, rice boiled in milk for two kalpas. A giver of milk, of curd, of ghṛe and of butter-milk obtains the drink of nectar in front of lord Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, a man who gives flowers, sandal, (would go) to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven and), decorated with flowers and sandal would stay there for thousands of yugas. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a bed, comes to Brahmā's world, and lies for a long time on a bed there. O best brāhmaṇa, he who offers a lamp or a seat, being free from all sins, is seated, surrounded by rows of burning lamps, on divine throne. O king(?), the giver of a tāmbūla enjoys all auspicious things. Lying on the bosom of divine ladies in heaven, he eats tāmbūla. O best brāhmaṇa, O best man, he who gives knowledge, would, after securing Viṣṇu's proximity, stay (near him) for a couple of hundred yugas. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, having secured knowledge there, he obtains, through the grace of Lakṣmī's lord, liberation, difficult to obtain. He who teaches a helpless, much afflicted brāhmaṇa, goes to Viṣṇu's abode, from which return (to this earth) is difficult to be had.

148-153. Even the best brāhmaṇa belonging to a noble family, does not shine without knowledge. Therefore, those who teach a brāhmaṇa, go to the highest position. A brāhmaṇa, to whom deities resort, is actually a god. The preceptor of all castes does not at all shine without knowledge. He who has taught a brāhmaṇa, has given (all) the gifts like gold, that are there in the world. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell you in brief the religious merit of that man who devoutly gives the gift of a book. For every letter that is there on every leaf of the book, he would get the fruit of giving a crore of tawny cows. The giver of the book would live in Vaikuṇṭha for as many periods of Manu as the days twice-borns read that book.

1. *Rajati*—*Jarati* seems to be the correct reading and not *rajati* which means 'whitish'.

154-160. O brāhmaṇa, there are many such gifts. Even in two hundred (months) who is in this world able to describe them correctly? All those sins like brāhmaṇicide which are committed by men are destroyed (by gifts). Therefore, one should give gifts. The fruit of that gift is obtained as long as the material of the gift given by the three castes through their religious merit, exists. There is no doubt that a man obtains the religious merit, crore times more than the gift given to please Lakṣmī's lord. O brāhmaṇa, therefore, an intelligent man should devoutly give a gift to please Viṣṇu. The wise have declared giving gifts to be superior even to penance. Therefore, a wise man should, even with an effort, give gifts. O brāhmaṇa, there is none like him in this world who does both—giving gifts and practising penance.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Brāhmaṇas; Gift of Food and Water

Vyāsa said:

1. Having heard Brahmā's words, that best brāhmaṇa, Hariśarman, again saluted him devoutly, and spoke, O Jaimini:

Hariśarman said:

2. O lord, please tell me as to whom the many gifts that you narrated should be given.

Brahmā said:

3-4. Of all the castes brāhmaṇa is the most venerable person. Gifts should be given to him by men having devotion and faith. A brāhmaṇa is the resort of all deities. He is actually a god on the earth. He saves a giver in this ocean of the universe, which is difficult to cross.

The brāhmaṇa said:

5. O best god, you have declared brāhmaṇa to be the most

respectable of all castes. But out of them (i.e. brāhmaṇas) who is the greatest? To whom is a gift given?

Brahmā said:

6-8. O best brāhmaṇa, all the brāhmaṇas are superior, and all are always respectable. But those brāhmaṇas who are spoilt by such blemishes as theft, so also our haters, are not respectable. So (gifts should) not be given to others. Brāhmaṇas of bad conduct are not respectable. Śūdras with their senses curbed are respectable. So also those who eat what is prohibited (are not to be honoured). Cows are supposed to be the mothers of people. O best brāhmaṇa, I am now particularly telling the greatness of brāhmaṇas through affection for you. Listen to it attentively.

9-11. Brāhmaṇas are respectable to kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. Brāhmaṇas are respectable to one another, and brāhmaṇas are to be honoured. O best man, the life, sons, fame, wealth of him who would worship a brāhmaṇa looking upon him as Viṣṇu, increase. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu desires to cut off the head of that foolish man who hoards (wealth) on the earth.

12-15. O Jaimini(?), a wise man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who has flowers in his hand, who has water in his hand, who has (the idol of) a god in his hand, and whose body is smeared with oil. A wise man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who is in water, who is in a temple of a deity, whose mind is absorbed in meditation, and who is worshipping a deity. O best brāhmaṇa, a wise man should not salute a brāhmaṇa performing outside (i.e. morning) duties, who is taking his meal, so also a brāhmaṇa who is singing Sāmans. An intelligent man should not salute everyone of the brāhmaṇas (separately) where many brāhmaṇas are present, O best brāhmaṇa.

16. He who would not salute (in return) a brāhmaṇa who has devoutly saluted, should be known to be like a cāṇḍāla, and should never be saluted.

17. Parents saluted by their son, should not salute him (in return). All brāhmaṇas saluted by (other) brāhmaṇas, should salute them (in return).

18. The wise ones do not hate brāhmaṇas and cows who have committed faults. If through folly they hate, Viṣṇu is always angry with them.

19. Yama puts a needle into both the eyes of him who looks angrily at suplicants (and) brāhmaṇas.

20. O brāhmaṇa, Yama puts a heated iron rod into that mouth with which fools reproach (others).

21. In that house where a brāhmaṇa eats (food), Viṣṇu himself (lives). So also all deities, manes and divine sages.

22-28. Yama quickly destroys all the sin in the body of him, the wise one, who would carry just a drop of water from the foot of a brāhmaṇa. All the holy places that exist in crores of worlds, exist in the right foot of a brāhmaṇa. He whose head is sprinkled with water from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, has bathed at all holy places and is initiated for all sacrifices. By carrying (on his head) the water from the foot of a brāhmaṇa all his fierce sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish at once. By carrying (on the head) the water from the foot of a brāhmaṇa, all diseases like consumption, highly afflicting, perish instantly. The dead ancestors gratified by the water offered at the feet of a brāhmaṇa for the dead ancestors, live in heaven as long as the moon and the stars (exist). By a wise man who would worship a brāhmaṇa's feet with dūrvās after washing them, Viṣṇu, the lord of the world and the best of all gods, is worshipped.

29-33. I am telling the truth (and) the truth (only). That mortal who would carry on his head the remains of the offering at the feet of brāhmaṇas, obtains eternal liberation. That best man who goes round a brāhmaṇa while keeping him to his right, has gone round the earth with the seven islands. He who would give a fruit or a tāmḃūla after wetting the feet of brāhmaṇas is free from a disease if he is ill, and from a sin if he is a sinner. One that is bound gets free from his bond on washing the feet of brāhmaṇas. By washing the feet of brāhmaṇas those women who have no children or whose children are dead, have many children and their children live (long). O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the greatness (of the wetting of a brāhmaṇa's feet) which removes all sins.

34a. I (shall) tell you in brief about (the importance of) wetting the feet of a brāhmaṇa.

34b-46a. Formerly there was a brāhmaṇa named Bhadrakriya, born in a pure family and highly devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu. He knew the Vedas, he was tranquil, and was highly

devoted to his parents. He honoured guests; so also he honoured his kinsmen. Once that best brāhmaṇa, with his body smeared with oil, went, taking with him clothes used for bathing, to a lake to bathe (then). That best brāhmaṇa who knew all holy texts and who was engaged in the well-being of all people, having bathed made offerings to his dead ancestors in the proper manner. Having finished the bath-rite, and repeating Viṣṇu's names, he came to his own house and was engrossed in worshipping Viṣṇu. With very cold water he washed both his feet. That brāhmaṇa who honoured (other) brāhmaṇas, who had washed his feet and hands, placed all utensils for the bath (of the deity). O best brāhmaṇa, to the region of the door came a dog that was tormented by the heat of the summer sun, resembling that of fire. He lay in the very cold water used by the brāhmaṇa for washing his feet. Due to the touch of the water used by the brāhmaṇa for washing his feet, the extremely sinful dog was freed from all sins committed during crores of existences. The dog lying at the door of the house and overcome by thirst, begged water. He was beaten by the brāhmaṇa's servants. O brāhmaṇa, the dog died there only. Due to the touch of the wetness of the brāhmaṇa's feet, the dog was free from sins. Seeing the noble one, as it were, the lord of the universe in an embodied form, the brāhmaṇa ascetic bowing with modesty, said to him:

The brāhmaṇa said:

46bc. O noble one, tell (me) who you are. Due to which act are you afflicted? (How) are you born in the stock of a dog, full of many afflictions?

Brahmā said:

47-57. Having heard the words of the brāhmaṇa sage, the very glorious one told all his account from the beginning. "I was a very powerful sovereign emperor named Śaṁkha. I protected the whole earth for four thousand years. All obeyed my orders. I conquered all enemies in battles. I gave all (kinds of) gifts, and protected my relatives. O glorious one, once I, struck by the arrows of Cupid, forcibly kidnapped a very beautiful bride of a man. As a result of that sin my glory was in danger. Then, I, very powerful one, was expelled by all people. Then, I,

deprived of my kingdom, lived in a forest. Fatigued with hunger and thirst, I sometime died (there). Having gone to Yama's city I experienced distress for a long time. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to it, causing pain to the heart of the listeners. I experienced a very fearful mass of the flames of blazing fire on the land full of redness due to heated iron weapons. Then by Yama's order I remained clasping a very fearful iron pillar, heated by a blazing fire. Then Yama's servants sprinkled me with streams of cold water (sharp) like razors. There in Yama's abode I experienced another great misery. Then again and again being born in the remaining hells, I experienced great misery in a sinful stock for a long time.

58-59. Due to the contact of the water (flowing) from your feet I am rescued from the bond of sin. I am going to the highest position difficult to be obtained even by meditating saints. O best brāhmaṇa, you are my preceptor. My salutation to you, the noble one. Being freed from sins due to your grace I (shall) go to Viṣṇu's city."

Bhadrakriya said:

60-71. O king, a man should never (forget) the account of the previous existence. Therefore, abandoning one's son, one should always follow a wise course of action. {A king who practises wisdom never faces misery. He enjoys the earth free from troublesome fellows for a long time. That wicked king who does not like wisdom is soon deprived of glory. There is no doubt about this. A king who desires a (long) life, strength, glory, friends, victory and happiness should always appoint wise ministers. Wise men, disregarding a king, abandon him with care. In an assembly without the wise, statesmanship is not strong. Then, when statesmanship of a king has suddenly vanished, the royal glory along with the treasure, the army and the elephants, vanishes. Kings desiring (their) well-being never hate brāhmaṇas, astrologers, physicians and kinsmen. A king who hates astrologers loses his glory. The one hating physicians loses his life. One who hates his kinsmen loses his family. One who hates brāhmaṇas suffers from all afflictions. Kings are said to be the fathers and subjects to be the sons. Therefore, kings protect the subjects as sons born of themselves. A king should love his citizens as his

own sons. The wise ones should know that calamities hang over the heads of those very sinful kings who harass their subjects. Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, protects wise kings as they protect their own subjects. The two, viz. looking after and punishing the subjects, bring him good fortune.

72-75. Kings without (these) two should be known to be mean kings. Kings curbing the wicked and protecting the virtuous rejoice on the earth for a long time. A king should preserve with care the wealth that is obtained justly. A king of bad conduct would not prosper in a calamity. O best brāhmaṇa, kings desiring their own good, always speedily observe the auspicious and inauspicious (happenings) in their kingdom through spies as their eyes. A king should entertain fear till an invasion by an enemy takes place.

76-80. When that fear (of an invasion) has come, the king should act fearlessly. Towards his kinsman, or a friend, or a minister, he should be serious on his face (i.e. outwardly) but should mentally have love only (for him). His ministers, kinsmen, sons, subjects and brothers do not look upon a king without seriousness as a king. First they keep away, so also they do not stand before him. People do not desire the shelter of a king who has given up seriousness. O brāhmaṇa, a king desiring to be (i.e. continue) a king for a long time, should not have only one minister in the entire kingdom for its prosperity. He would take away the position of very intelligent servants.

81-91a. Therefore, the king should appoint another man in the assembly. A king won over by foolish women and always engaged in singing and playing upon musical instruments, so also without horses and elephants, would suddenly face a calamity. O best brāhmaṇa, following (good) practices, truthfulness, keeping one's promise, seriousness are the characteristics of kings. How can he be (called) king who is without valour? How can he be (called) king who has not conquered the land of others? After the land of another (king) is conquered, the king obtains the inexhaustible fruit of a horse-sacrifice for every step that he would go over. When a king, desiring to conquer another king's land, is killed by other kings in a battle, then he, being freed from all sins, would go to the highest place. A king who gets victory in a battle, obtains the highest position. Or if he is killed in a battle

he would obtain Indra's affluence in heaven. That king who kills a warrior who has abandoned his weapon, who has lost his energy, or who is bent upon fleeing, has a downfall. O best brāhmaṇa, both he who is bent upon fleeing and he who kills him, would stay in a hell extremely unbearable. O best brāhmaṇa, a courageous warrior and he who kills him would both live in heaven as long as the moon and the sun exist. What is the use of talking too much in this regard? I shall tell (you) in brief. A king who protects his subjects, never sinks.

Brahmā said:

91b-96a. O brāhmaṇa, when the king was speaking like this, a great shower of flowers fell on him whose sin had dropped, from the sky. Then messengers of the noble Viṣṇu came there taking (with them) a beautiful chariot to which royal swans were yoked. That king whose sins had gone away, got into the divine chariot made of gold and went to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told (you) this greatness of the water (flowing) from a brāhmaṇa's feet. Having listened to it devoutly, a man would obtain liberation. Thus I have told you everything that you desired to hear. O brāhmaṇa, go to the abode of Viṣṇu. Well-being to you.

Hariśarman said:

96b-98a. Due to the great fire of hunger my body is being burnt. O lord of gods, tell me by which means my hunger would be satiated. You are a devotee, loving your devotees. Everyday due to the very blazing fire of hunger I am having very great pain.

Brahmā said:

98b-99. O best brāhmaṇa, eat the flesh of your body which you have always fed with food; for, those who satisfy themselves with the food (meant) for another (person), eat the flesh of their own bodies in the other world.

Vyāsa said:

100. Hearing the cruel words of Brahmā, that best brāhmaṇa again praised the god with words having pleasing letters (i.e. with pleasing words).

The brāhmaṇa said:

101-105. O god of gods, O you who protect him who seeks your refuge, pardon all my faults. Salutation to you, O greatest god. O lord, there are all faults (i.e. committed by) and no virtues of men who carry bodies full of feces and urine. Please pardon the fault committed by me who was deluded. The good do not take into account the fault of those who have sought their shelter. O Brahman, it is not possible for living beings to eat the flesh of their own bodies. Tell what is proper for them, and by what they will be gratified.

Thus the brāhmaṇa devoutly spoke these words. The omniscient Brahmā, dear to brāhmaṇas, and kind, spoke (thus):

Brahmā said:

106-109a. O best brāhmaṇa, do not grieve. Listen to my good words as to the means by which you will now obtain food. The son is born from oneself. (Therefore) the son is like one's own self. Therefore, the manes obtain (the fruit of) the deed of their sons. For a long time you will stay in the very beautiful abode of the god.

Then that brāhmaṇa, thus addressed by him, and oppressed by hunger, appeared before his son in a dream and said to him:

The brāhmaṇa said:

109b-116. O best son, you are initiated. May you have the highest good! O dear one, I am your father. Listen to my grief. O son, due to the efficacy of penance I have obtained the highest abode. Tormented by the fire of hunger I have always been sinking there. O son, O brāhmaṇa, if you have affection for me as your father, then now give food and water to me. Whatever is offered by sons to their fathers on the earth, is obtained by the fathers, since sons are born from (their) fathers' bodies. Formerly I very devoutly worshipped the lord with songs, musical instruments, dances and auspicious recitals of hymns, sandals, incenses, offerings of eatables and lamps full of ghee, so also with water for washing the feet, respectful offerings and water

for sipping, so also meditations and invocations. O son, I, a miser, never gave the lord of the world food, or (other) offerings of eatables. I never honoured a guest with water or other (articles).

117-122a. I never satisfied my kinsmen or suppliants. O son, due to that act only, I, being tormented by the fire of hunger, am everyday sinking (while I live) in Viṣṇu's abode. Therefore, O best of the learned men, by giving the gifts of food and water to brāhmaṇas, protect my life. If, through cruelty you do not do so, then I shall eat my flesh only in Viṣṇu's abode.

Then that hungry brāhmaṇa, with his throat, lips and palate dried up, speaking like this to his son, suddenly disappeared. Then when in the bright morning the sun appeared, the (son who was) initiated thought over what his father had said to him in his dream.

122b-124a. 'Due to the fault in his acts my father, with his body burnt by hunger, everyday is sinking. Fie upon me who am a dull, miserly person. I too am giving nothing through my father's religious merit.'

124b-125. Thinking like this in many ways the brāhmaṇa, though initiated, with faith and devotion gave gifts to brāhmaṇas, O best brāhmaṇa.

126-131a. Listen for how much period he remained in Viṣṇu's abode free from hunger and thirst due to the efficacy of that religious merit. The day of Brahmā is said to be (i.e. to consist) of four thousand yugas. During that day only fourteen periods of Manu pass. During that day only fourteen Indras are said (to rule). O best brāhmaṇa, they enjoy their separate domains. Having enjoyed their auspicious domains during one day of Brahmā, the fourteen Indras and Manus perish. When that Hariśarman lived in the very bright world of Viṣṇu, which gave pleasure and which was charming, one day of Brahmā passed. There, he, having enjoyed charming pleasures for this much period, obtained the highest knowledge and entered Viṣṇu's body.

Vyāsa said:

131b-132. O Jaimini, in the world there is no other gift like

that of food and water. Fruits of all gifts are had from the gifts of food and water. (For them) there is no test of a worthy recipient, or any restriction about time.

133-134. The wise have expressed (their view) regarding the gifts of food and water. (They say:) Gifts of food and water should always be made. Those men who, with great respect, recite this (description of the) greatness (of the gifts) of food and water and of brāhmaṇas, obtain the fruit of the gift of food and water and go to Viṣṇu's abode, giving happiness.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Ekādaśī

Jaimini said:

1-2. O preceptor, by your grace I have heard the sin-destroying greatness along with its history, of the water flowing from a brāhmaṇa's feet, the auspicious greatness of Gaṅgā, so also the fruit of the worship of Viṣṇu, the excellent (account of the) greatness of the gift of food and of water.

3-5. O best sage, now I desire to hear carefully the entire fruit of (the vow of) Ekādaśī, which destroys all sins. Why is the Ekādaśī(-vow) the greatest? What is declared to be the mode of (its observance)? When is it observed? What is its fruit? Tell me. O you ocean of virtues, who is the most adorable deity there? Please tell me what fault (accrues) to him who does not observe it.

Vyāsa said:

6-12. O brāhmaṇa sage, none else but Viṣṇu is able to narrate the entire fruit of the Ekādaśī(vow). Therefore, I shall tell it in brief. The highest Puruṣa (Brahman) having first created the world with the mobile and the immobile, created the 'Man of Sin' (sin personified) for curbing all. His head was the murder of brāhmaṇas. His eyes were the drink of liquor. His face was the theft of gold. His ears were the violation of the preceptor's bed

(i.e. his wife). His nose was the murder of women. His arms were the sin of killing cows. His neck was the snatching of deposits. His throat was causing abortions. The tip of his heart was adultery. His belly was the murder of friends. His waist ending with the hollow of his navel was the murder of those who sought his shelter. His thigh was the preceptor's censure. His penis was the sale of (one's) daughter. His anus was the divulging of confidential words. His feet were the murder of love. The small hair on his body was misfortunes. His body was huge. He was fierce. His complexion was dark. His eyes were tawny. He gave great pain to those who sought his shelter.

13-14. Seeing that Man of Sin, the best among men (but) very fierce, the kind lord who removes the affliction of his creation (i.e. mankind), thought: 'For curbing my creation, I have created this wicked man, cruel and giving affliction to those that resort to him. (Now) I shall create the means (to control him)'.

15-16. Then lord Viṣṇu himself became Yama. He created hells like Raurava that gave affliction to the sinners. A fool who commits a sin does not go to the highest position. By Yama's order he would go to a hell like Raurava.

17. Once lord Viṣṇu, who removes the affliction of the created beings, mounted upon Garuḍa and went to Yama's abode.

18. The Sun's son, on seeing Anāmaya Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, was pleased in mind, and worshipped him with incense etc.

19. Viṣṇu, the only chief of all the worlds, honoured by Yama, sat on a seat made of gold, O best brāhmaṇa.

20. The lord, the killer of demons, seated there, heard crying, meditation (dhyānam?), in the southern direction, O lord.

21. Then that lord of Lakṣmī, with his mind full of amazement, said to Yama: "Wherefrom is this sound of their crying (coming)?"

Yama said:

22-23. O god, sinful mortals sink in the hell giving great affliction, in my abode due to sins committed by their own hands. O Viṣṇu, it is extremely painful to eat the fruit of the tree of sins. Therefore, the sinners are crying. This big noise is theirs.

24-25. Thus told by the Sun's son, Kṛṣṇa, having lotus-like eyes, suddenly went where they were crying. Then the lord, the master, seeing those sinful mortals living in Raurava etc. had pity produced in his heart and thought:

26. 'I have created all these living beings in accordance with the fault in their acts. In spite of my presence they sink in hell, giving great distress.'

27. O best brāhmaṇa, thinking this and something else, he, full of pity, himself suddenly became the day of Ekādaśī.

28-30. Then he made it well-known to all the sinners. All of them, with their sins dropped went to the highest abode. Therefore, know Ekādaśī to be the embodiment of Viṣṇu, the highest soul. He made the Ekādaśī day, as the best of all vows, the best one (removing) all misdeeds, and as one purifying the three worlds. The Man of Sin, being afraid, went to Viṣṇu to praise him.

31. Then, O brāhmaṇa, that Man of Sin, devoutly joining the palms of his hands, praised lord Viṣṇu, the lord of Lakṣmī.

32. Hearing his hymn of praise the lord was pleased. He said: "I am pleased. Tell me what you desire."

The Man of Sin said:

33-34. O Viṣṇu, you, the lord, have created me, giving distress (to beings) by obliging them. Due to the power of Ekādaśī, I am perishing now. When I die, all the sentient beings will be free from the bonds of the worldly existence.

35-42. O lord, when all the best sentient beings will be freed, with whom will you sport in this play-house in the form of the worldly existence? O Viṣṇu, if you have a desire to sport in the play-house in the form of the world, then protect me from the fear of the Ekādaśī day. I cannot be killed by thousands of other (kinds of) religious merit. The meritorious Ekādaśī (alone) can kill me. Grant me a boon. For me who ran away through the fear of Ekādaśī, I do not find any place free from fear among men, insects, other living beings, on mountains, trees, dry grounds, in water, rivers, seas, forests, on desolate roads, in heaven, on the earth, in the nether world, (or) among gods, gandharvas, birds. O god of gods, O eternal one, due to this Ekādaśī day I am not getting a place to stay in the crores of universes. O lord, O lord

of gods, tell me where I shall live without fear on the Ekādaśī (day). You have created me without a purpose.

Vyāsa said:

43-44. The Man of Sin spoke like this to Viṣṇu who removes affliction. He, with tears in his eyes, fell down on the ground and wept. Then the lord, the destroyer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha, laughed and said to the Man of Sin who was alarmed through the fear of Ekādaśī:

The lord said:

45-47. O Man of Sin, give up your grief. Be joyful. I shall tell you where you will have your place on the Ekādaśī day. O Man of Sin, when Ekādaśī, the purifier of the three worlds, arrives, you should resort to food. This Ekādaśī day, my embodiment, will not kill you, the Man of Sin, who have taken shelter inside food.

48-49. Then, O brāhmaṇa sage, the god also disappeared there only. The Man of Sin, being satisfied, went as he had come. Therefore, those best ones who desire their welfare should never eat food when the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, has come.

50-52. By the order of glorious Viṣṇu all the sins that are there in the world, save themselves by resorting to food on the Ekādaśī day. (Even) those committing all (kinds of) sins would be discharged from hell. But those who eat food even on this day should be known to be the greatest sinners (and have no requittal). Repeatedly I am telling firmly. O people, listen, listen. Never, never eat food (on the Ekādaśī day).

53-56. O best brāhmaṇa, all brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and others should observe the Ekādaśī (vow), which gives (the fruit of) the four goals of human life. The wise say that a *kāṣṭhā* is formed by eighteen *nimeṣas*. Those who know everything say that a *kalā* is formed by thirty *kāṣṭhās*. A *kṣaṇa* is formed by thirty *kalās*, and a *muhūrta* by twelve *kṣaṇas*. The day and night of people is declared to be of thirty *muhūrtas*. O best brāhmaṇa, a fortnight should be known (to be formed) by those fifteen (days). A month is formed by the two fortnights—the bright and the dark.

57-58a. O best brāhmaṇa, he who, even having committed great sins, observes the Ekādaśī (vow) in both the bright and dark halves in the month, would, after being freed from all sins, obtain Viṣṇu's world.

58b-62. A mother is not said to be mother. The mother is the Ekādaśī day. A mother would look after (one) in this world only. But the Ekādaśī day (looks after one) everywhere. That dull person who, abandoning the Ekādaśī vow observes another vow, takes up a clod after giving up a gem in his hand. Those who, full of devotion, have observed the Ekādaśī vow, have performed all sacrifices, and have observed all vows. Viṣṇu is always angry with those sinful men who, through folly, eat (food) on the Ekādaśī of the bright half or of the dark half (of a month). He, who has fasted on the Ekādaśī day has performed all religious rites.

63-71. As Viṣṇu is declared to be the greatest of all gods, so is the Ekādaśī vow the greatest of all vows. As the Sun is (said to be the greatest) among Ādityas, as the Moon is (said to be the greatest) among the constellations, so the vow of Ekādaśī is said to be the greatest of all vows. As the holy fig tree is declared (to be the greatest) of all trees, as the Sāma (Veda) is (declared to be the greatest) of all Vedas, so is the Ekādaśī vow said to be the greatest of all vows. As Uśanas (i.e. Śukrācārya) is (said to be the greatest) of (all) thinkers, as brāhmaṇa is (said to be the best) among castes, so is the Ekādaśī vow said to be the greatest of all vows. Among the sages Vyāsa is the greatest. Nārada is the greatest among the divine sages. Similarly the Ekādaśī vow is the greatest of all vows. As the gift of food is said to be the best of all gifts, similarly the Ekādaśī vow is said to be the greatest of all vows. As there is no friend like religious merit, as there is no teacher like the holy texts, similarly there is no vow comparable to the Ekādaśī vow in the three worlds. As the wise have declared mind to be the greatest of the senses, the month of Kārtika to be the greatest among the months, Arjuna to be the greatest of the Pāṇḍavas, as the Vedas are declared to be the greatest of all holy texts, so is the Ekādaśī vow said to be the best among vows.

72-74. O brāhmaṇa, the wise have not declared any other vow equal to the Ekādaśī vow in the Vedas, scriptures, Purāṇas

and other holy texts. Having observed the Ekādaśī vow all men remain without fear on the earth. What will (Yama), the Sun's son, do (to them)? Yama is the servant of those who properly observe (even) one Ekādaśī. Therefore, one should observe the Ekādaśī vow, giving happiness.

75. I am telling you in brief the manner of (observing) the Ekādaśī vow. O best one, O Jaimini, being of (i.e. with) an attentive mind listen (to it).

76-81. Having got up in the morning on the tenth (day) a man should brush his teeth. Then he should bathe without (smearing his body with) oil and (remain) without food. Then having worshipped Viṣṇu by offering water for washing his feet etc., he should, being highly devoted to the meditation of Viṣṇu, take one meal (only). On the tenth he should avoid (eating) flesh, salt, meat, pulses, big beans, so also vegetables. On the tenth he should avoid eating twice, the food of another (man), spirituous liquors, sexual union, so also taking food from vessels of bell-metal. On the tenth he should avoid nimba-leaf, egg-plant-fruit, and dry citron, so also milk without ghee. On the tenth he should avoid eating too much, very much enjoying and eating food and tāmbūla.

82. O best brāhmaṇa, just those articles which are prohibited on the tenth are also undoubtedly prohibited on the twelfth.

83. O best brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu desiring the proper fruit of his vow should not eat at night on the tenth, so also on the twelfth.

84. Therefore, he who observes a vow, having quickly eaten food proper for a fast should, in the proper manner, brush his teeth in the afternoon on the tenth.

85-87. In the evening, having gone to (Viṣṇu's) temple with a handful of flowers, he, meditating mentally upon Viṣṇu, should utter this prayer: 'O Govinda, I have taken up this vow before you. By the grace of your feet, may it reach its completion without any obstacle. Can I, a man of a very fickle mind, full of greed and delusion, observe it without your favour?'

88-93. Having recited these two hymns, and having offered just that handful of flowers to Viṣṇu, he should salute (Viṣṇu) prostrating himself like a staff on the ground. In that very abode of Viṣṇu, he, engaged in remembering Viṣṇu, should sleep on the

ground after covering his bed with kuśa (grass). Then when it is the bright morning, he should not brush his teeth. The wise one should clean his mouth with twelve mouthfuls of water. He should (then) perform his daily rites like Viṣṇu's worship etc. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, at night, he should, together with all other men observing the vow, keep awake in front of the lord of worlds. O best brāhmaṇa, he who observes the vow for a long time along with his mother, wife, brother or also his father, his son, friend, and who would keep awake before Viṣṇu, would dwell in Viṣṇu's abode.

94. Viṣṇu would take away the sin of (i.e. committed by) him during many existences, who would draw the picture of a conch, or a disc etc. in Viṣṇu's temple.

95-100. Listen to the fruit of (i.e. obtained by) him who would draw in Viṣṇu's temple a picture with the paste of rice-powder or with other sylvan materials. He enjoys all auspicious (things) along with his sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons. And afterwards, he, going to Viṣṇu's abode, would get liberation there. A man hoisting a flag on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Lakṣmī's lord, would go to Viṣṇu's city after emancipating crores of men. That man who would decorate Viṣṇu's temple with lines of banners would be a king in every birth. As soon as the banner moves due to breezes all the sin of the maker of it perishes just then. Wise men desiring the highest position, should put up the lines of banners of various colours in Viṣṇu's temple on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu.

101-105. O brāhmaṇa sage, that man who holds a very beautiful umbrella over Viṣṇu's head, becomes (i.e. is born as) a kṣatriya in every existence on the earth. He who, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, prepares a pavilion of flowers, would obtain for every flower the religious merit due to more than a hundred horse-sacrifices. A wise man should even with effort prepare a pavilion with flowers on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu in order to obtain (the fruit of) the four goals of human life. He who makes an abode of cloth (i.e. a tent) on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, lives in a mansion in heaven, O brāhmaṇa sage. Having fashioned an abode of cloth, a man, dear to Viṣṇu, (or to whom Viṣṇu is dear), ties there a white, or red or black (piece of) cloth.

106. The observer of the vow should devoutly install there

a śālagrāma stone or idol of the lord of Lakṣmī after bathing it with pañcāmṛta.

107. A wise man should first perform, even with effort the *svastyayana* (recitation of mantras for averting evil) and then declare the purpose in order to obtain (the fruit of) the four goals of human life.

108. Having performed one's *bhūtaśuddhi* (the removal of ghosts from oneself) in accordance with the formality prescribed by scriptures he should take with a concentrated mind an excellent flower.

109-110. He should meditate upon Viṣṇu residing in the lotus of his heart, seated on a golden seat and on a jewelled one. "Constantly looking from the corners of my eyes at him, seated on a golden seat, adorned with fire-like (bright) gems, having donned a sporting attire, having a beautiful body like the sky, having the digit (of the moon), always shining with the four arms holding weapons, looking with his lotus-like eyes at Lakṣmī's face that removes his fatigue, I worship him.

111-123. O lord, O lord of Lakṣmī, O dear one, come along with the gods. In this vow I have to worship you with devotion. O you endowed with all good characteristics, O lord of the world, remain with Lakṣmī on this excellent seat till I worship you. O you whose fame is well-known in all the worlds, O Nārāyaṇa, O lord, I hope you are quite all right. Tell me all that, O you who are worshipped by the gods. O lord of gods, O Nārāyaṇa, accept the fragrant water for washing your feet. It will remove the dust-particles from both your feet; it is pure and very cold. O Viṣṇu, I offer you materials of worship along with dūrvā grass. It is along with unbroken rice grains, O you whose eyes resemble lotuses. I am offering you this very pure water for sipping. O you highest joy, accept it which enhances great joy. O you destroyer of Jarāsandha, O you lord of Lakṣmī, may your body be decorated with the fragrant sandal offered by me. O god, O lord of gods, to you the first cause of the worlds I am offering this water for sipping, for purifying. (Please) accept it. For increasing the joy of the god, this incense was formerly created by Brahmā. Therefore, I offer it to you, O greatest among gods. O Janārdana, O god, may this lamp, full of ghee, and destroyer of the mass of darkness, please you. This garment along with the upper one will very well

decorate your abdomen and hips. O lord of gods, O master of the world, I am giving it to you along with the sacred thread. O highest god, I have devoutly offered to you four kinds of food having six agreeable tastes. (Please) accept it. O Viṣṇu, O you very intelligent one, accept this tām̐būla removing the bad odour of the mouth, with (i.e. containing) camphor and khadira, and giving beatitude”.

124-126. Full of devotion he should in this way worship Viṣṇu with excellent offerings in (all) the four watches (of the day). He who would offer various offerings on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu should not show guile about wealth if he desires the fruit of his acts. Then all the observers of the vow, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, should keep awake at night while dancing, singing and eulogizing etc.

127. O best brāhmaṇa, those who are engaged in the vow, should remember Viṣṇu's names destroying all sins, while going round (the image of Viṣṇu) keeping it to their right.

128. Those who hear the sound of Viṣṇu's name coming from every mouth would be free from great heaps of sins.

129. On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu one should not talk to heretics. Due to a mere talk with heretics (one's) entire religious merit perishes.

130. Fools are not pleased on hearing the song of Viṣṇu's glory which comes out from every mouth, as dogs are not pleased on hearing the sound of a lute.

131. The good ones are pleased on hearing the song about the lord of the world, which destroys all sins, as the deer are pleased on hearing the sound of a lute.

132-134. They sing songs about Viṣṇu. They dance an excellent dance. They are pleased on seeing the observers of Viṣṇu's vow. They are pleased with what the observers of Viṣṇu's vow are pleased with in the temple of Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa. Those observers of (Viṣṇu's) vow who do not sing on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, attain beasthood eternally in every existence. They, without (the power of uttering) words (i.e. being dur̐ab) roam in every existence.

135. Musical instruments like tabor should be beaten in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu, since lord Viṣṇu would be pleased with (the sound of) musical instruments.

136. The devotees of Viṣṇu keeping awake (in front) of Viṣṇu study Vedas (in his temple) or recite a Purāṇa (in the temple).

137. On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, Rāmāyaṇa, Bhāgavata, or Bhārata narrated by Vyāsa or other Purāṇas should be read.

138. Those who read (these) before (the image of) Viṣṇu and those who listen to them on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, obtain for every letter the fruit due to the gift of a tawny cow.

139. A devotee of Viṣṇu should joyfully keep awake at night. He should curb his sleep. He properly meditates upon Viṣṇu with his heart.

140-142. On the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, he should salute Viṣṇu by falling (i.e. prostrating himself) on the ground like a staff while going round (the image keeping it to his) right. Then the devout observer of the vow, after having performed the five great sacrifices in the bright morning, should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with milk and worship him. The observer of the vow should give a present according to his capacity to a brāhmaṇa. Then on the twelfth day he should break the fast.

143-147. The religious merit earned during crores of existences by him who breaks his fast after having observed a fast on the twelfth day, perishes. The wise ones, desiring the fruit of the vow, should break the fast on the twelfth day, and never on the thirteenth day. O brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, desiring the fruit of the fast, should, with effort, avoid sleep even at night on the day of the fast. Without keeping awake the fast is useless. Therefore, (on the Ekādaśī days) in both the fortnights he should keep awake. O greatest brāhmaṇa, all those who observe the Ekādaśī vow in this manner truly go to (i.e. attain) liberation.

148. O Jaimini, even hosts of gods like Indra and others should observe this essence of the vow of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, which is the only cause of avoiding birth and death. You also observe it carefully.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Queen Suprajñā on the Efficacy of Ekādaśī Vow

Vyāsa said:

1-2. Formerly on the earth there was a king named Kocaraśa. He was calm. He knew the excellent ways of life. He was the best among those who know statesmanship. He, the great one, spoke the truth. He had conquered his anger. He had vanquished the multitude of his enemies. He was very much devoted to Nārāyaṇa's worship. He was engrossed in the service of Hari.

3-4. His queen was Suprajñā by name, who spoke pleasing words, was endowed with all (good) characteristics, and was absorbed in serving her husband. She was engaged in (observing) the Ekādaśī vow, and desired the good of all living beings. She remembered her (past) births. She was noble and of an excellent complexion.

5-6. That king who knew the highest truth, having observed the Daśamī (vow), was along with his wife engrossed in keeping awake at night on the Ekādaśī day. In the meantime a certain brāhmaṇa named Śauri, who was very lustrous, came to the king's pavilion where people kept awake.

7-8. The king, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, seeing him coming, was highly delighted and honoured him by offering him water for washing his feet etc. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the entire truth, and comfortably seated among them, saw there many observers (of the Ekādaśī vow) engaged in Viṣṇu's worship.

9-14. Some worshipped Viṣṇu with many lovely flowers, sandal, incense, lamps and excellent presents. Some observers of the vow decorated with the clay from Gaṅgā, and adorned with garlands of tulasī leaves, gladly danced in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. (Some) observers of the vow, dear to the lord, sang, keeping rhythm with clapping their hands, charming songs about Viṣṇu. Some (others) praised Anāmaya, Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, with excellent hymns having divine meanings and containing pleasing letters. Some fanned (the image of) Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, with white chowries to his great delight. Some played upon the charming, pure, auspicious musical instruments

like the lute. Some noble ones sang (songs) to (i.e. in honour of) Viṣṇu.

15-16. The two—the king and the queen—being very much delighted, sang a charming song, and danced an excellent dance. That best brāhmaṇa, Śauri, spoke with gentle words to the noble couple, dancing and singing:

Śauri said:

17-20. O king, you are fortunate, so also is your queen fortunate. This auspicious behaviour of you two is difficult to be found on the earth. I shall speak something to you, since I have not seen an excellent devotee of Viṣṇu (like you). There is no doubt that the earth, with you as the king, is blessed. O king, along with your wife you are observing this pure Ekādaśī vow, dear to the lord. Therefore, you are the chief among Viṣṇu's devotees, since, O best king, you, the only lord of (the earth with) the seven islands, are, along with your wife, joyfully dancing and singing before (the image of) Viṣṇu.

21. This behaviour of you, the couple, is seen to be wonderful. For what reason such an extremely pure thought has arisen in (the mind of) you?

Vyāsa said:

22. Having heard these words of that brāhmaṇa, Śauri, Suprajñā, with a face having a slight smile on it, spoke to the brāhmaṇa:

Suprajñā said:

23-24. O best brāhmaṇa, we two, very great sinners, were formerly freed by the noble (Yama), the son of the Sun, due to the efficacy of the Ekādaśī (vow). O best brāhmaṇa, due to (my) power of recollecting (the past) existences, we two are now observing this divine Ekādaśī vow with a desire for (reaching) the highest place.

Śauri said:

25-26. O beautiful lady, if you know your former birth, then tell me (about it). In my heart a great curiosity is produced

to listen to it. Who were you formerly? Who was your husband? How was it that you, though sinners, were released by Yama?

Suprajñā said:

27-28. Though these words are not to be divulged (I shall tell you), O best brāhmaṇa. I, proficient in the science of love, was the chief prostitute. O best brāhmaṇa, in that existence, I committed very many fearful sins, giving torment in hell.

29-30. This (king) was a śūdra named Nityodaya, who had given up the practices of his own (caste), who, the cruel one, kidnapped other's wives and snatched other's wealth. He drank liquor, killed his friends, caused abortions, harmed others, was very proud, and always censured the prescribed course of conduct.

31-33. Once he, abandoned by all his kinsmen of good vows, and longing for the amorous movements of prostitutes, came to my house. O best brāhmaṇa, seeing this handsome youth, I too, having love for him, pleased him with sexual unions (with him). Then, O you rich in penance, he, having had sexual union with me, being humble with modesty, spoke to me (these) words with love:

34. "I am proficient in the science of sexual union. I am abandoned by my relatives. If you agree about it (i.e. the sexual union), then I shall stay here with you."

35-40. Hearing these polite words, O brāhmaṇa, I forming the relation of a couple, stayed with him. O best brāhmaṇa, once on a day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, I was tormented by major (diseases) harming the body. On that (day) only, O best brāhmaṇa, I, with my body dull by fever, did not drink water, nor did I eat food due to great fear. This one, in whom love for me was begotten, abandoned food and water on the same day, and was as it were unhappy with existence. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, I, with my mind smitten with fever, burnt a lamp with ghee, and kept awake. He too, repeatedly saying, 'Nārāyaṇa, Hari, Kṛṣṇa,' kept awake during the night.

41. O brāhmaṇa, due to the efficacy of the fast, and the utterance of (the name) Keśava, all our sin perished.

42-43. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, when the morning dawned,

and the sun rose, I, oppressed by fever, expired. Then he, seeing me dead, and censured by all people, resorted to death with me.

44-45. Then we two, after being bound with a strong noose by the servants of Yama, whose eyes were like blazing fire, were taken (to him) along a difficult path. That wise Citragupta considered, from the beginning, all our good and evil acts by Yama's order.

Citragupta said:

46-49. O you large-armed one, even though these two are the greatest sinners, yet they are freed from sins due to their fasting on the Ekādaśī day. Even he who would observe the meritorious Ekādaśī vow unintentionally would, being free from all sins, go to the highest place.

The very glorious Dharmarāja, thus addressed by Citragupta, suddenly rose from his seat, and saluted her and him. The two, free from sins, were adorned with fragrant sandal, divine incense, and flowers, so also with golden ornaments by Yama.

50-51. Then the Sun's son affectionately fed us with various kinds of fruits, sweet and resembling nectar. Then lord Yama himself praised us with divine eulogies and having put us in a divine chariot said to us with the palms of his hands joined:

Yama said:

52. You are the greatest among the meritorious. You are free from sins. Now go there where Viṣṇu dwells.

53-54. When we two were thus addressed by Yama, humble with modesty, we, bowing at his lotus-like feet, said to him: "O god, we would not go anywhere (else). (We would go to) the highest position of Viṣṇu. But we have a desire to see the hell situated in your dwelling."

55. Then, O brāhmaṇa, by Yama's order we two got into a beautiful chariot and we two saw there extensive hells, difficult to be seen.

The brāhmaṇa said:

56-58. O you chaste lady, please tell (me) in detail all the

conditions of the sinners which you saw there. O you beautiful lady, tell me in detail by which path the meritorious ones go to Yama's house, and by which way the sinners go. How would a pious soul see there lord Yama and the paths of the pious and of the sinners, giving pleasure and pain (respectively)?

Suprajñā said:

59-64. I shall first describe the path of the pious men, which increases the pleasure of the meritorious. O best brāhmaṇa, listen. The path of the pious, built with big stones and covered with divine pieces of cloth, appears to be free from all troubles. At places wonderful songs are sung by gandharva-maidens. At places celestial nymphs of beautiful bodies dance. At places they produce the sound of the lute and the charming (sound) of various musical instruments. At places there is a shower of flowers; at places cold breezes blow. At places there are stalls where water is distributed to travellers, at places there are houses for eating. At places god and gandharvas recite excellent eulogies. At places there are very beautiful lakes with fully bloomed lotuses. At places there are very shady trees like blossomed aśoka trees.

65-73. From there, O best brāhmaṇa, the pious men endowed with happiness, and meeting with a happy death, go along the path. Some are mounted on horses; some are decorated with various ornaments. They go covering their heads with white umbrellas with their handles raised. Some mounted on elephants, some mounted on chariots, some having got into vehicles, happily go to Yama's abode. Some men, fanned with breezes from the chowries placed in the hands of divine ladies, and praised by great sages, go (to Yama's abode). Certain pious men, holding divine weapons, adorned with garlands and sandal and eating tām̐būla go to Yama's abode. Some living in houses built near water, blazing the ten quarters with the lustre of their bodies go to Yama's abode. O best one, certain (men), enjoying rice boiled in milk, and eating well go happily to Yama's abode. Some drinking milk, some drinking sugarcane juice, also some drinking butter-milk go to Yama's abode. Some meritorious ones eating curd, some eating various fruits, some drinking spirituous liquor go (to Yama's abode).

74-76. Seeing many (such) pious men, securing Yama's

love and coming there, Viṣṇu would himself appear there. He has four arms; his complexion is dark; his eyes are like full-blown lotuses. He holds a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus. His vehicle is Garuḍa. His sacred thread is golden. His great face is lovely like that of Cupid. He puts on a crown and ear-rings. He is adorned with a garland of wood flowers.

77-79. All like the very wise Citragupta, Yama's servants like Caṇḍa, speaking sweetly have the forms of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, then Yama himself, having great affection, would worship all those excellent men. Having (honoured) the pious men with divine gems (and) fed them fruits the Sun's son (i.e. Yama) said:

Yama said:

80-81. O you noble ones afraid of the torment in the hell, you (will) go to the highest position due to the efficacy of your acts. The man who, being born in the world, does (acts of) merit, is my father, my brother, and is my friend and like my kinsmen.

82. O best brāhmaṇa, all those, thus addressed by Yama, got into a divine chariot and went to Viṣṇu's city.

83-98. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you in brief (about) the fate of the meritorious. Listen to the fate of sinners. I shall tell it in detail. The expanse of the path, full of all afflictions, of the wicked ones, is said to be eighty-six thousand yojanas. At places there is a shower of fire. At places there is a shower of stones, and O best brāhmaṇa, at places there is hot sand. At places there are sharp stones. At places there are hot stones. At places there is a shower of weapons. At places there is a shower of burning charcoals. At places breezes, very hot like fire, blow. At places are deep places of darkness with their openings covered with grass, O brāhmaṇa. At places there is a shower of thorns, along with thorny arrows. At places there are rows of rocks, difficult to climb, along with serpents. The sinners, with their throats and palates parched up, go there. O best brāhmaṇa, the unhappy sinners go along that path full of various kinds of sufferings and without shade or water. The sinners named Vimuktakeśa, some of the form of goblins, fierce, wet with steams

of blood, some adorned (i.e. smeared) with mud, some with dark bodies, go along the path. Some sinners waiting with agony, some with their eyes full of tears that are trickling, some repenting for their deeds, go along the path. Round the neck of some sinner a hide-noose is tied. (Chains) are bound round someone's skeleton and someone's both feet. Yama's servants, angrily putting a noose round the sinners' necks pierced with needles, drag them. The sinners carrying in the cavities of their ears heavy stones lying on the path, and (carrying) iron-loads on the tops of their heads, go along the path. Yama's servants take some sinners after putting nooses round their arms and (after keeping) strong weapons on their necks. By tossing the sinners Yama's servants take them. Some walk with their heads down, and some with their feet up. Some walk on their hands; some walk on one foot. Thus they are deformed, and cry piteously.

99-102. The sinners, being beaten by Yama's messengers go along that path. When they had come, evil-minded Yama, angrily gave up his divine form and became very fierce. His body was thirty yojanas long, and his eyes resembled wells. His complexion was smoky. He was very lustrous. He was prominent. His sound was gurgling. He had rows of very long teeth. His rows of nails resembled winnowing baskets. He was mounted on a strong he-buffalo. He bit his lips. He had a staff in his hand. He had a noose of hide. His face had curved eyebrows.

103. With him shone Citragupta who had great illusory power, whose eyes were red due to anger, and who was laughing loudly.

104-105. All (Yama's) servants, with nooses and mallets in their hands, who were fierce and angry, thundered like clouds. Yama's servants, running from every side said boastfully: "Quickly kill the most sinful ones. Break them, cut them, pierce them."

106. Lord Yama threatened all the sinners that were running, giving out a 'hum' sound with these words:

Yama said:

107-113a. O sinners, O wicked ones, you thoughtless ones have committed sins which trouble yourselves. You do not see me remaining over your heads. Even knowing me, the lord of life,

(to be observing your deeds), you committed sins. Nowhere have you heard with your own ears that I am the brother of the meritorious and the enemy of sinners. Hells are unbearable; they are full of various afflictions. The sinners experience them (i.e. undergo tortures there). Have you not heard this? O you wicked-hearted ones, you regarded my inquiry to be just untrue. O you who have committed sins, today see it with your own eyes. In the blindness due to wealth, all of you being insolent, never followed my words. You always committed heaps of sins. In accordance with that (heap of sins), O wicked ones, experience the fruit of your sins. What is the use of crying?

Suprajñā said:

113b-116a. Speaking (to them) like this, Yama said to Citragupta: "O you noble one, take into account the sinful deeds of these."

Hearing those great words of Yama, Citragupta being (thus) directed (by Yama) told as many sins of them (as they had committed). Then, O best brāhmaṇa, all the sinners waited. They, who were frightened, and who were controlled with a noose of hide (said):

The sinners said:

116b-119a. O Sun's son, who were the witness presented by you to the sins which we had committed. Tell us who witnessed the good or evil deeds that we did formerly.

Then, O brāhmaṇa, Yama having laughed spoke these words very angrily after summoning all the witnesses:

Yama said:

119b-120. You were all nearby and witnesses to whatever took place. The sky, the earth, so also the water, the dates, the day, the night, both the twilights and Dharma—these are the witnesses.

121-122. They narrated all the good and evil deeds of the sinners, and the deed of each one of them and the time when it was done. Each witness told (the deeds) in Yama's presence.

Hearing them, the minds of all sinners were overpowered by fright.

123-125a. They stood with their hearts trembling as deer (remain) on seeing a cloud. Then making a 'Kaḍa Kaḍa' sound with the rows of his teeth (i.e. gnawing his teeth), Yama separately struck them with his fatal staff. All those sinners, struck separately by Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) wailed over their deeds and being alarmed lamented.

125b-132. Then, Caṇḍa and others, the messengers of Yama, threw, by Yama's order, all those sinners into hells. They dropped some sinners into (the hell called) Tapana, and some into (the hell called) Avīci. (They threw others) into Saṃghāta, Kālasūtra, Mahāraurava, into a hot basin containing sand, and into Kumbhīpāka. They threw the sinners into (hells like) Pramardana which was breathless (i.e. where breathing was not possible) and which was very fierce; so also in the fearful (hell called) Asipatravana, and into (hells) containing various kinds of foods. Certain servants of Yama similarly threw (some) sinners into Vaitaraṇā. Yama's servants threw some sinners into a fierce pool of feces; some (sinners) into (a hell) full of thorns along with bones and chaff-fire, and extremely hot; so also Yama's servants threw them into hells where smearing was done with feces, where the foods was feces, so also in the hell where one's own flesh was eaten. Some (sinners) ate phlegm; some drank semen. Some sinners drank urine; some drank blood. In the mouths of some were leeches, resembling serpents.

133-151. Some (hells) were filled with serpents by the fierce messengers of Yama. O best brāhmaṇa, the very angry (servants of Yama) extracted the tongues of some (sinners). The cruel servants of Yama filled (i.e. put) heated oil into the cavities of the ears and into the mouths of some. They cut off with the edges of swords (i.e. with sharp swords) a hand and a foot also, so also ears and noses of some wicked ones. Some slept on the heap of burning charcoals; some on thorns resembling arrows. O best brāhmaṇa, Yama's servants pulled out the hair of sinners and threw them into hot mud. They repeatedly inserted thousands of heated needles into the mouths and joints of nails of certain sinners. They put certain (sinners) on the tip of a heated pike. With sharp thorns they hurt the heads of some (sinners). (Yama's

servants) seized some sinners crying piteously by their hands and feet, and cut them asunder with the thorns of śālmali trees. Yama's servants, after tying a stone round the necks (of the sinners) repeatedly threw some into ditches full of blood and into ditches full of pus. The messengers of Yama devoured the heads of the sinners. They angrily again and again crushed them with stones. They put into the chests of the wicked ones who were crying, masses of iron nails. The eyes of certain sinners were extracted with hooks. O brāhmaṇa, the noses of some were filled with scorpions. Yama's servants tied the feet of some with ropes to the branch of a tree and burnt fire with smoke at the root (of the tree). There the sinners inhaled smoke. They remained there with their faces down and feet up as long as the moon and stars (shine in the sky). Some (sinners), being repeatedly beaten with pestles and mallets by Yama's messengers, and overcome by agony, vomitted blood, Certain sinners sank into an abode full of darkness and having the odour of pus, along with gad-flies and gnats. Some ate ash; some ate insects. Some ate ill-smelling flesh, and some earth with pus. Some, being eaten by dogs, tigers, jackals and hogs, so also by bears, and wet with blood, wail(ed). Some others were being eaten by serpents with extremely strong poison. O brāhmaṇa, the chests of others were being torn asunder by the horns of he-buffaloes.

152-161. Sprinkling the ground with their blood, they fell in a swoon on the earth. With their entire bodies shattered with arrows, resembling snakes, which (arrows) were discharged from the bows of Yama's servants, others rolled on the ground. They (crush) a mass of heated iron balls and a heated stone with a cutting weapon into their mouths. Yama's messengers sewed the nostrils and mouths of some in order to suppress breath. The arrogant, very strong servants of Yama, pulled out, with Yama's sharp-edged (weapons called) Śakti, the skin of the bodies of some. They seized some by their hair, and dropped them on the ground. They always struck (the sinners) with weapons and (their) feet etc. Some sinners were tormented with streams of saline water. O brāhmaṇa, they wailing in various ways, drank saline water. Certain sinners drank bile, O noble one. Some great sinners drank the mucus resembling thick milk flowing from the nose. Yama's servants placed on the chests of some lying on the

ground, big, heated stones, resembling mountains. They tied with strong cords the faces of some turned upwards, after putting a pair of logs at their necks and into their throats. They dropped some on the ground after placing them on the branch of a tree.

162-167. They raised them and again and again threw them on the ground. In this way all the sinners, hungry and thirsty, and murmuring 'save me, save me' cried in the abode of torment (i.e. in hell). Having, till the end of the yuga experienced torment in hell, and having not experienced (the fruit of) the remaining sins, they are born in sinful stocks. They, born in sinful stocks, are troubled by diseases. They are defective in a limb, or have an excess limb. They are unhappy and resort to sins. They are sonless. They are great fools. They are absorbed in harming others. They have a short (span of) life. They are dull. They are the husbands of bad wives. Everyday they do sinful acts through (physical) deeds, mind and words. Again as a result of their sins they go to hell as before. Therefore, the best ones should never commit a sin.

168-175a. Men who have committed sins, cannot escape from hell. O best brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you in brief the affliction of sinners. Who is able to describe it properly even with hundreds of myriads of years? Then, having observed the sinners with a bad plight, we, getting into an aeroplane, went to Viṣṇu's city. Having enjoyed pleasures in Viṣṇu's house for thousands of crores of kalpas, we were born in this very pure royal family, O best brāhmaṇa. Having enjoyed here (i.e. in this existence) all pleasures with all affluence, O best brāhmaṇa, we had a happy (i.e. peaceful) death, and we would go to the highest place. In the three worlds, there is no (other) vow like the Ekādaśī vow. Such is our mode of existence even after our having observed the vow unintentionally. I do not know what would happen to them, through Viṣṇu's grace, who observe the Ekādaśī vow with devotion. O best brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you all that (you) had asked (me) about the importance of the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. What else do you want to listen to?

Vyāsa said:

175b-178. Hearing these words of him, the brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, put his mind very firmly into (observ-

ing) the Ekādaśī vow. The king and the queen having, for a long time, enjoyed the earth, in the end went to Viṣṇu's city and obtained the highest position. Those who listen to or recite the importance of this king of vows are freed from the heaps of sins and obtain (a place) near Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

The Greatness of Tulasi and Dhātri

Sūta said:

1-2. Jaimini, being very much pleased on hearing the fruit of the Ekādaśī (vow), spoke, with the palms of his hands joined, these (words) to lord Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana (i.e. Vyāsa): "Through your grace I have heard the greatness of god Viṣṇu. (Now) tell me about the greatness of tulasī which destroys the sins of the listeners."

Vyāsa said:

3-6. O brāhmaṇa, this revered tulasī should always be worshipped by all deities like Indra. It gives the fruit of the four goals of human life. To the good tulasī is difficult to be obtained in heaven, in the mortal world and in the nether world. Devotion to it secures the four goals of human life. O best one, at that place only where one tulasī-plant stands, all gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva dwell. Always Keśava dwells in the middle of the leaf, Prajāpati at the tip of the leaf, and Śiva at the foot-stalk of the leaf of tulasī.

7-10. Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, so also Gāyatrī and Caṇḍikā, likewise all other wives of (other) gods dwell in the leaves of that (tulasī-plant). These, viz. Indra, Agni, Śamana, Nairṛti, so also Varuṇa, Vāyu and Kubera dwell in the branch of the tulasī-plant. All planets like the Sun, the Viśvedevas,¹

1. Viśvedevāḥ—Name of a particular group of deities ten in number and supposed to be sons of Viśvā; their names are: Vasu, Satya, Kratu, Dakṣa, Kāla, Kāma, Dhṛti, Kuru, Purūravas, and Mādravas.

Vasus,¹ all sages and all divine sages, so also all the holy places that are there in the crores of universes and on the earth, live by resorting to (i.e. in) the tulasī plant.

11-17. He who devoutly worships tulasī, has worshipped the holy places, so also all gods like Brahmā. Viṣṇu just at that moment destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa remaining in the body of those who remove the masses of grass at the root of tulasī. O best brāhmaṇa, by sprinkling the tulasī plant with fragrant and cold water in summer a man would obtain eternal bliss. He who gives it moonlight or an umbrella, especially in summer, is freed from all sins. A man who would every-day sprinkle the tulasī plant with continuous streams in Vaiśākha obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. He who would sprinkle the tulasī plant with water from the hand stretched out and hollowed also obtains heaven after being freed from all sins. O brāhmaṇa sage, in the house of that man who would sometime sprinkle the tulasī plant with milk, Lakṣmī is steady.

18-22. O brāhmaṇa sage, listen to the fruit of the merit of him who would smear the root of the tulasī plant with cowdung. For as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles removed from there, he rejoices with Viṣṇu, O Jaimini. He who would place a lamp at the root of the tulasī plant at twilight, goes along with a crore (members) of his family to Viṣṇu's abode. Viṣṇu would always protect him who protects the tulasī plant from cows, dogs, asses, men and children. There is no doubt that he who devoutly plants a tulasī plant, obtains the highest liberation after death.

23. That best devout man who would see the tulasī plant in the morning uninterruptedly obtains the fruit of seeing Viṣṇu.

24. The life, strength, fame, wealth, progeny of one who would devoutly salute the tulasī plant, grow.

25. By remembering tulasī, all sin perishes. The diseases of men perish on just touching the tulasī (plant).

26-27. The sin in the body of him who eats the auspicious tulasī leaf, removing all sins, perishes at that moment (only).

1. Vasavaḥ—Vasus are a class of deities. They are eight in number: Āpa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara or Dhava, Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa, and Prabhāsa.

In the body of the man who wears a rosary made of tulasī wood there is no sin. This is the truth that I tell.

28. There is no doubt that he who bears on his head the water dropped from the leaves of tulasī, obtains the religious merit due to a bath in Gaṅgā.

29. A man having devoutly worshipped the auspicious tulasī with dūrvās, sacred rice grains, flowers, offerings of eatables, would obtain the fruit of the worship (offered) to Viṣṇu.

30. O brāhmaṇas(?), what is the use of worshipping Viṣṇu's feet to him who has sometime worshipped revered tulasī, giving the highest nectar of piety, material welfare and sensual enjoyment, with offerings of eatables, flowers, excellent incense and ghee-lamps?

31. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu is pleased with them who plant tulasī pleasing Viṣṇu and fit to be worshipped by gods, at places free from blemishes; and Mura's enemy, the lord of the three worlds, quickly gives them the highest position.

32. Whatever auspicious act—a sacrifice, a vow, honouring the dead ancestors, worship of Viṣṇu, giving gifts—and other auspicious act(s) that men perform at the blemishless root of tulasī—all those indeed become inexhaustible.

33. O best brāhmaṇa, all that pious act which a man does on the earth without tulasī, dear to Viṣṇu, becomes fruitless. The god of gods, the lotus-eyed one (i.e. Viṣṇu) is also not pleased.

34. A man who, with devotion, sees the auspicious, pure tulasī during pilgrimages, quickly gets the fruit of the pilgrimages through Viṣṇu's grace. This statement is very firm.

35-36. Ananta (i.e. Viṣṇu), the only lord of the world, abandoning fragrant flowers like mandāra, kunda, lotus, gladly accepts even dry tulasī full of virtues and the security for the destruction of sins. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) to whom tulasī is dear always snatches the wealth of those wicked men who, through ignorance, uproot a tulasī (plant) purifying like the nectar-giving creeping plant, and place it on the ground. This is the truth.

37. Viṣṇu quickly snatches the wealth of those men who always urinate or excrete or put dirt at the root of tulasī, the abode of gods, and thus collect sins.

38-42. “I am collecting (the leaves of) you for worshipping Viṣṇu. I am collecting (the leaves of) you since even with flowers like (those of) pārijāta, so also with sandal etc., put without you Viṣṇu is not satisfied. O holy one, without you every act is fruitless. Therefore, O goddess Tulasī, I am collecting (the leaves of) you. Grant me a boon. O leader of the world, pardon me that pain which is produced in your heart due to (your leaves) being plucked. O Tulasī I salute you.” A devotee of Viṣṇu, joining the palms of his hands recites these two hymns and then clapping twice collects tulasī leaves in such a way that the tulasī branch does not shake, O best brāhmaṇa.

43. When at the time of plucking a leaf, a branch of goddess (Tulasī) would be broken, then anguish is produced in the heart of Viṣṇu, Tulasī's lord.

44. Viṣṇu, the destroyer of (the demons) Madhu and Kaitābha should be worshipped even with every old leaf fallen from the tip of a branch.

45. He who would worship lord Viṣṇu with tender tulasī leaves, quickly gets whatever he desires with (i.e. in) his heart.

Jaimini said:

46. O best brāhmaṇa, what (other) tree is like that of tulasī? I desire to know it. O son of Satyavatī, (please) tell it.

Vyāsa said:

47-51. O brāhmaṇa, as tulasī is always most dear to Viṣṇu, so is dhātrī, destroying all sins. O best brāhmaṇa, all those deities who dwell in the plant after having reached it, stay at the root of āmalakī. O best brāhmaṇa, holy places like Gaṅgā dwell just there where pure dhātrī, most dear to Viṣṇu, remains. That act, auspicious or inauspicious, which is done by men at the root of āmalakī, would certainly become inexhaustible, O brāhmaṇa. He who would worship Viṣṇu with pure, fresh leaves of dhātrī, is freed from mass of sins and secures absorption into Viṣṇu.

52-56. O Jaimini, that place where there would be neither dhātrī nor tulasī is impure. (A man) does not obtain the fruit of his act (performed there). All the (pious) acts done by him in his hermitage where the auspicious dhātrī or tulasī does not exist indeed become fruitless. O brāhmaṇa, (in the house) of

him, which is without dhātrī and tulasī, poverty and sin (remain) and by that Kali is pleased. The wise should look upon that place where there is neither tulasī nor dhātrī as a cremation ground, O best brāhmaṇa. All gods dwell there where dhātrī and tulasī exist. All sin exists there where there is neither a leaf of dhātrī nor of tulasī.

57-60. Viṣṇu, along with Lakṣmī, would remain by resorting to the body of the wise man who would wear a rosary of dhātrī-fruits. All deities live by resorting to the body of the intelligent man who would wear a garland of dhātrī wood. All the act, auspicious or inauspicious, which a man wearing a garland (i.e. rosary) of dhātrī fruits does, is said to be inexhaustible. The entire sin remaining in the body of that man knowing the entire nature of Brahman, who eats the dhātrī fruit, perishes.

61-63. O best brāhmaṇa, I (shall) tell (you) the greatness destroying all sins (of the man) who would wear a rosary of the dhātrī fruits. Listen (to it). Even if he by chance dies in a cremation ground, he obtains the religious merit due to a bath in Gaṅgā. There is no doubt about it. Seeing him, all sinners are instantly freed from very fierce heaps of sins, (committed) even during hundreds of crores of existences.

64-66. There is no doubt, O best brāhmaṇa, that he who everyday takes a lump of the dhātrī fruit would obtain religious merit everyday and store it. There is no doubt that he who harms the dhātrī tree, the resort of all gods, gives blows on the body of Viṣṇu. Dhātrī is full of all gods. It is especially dear to Viṣṇu. Even Brahmā cannot correctly describe its virtues.

67. That man who, having known the entire truth, has devotion for dhātrī and tulasī, enjoys all pleasures, and then in the end obtains liberation due to Viṣṇu's grace.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

*The Importance of Honouring a Guest**Jaimini said:*

1. O glorious one, tell me in detail again about tulasī's greatness destroying sins, so also about the importance of honouring a guest.

Sūta said:

2. Then, O best brāhmaṇa, that very lustrous Vyāsa, started telling the greatness of tulasī, destroying the sins of the listeners.

Vyāsa said:

3-4. This tulasī, dear to the lord, is actually great Lakṣmī. Therefore, O Jaimini they do not recognise it as a tree. As a mortal always worships tulasī on the earth, so gods along with Indra worship it in heaven.

5-6. I am telling firmly that everything is prosperous there only where this tulasī, of the nature of the highest Brahman, stands. Even a sinner who gets, at the time of his death, water dropped from a leaf of tulasī, goes near Viṣṇu.

7. He who would have, at the time of his death, a vertical sectarian mark (*ūrdhvapuṇḍra*) is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu.

8. O best brāhmaṇa, Yama is not the master of him who would have a tulasī leaf in his mouth, on his head or in his ears at the time of his death.

9-12a. There was a pious brāhmaṇa by name Pavitra, who knew the highest truth. His wife had the name Bahulā. The chaste lady belonged to a good family and was highly devoted to serving her husband. There (also) lived an excellent brāhmaṇa named Anapatyapati. That Pavitra, serving brāhmaṇas, formed friendship with him. Then, O best one, Pavitra, through love (for his friend) and with a desire to have talk, sat with Anapatyapati on an excellent seat.

12b-13a. In the meanwhile a good brāhmaṇa, of a great lustre, named Lomaśa, came there and saw the two telling (each other) wonderful stories.

13b-14a. Then the two brāhmaṇas, getting up from the seat, honoured that brāhmaṇa Lomaśa with water for washing his feet, with respectful offerings and water for rinsing his mouth.

14b-16a. That Lomaśa, highly devoted to Viṣṇu, was very much pleased with them, and narrating (tales of) Viṣṇu, sat on the seat, O best brāhmaṇa. The two sages, Pavitra and Anapatya, said devoutly to the magnanimous Lomaśa who had joined the palms of his hands:

16b-20a. “O revered one, O you who know all the worldly practices, indeed our hermitage is purified by the couple of your feet which are fit to be seized (i.e. touched) by the good. By seeing the couple of your feet, all the sins that we had formerly committed through delusion, have perished. You are actually lord Viṣṇu fit to be worshipped even by gods. How are we, men, able to worship you properly? With the worship that we have, according to our capacity, offered to you, our guest, be pleased. Pardon the faults of us two.”

20bc. O best brāhmaṇa, speaking like this, the two high-souled friends, the two householders, fell at the couple of the feet of the guest.

Vyāsa said:

21-23. Then Lomaśa, best among the learned, was very much pleased. (He said to them:) “You are best among the polite, You are the best brāhmaṇas, and are highly devoted to piety. By your polite words I am very much pleased. The wise say that a guest is actually Brahmā, Śiva, or Viṣṇu. You have shown so much devotion to me. May auspiciousness come to you. I, a guest, have been properly entertained by you with abundant eatables.”

Vyāsa said:

24. Then the two brāhmaṇas got up, and saluting him by touching the couple of his feet, said to that sage Lomaśa:

The two brāhmaṇas said:

25-26. O brāhmaṇa, please tell us the importance of the worship of a guest, having done which, liberation, to be obtained by men but with difficulty, is obtained. Who is said to be a guest

in the world? How is his worship (done)? What position do the one attentive to a guest and the guest obtain?

Lomaśa said:

27-28. Of the four stages of life that of the householder is said to be the best due to its honouring the anchorite, celibate and a religious mendicant. Among (the members of) the four stages of life the householders are said to be the chief. They should devoutly honour guests.

29-30. The greatest duty of householders is said to be honouring guests. They are said to be householders since they have not fallen from the duty of their stage of life. If householders take care in honouring guests, then what purpose do they have with other pious acts?

31-32. The wise call him to be a guest whose name, family and position are not heard of (before), and who would accidentally come to their house. The wise ones should honour like Viṣṇu brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras who have come to their house.

33-34. Those others born in low castes, among whom cāṇḍālas are the chief ones, should be honoured like Viṣṇu with water for washing their feet, with respectful offerings and abundant eatables. When guests come, a householder goes forth (to greet them). A brāhmaṇa should quickly give them water for washing their feet and materials of worship.

35. With soft words he would make a friendly enquiry after the (guests') health. And the householder should gladly feed them with divine foods.

36. The wise one should prepare his bed in a comfortable chamber. Seeing him desirous to go in the morning he should give him leave.

37-38. O best ones, I shall tell you how a guest should be honoured with hospitality if the householder is unfortunately not wealthy. When guests have come he should devoutly offer them (a) grass (seat) etc. If there is no grass seat he should not devoutly say to him: "Sit on the ground."

39-41. For washing his feet he should give him excellent water. Then with sweet words he should ask in a friendly way about his health etc. Then he should devoutly give him fruit etc.

for eating. Without that an intelligent person should not gladly present himself (to the guest). And he should say: “O guest, I am a great sinner, very poor. I desire to offer you (worship with) devotion. But the destiny is opposing.”

42-44. The poor one who has avoided honouring a guest in this manner and not anyone else fallen from his duty, would obtain the fruit as stated (in holy texts). The religious merit earned during crores of existences, of the householder from whose house a guest goes unhonoured, perishes. Viṣṇu would instantly remove the sin committed during crores of existences, of him who honours with devotion just one guest.

45-46. I am telling the truth. I am saying what is beneficial. I am making a firm statement. A householder does not go to heaven without carefully honouring a guest. It is truth, (nothing but) the truth. It is the repeated truth. For householders going to heaven is not (possible), is not (at all) possible, except by honouring a guest.

47-51. In the Dvāpara age there was a cowherd known as Jñātidharma. He knew all the ways of life. His wife was called Śrīvallabhā. He who served his kinsmen did all (good) acts. With his wife he lived in Saurāṣṭra. O brāhmaṇas, due to the movement of bad planets Indra did not shower water for twelve years. Therefore, there was a very great famine. During that great famine, the inhabitants of that country were distressed, and all of them gave up even the limit (of decorum). The great meditating saint Jñānabhadra, with his wealth lost due to the great famine, became very much distressed in the age called Dvāpara.

52-53. Seeing his wife and sons distressed with hunger, he with the brāhmaṇa's consent(?), went to the land at the foot of a mountain to eat fruits and roots. O you two best brāhmaṇas, the long-lived one, who was hungry, found one pumpkin gourd at the border of the land at the foot of the hill.

54-56. That very glorious best brāhmaṇa Jñānabhadra, being delighted on getting the fruit, speedily went (back) to his house. O brāhmaṇas, in the meanwhile, when the clouds had covered the sky, as it were, with dark blue feet, it rained with powerful showers. The sage's entire body was bathed with that shower. A forester, afflicted with cold, went to (his) house from the forest.

57-63. Seeing the guest afflicted with cold, he saluted him by (bowing) his head. He then devoutly gave him a grass-seat and water for washing his feet etc. Then with that guest only making an intelligent talk with sweet words the cowherd along with his wife diligent in serving her lord, remained with a composed mind. The chaste lady was delighted on having, with effort, secured a pumpkin gourd and gave a part to him after cutting it (into parts). Then that hospitable cowherd who had become weak due to fasting for twentyone days gladly gave a large part (of the fruit) to the guest. Then that chaste housewife highly devoted to her husband also gladly gave that (other) part (of the fruit) to the guest. O best brāhmaṇa, the guest having eaten both the parts (of the fruit) of (i.e. meant for) that noble couple, was very much delighted. The two with firm devotion worshipped the guest like Viṣṇu.

64. Having rested there only at night, he went in the morning after a long time after having bathed. (The two) passed twentyone days in fasting.

65-66a. Then that noble couple died. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit the noble-hearted couple obtained absorption into Viṣṇu, difficult to be obtained even by meditating saints.

66b-67. Due to the efficacy of their religious merit and the worship of the guest that they had done, the famine in the kingdom came to an end. The people were extremely happy and were free from grief and diseases.

68. They were rich in wealth and grains and were highly devoted to religion. The bandits there disappeared, and the king protected the people.

69-70. People were engaged in their own practices (i.e. practices laid down for their respective castes), and the clouds rained as desired. Crores of the ancestors and successors of the two, being freed from sins due to that act only obtained salvation. They were blemishless, endowed with wealth and were alone honoured by all the people.

71a. The progeny of the two grew without grief and diseases.

Lomaśa said:

71b-72a. I have told you the importance of the worship of

a guest along with its history. O brāhmaṇas, what else do you desire to hear for your pleasure?

Vyāsa said:

72b-76a. When that Lomaśa, rich in austerities was speaking like this, a black mouse, seized by death came up from its hole. Seeing that black mouse to have come from the hole, Pavitra, beside himself with anger got up, repeatedly speaking like this: "This wicked mouse of a sinful heart digs (the ground of) the hermitage with its sharp teeth at night, and destroys domestic things. For all the castes pity is said to be the best. It should be shown to all living beings, but not to wicked ones."

76b-80a. Speaking like this, O best brāhmaṇa, with a very sharp iron arrow he killed the mouse that had committed sins and the death of whom had approached. That rat, with its body bathed (i.e. wet) with the streams of flowing blood, fell on the ground with its consciousness affected due to agony, O brāhmaṇa sage. Seeing the mouse fallen, the kind, best brāhmaṇa, wailed loudly and speedily got up. Taking an excellent tulasī leaf from his own ear, he put it into the mouse's mouth, on its head and ears.

80b-82a. "O mother, O goddess Tulasī, O you causing delight to Govinda, give the best position to this mouse who has committed sins." O best brāhmaṇa, he who obliged all the world, loudly uttered the sound (i.e. the words): 'Hari, Nārāyaṇa Ananta'.

82b-83a. The mouse, due to the touch of the tulasī leaf, and due to hearing Viṣṇu's name, was free from sins and became free from the bond of the worldly existence.

83b-86a. Then the messengers of the great Viṣṇu, who were endowed with all (good) characteristics, quickly came there in good chariots to take (the mouse) whose sins had gone (to Viṣṇu's abode). The mouse surrounded by the hosts of Viṣṇu's messengers got into a divine chariot and went to the highest place. The mouse, having stayed in Viṣṇu's abode for thousands of crores of yugas, and having secured knowledge there only, went to (i.e. obtained) final emancipation.

Vyāsa said:

86b-87. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you the importance of goddess Tulasī. O glorious one, tell me what you desire to hear now.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Conduct in the Four Yugas

Jaimini said:

1. O glorious one, tell me how will all people be (i.e. behave) when the very fierce Kali age has come.

Vyāsa said:

2-5. The first (age) is called Satya-yuga. In it the people—brāhmaṇas and others—were devoted to worshipping Viṣṇu, and were free from grief and diseases. All of them spoke the truth, all were kind, and all lived long. They were rich in wealth and grains. They were free from (doing) harm (to others) and from religious hypocrisy. All obliged others. All knew sacred treatises. O best brāhmaṇa, in Satya-yuga all people were like this. And the kings followed royal duties and protected people. Oh! Who can relate the merit and the glory of Satya-yuga?

6-8. In it no man practised unrighteousness. When Tretā-yuga came, Dharma became deficient in one foot. Some people had little unhappiness. Some resorted to kindness. People were engaged in meditating upon Viṣṇu. They were highly devoted to (performing) sacrifices and (giving) gifts. They were engaged in (following) the practices of castes and stages of human life. They were happy and of a composed mind. All the śūdras tilled the soil and served brāhmaṇas.

9-11. Brāhmaṇas were noble and had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. They were averse to accepting presents. They were true to their words. They had curbed their senses. They were always engaged in penance and vows. They always worshipped Viṣṇu. When at the end of Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga arrived.

Dharma would be deficient in two feet and some men would have happiness and unhappiness. Some would be engrossed in sins, and some were pious.

12. Some lacked some virtues. Some men of high virtues were extremely unhappy. Some were happy.

13. Sometime a brāhmaṇa longed for receiving (a present). At some time or other kings harassed their subjects through greed for wealth.

14-17. Brāhmaṇas were very much given to Viṣṇu's worship, and śūdras served brāhmaṇas. When, O brāhmaṇa, in yuga after yuga Dharma became deficient (foot) by foot, then Vyāsa of the form of Viṣṇu divided the Veda. O best brāhmaṇa, in Kali-yuga which is the only abode of all sins, Dharma would be having one foot (only), and all people would be engaged in (committing) sins. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras will be very much addicted to sins, will be very voluptuous and cruel. They will censure the Vedas and indulge in gambling and stealing.

18-20. They will be engaged in cohabiting with widows in Kali-yuga. Certain brāhmaṇas, looking to their livelihood (only), will be acting very fraudulently. All will be exceedingly fond of women, all will drink intoxicating liquors. All will be engaged in sexual acts and snatch other's wealth. They will always ardently long for other's food. They will be averse to penance and vows. They will be bound by the company of heretics in Kali-yuga.

21-22. Brāhmaṇas following śūdras' practices, will be (vagrant devotees) wearing red garments. In Kali-yuga the accomplished one will reach a very low position. And the mean, being endowed with wealth, will go to a very high position. All men will give gifts to those who have obliged them.

23-24. Even with effort (being made) cāṇḍālas will not abide by brāhmaṇas. In Kali-yuga people will give false testimony through affection for their friends. They will talk impious ideas. They will lament over righteous thoughts. They will censure (people) in (their) absence. They will be cruel, and will speak sweetly in the presence of other (people).

25-26. Unchaste women will speak like chaste women to their husbands. Brāhmaṇas will harm other's wives and will sell their possessions. In Kali-yuga, people will sell their daughters.

All men will be subjugated by women. Women too will be very fickle.

27-29. In Kali-yuga men will be wicked-hearted. The earth will have few crops and clouds will have little water. They will also shower (water) at a wrong time. O Jaimini, in Kali-yuga cows will eat feces and will yield little milk. And undoubtedly that milk will be ghee-less. People will be given to self-praise. They will be intent on censuring others.

30. Boys will have short bodies, and will eat too much food. In Kali-yuga, brāhmaṇas will offer libations to the dead ancestors for religious hypocrisy.

31. All will be affectionate in words (only) till their mission does not succeed. All will laugh at (certain) people, seeing them to be devoted to piety.

32-33. People will prosper through wicked deeds. Therefore, people will be addicted to sins. And they will completely perish within ten or twelve years. (They will prosper) as water will increase in the rainy season. People will lose their youth in Kali-yuga.

34. A girl will conceive in her fifth or eighth year. Men will have many children and (therefore) they will be very unhappy.

35. All will long for taking (gifts), none will long for giving. In Kali (yuga) Mlecchas will be kings, addicted to sins.

36. In Kali-yuga people will be of one caste (only) in order to satisfy carnal desires. In the first division of Kali (yuga) men (will) censure Viṣṇu.

37-38. In the middle (part) of Kali (yuga) men will only recognise Viṣṇu's names. Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras will have (but) one caste in Kali-yuga, and there will be only four castes.

39-40a. O best brāhmaṇa, whenever there will be a decrease in (the number of) the pious ones, it should be known that the sinners will be on the increase in Kali (yuga). O best brāhmaṇa, though I have described this Kali (yuga) to be fierce, yet O best among the virtuous, it has (one) great merit.

40b-41. In Satya (yuga) religious merit would be accomplished after twelve years. In Tretā (yuga) (it would be accomplished during half the period of that. In Dvāpara (it would be accompli-

shed) within a month. But it would be produced in a day and night in Kali-yuga.

42-44a. Therefore, in the mortal world men do not at all reach a good position. A man obtains that fruit in Kali-yuga merely by uttering (the name of) Viṣṇu, which he would obtain by worshipping Viṣṇu for twelve years in another yuga. Kali does not trouble that man who utters only one name of Viṣṇu in Kali-yuga in this world. This is the truth, the (only) truth. There is no doubt in it.

Jaimini said:

44b-46a. Every act becomes fruitless due to the lack of the purity of mind. You have told this before. Therefore, my mind gives wonder (i.e. is amazed). In Kali-yuga all lack the purity of mind. O preceptor, tell me how their acts would be (done).

Vyāsa said:

46b-47. A man should devoutly offer whatever act he does in Kali-yuga to the great Viṣṇu. Every act that is dedicated to Viṣṇu would be inexhaustible.

Vyāsa said:

48. O best brāhmaṇa, I have thus told you the entire account, having devoutly heard which a man would obtain liberation.

Sūta said:

49. Jaimini thus informed by that highest soul, became engaged in the employment of rituals, and went to the highest position.

50-52. Those men desiring liberation, who devoutly recite or listen to this Essence of the Employment of Rituals are freed from all fierce sins committed during many existences, and obtain liberation. There is no doubt about this. Those men who, desiring liberation, recite and listen to this, get whatever is desired by them through the auspicious favour of Lakṣmī's lord.

53. A man, reciting or listening to half a verse, or a verse, or a quarter of a verse, gets the desired fruit.

54. That man who, after writing or getting written this holy text, would worship it, obtains the fruit of Viṣṇu's worship only.

55. May this Purāṇa which is very secret, has come out from Vyāsa's mouth, is very charming, gives delight to Viṣṇu's devotees, pleases the Disc-holder (Viṣṇu), Murāri whose feet are for a long time saluted by gods and others and who is the lord of the entire world.

May auspiciousness prevail.

May it be dedicated to Viṣṇu.

End of the Treatise.

INDEX

- Abhayada (a holy place) 2831
 Abhigamya (an epithet of Śiva) 500
 Abhijit 115
 Abhimata (a Sādhya) 523
 Ābhīra (a country) 1365f.
 Ābhīras 634
 Abhisāra (a country) 1365
 Abhisārikā 2955
 Abjaja (an epithet of Brahmā) 504
 Ablution 276
 Acchoda (a holy place, a lake) 1414, 1417, 2782, 2787, 2832, 2838
 Acchodā (a river) 97
 Acyuta 121, 711, 1589, 1721, 2028, 2030, 2081, 2092, 2099, 2155, 2545, 2587, 2591, 2612, 2906, 2969, 3136, 3148, 3160, 3162, 3164, 3172, 3175, 3181, 3200, 3211, 3214, 3263, 3282, 3298f, 3321, 3332f, 3395, 3472
 Acyutaśekhara (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Ādhāraśakti 3157
 Adharma 508
 Adhidaivata 507
 Adhirājya (a country) 1365
 Adhiramyā (Nīlaratna's wife) 1934
 Adhokṣaja 330, 1999, 2612, 3282
 Adhṛṣyā (a river) 1364
 Adhvaryu 40, 425, 511, 1679, 2275
 Ādi (son of the demon Andhaka) 609
 Āḍibaka 490
 Ādicakrin (Viṣṇu) 2613
 Ādikhaṇḍa 1351f., 1563
 Ādiparvan 2152, 2265
 Aditi 48, 62, 206, 225, 371, 522, 525, 591, 869, 916, 918, 921, 992, 2662, 2756, 2771, 3292
 Āditīrtha 405
 Āditya (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 2560
 Āditya (the Sun) 349, 449, 783, 876, 878f, 1438, 2883
 Āditya (a deity) 41, 89, 146, 190, 221, 378, 406, 524, 878, 1212, 1481, 2771, 3205, 3292f, 3517
 Ādityaśayana (a vow) 346f
 Āditya(tīrtha) 2898
 Ādityāyana (a holy place) 1397
 Ādityeśvara (a holy place) 1393
 Āḍivaka 124
 Ādivarāha (Viṣṇu) 253
 Ādreya (a country) 1366
 Adrohaka (name of a good man) 704, 706, 712, 746
 Adṛṣyanti 11
 Agastya 218, 254, 261, 263f, 318f, 461, 475f, 487f, 634, 1377, 1663, 1668ff, 1679, 1797, 1933f, 1935, 2181, 2589, 2629
 Agastyeśvara (a holy place) 1394
 Agāvaha (son of Brhaddevī) 120
 Aghamarṣaṇa 3313
 Aghāpahā (a river) 1238
 Aghāra (a rite) 2189
 Aghora (a demon) 847
 Āgneya (a kind of bath) 655
 Āgneyāstra (a missile) 630, 1833
 Agni 33, 58, 209, 213, 233, 316, 319, 337, 449, 523, 534, 549, 563, 617, 640f, 679, 847, 1113, 1131, 1436, 1764, 2033, 2189, 2245, 2319, 2321, 2395, 2467, 2714, 3249, 3286, 3534
 Agnibāhu 58
 Agnidagdha 84
 Agnīdhra 425ff, 511
 Āgnīdhra 58, 75
 Agnigarbha (an epithet of the Sun) 878
 Agnipāleśvara (a holy place) 2848
 Agni or Āgneya Purāṇa 2266, 3007f, 3194
 Agnipa 2782
 Agniśikha (an attendant of Śiva) 2200
 Agniṣtoma (a sacrifice) 25, 376, 1377, 1422, 1425, 1428, 1430, 1432, 1433, 1434, 1437f, 1440, 1464, 1480, 1482, 1486f, 2481, 2488, 2588, 2618, 2726, 3248
 Agniśvāta (a sage) 289, 2741
 Agniśvāta (a sacrifice) 72
 Agnitīrtha 1436, 1477, 1505, 2849
 Aha (a holy place) 1433
 Ahalyā 746ff, 1113, 1480, 1693, 1763, 1792
 Aharṅkāra 8, 14, 15n., 1352f,
 Āhavanīya fire 146, 2270
 Ahi 24
 Ahicchatra (a city) 1690, 1697
 Ahimsā 952
 Ahinagu (Devānīka's son) 70
 Ahirbudhnya (a Rudra) 48, 221, 523
 Ahitāpī (a river) 1363
 Ahovīrya (a sage) 181
 Āhuka 115
 Aila 1363
 Aindrāstra (a missile) 630
 Aindratāpana (a demon) 628

- Aindrikā (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951
 Air (an element) 3163
 Airāvata or Airāvaṇa 32, 34, 50, 57, 562, 564, 667, 810, 837, 1358, 1590, 2327, 2330, 2594, 3089, 3182, 3292f
 Airāvata (a country) 1362
 Aja (Dilīpa's son) 70, 2612
 Ajā Ekādaśī 2526f
 Ajagandha (Rudra) 392, 418
 Ajagava (Śiva's bow) 1005
 Ajaikapāda (a Rudra) 48, 221
 Ajakarna (a tree) 75, 2331
 Ajāmila 1456, 2045, 2063, 2823
 Ajāpya (sage) 289, 2085, 2741
 Ajāta 117
 Ājyabhāga (a rite) 2189
 Akalmaṣa (Manu's son) 58
 Akapi (Manu's son) 58
 Ākāśa 15, 927, 1477
 Ākatha (a brāhmaṇa) 2296, 2298f
 Akhaṇḍa Dvādaśī 2101
 Akhaṇḍā (an Ekādaśī) 1227
 Akhilārtihara (Viṣṇu) 3472
 Akopa (Rāma's minister) 3245
 Akṛtāśva (Sarmhatāśva's son) 69
 Akrūra 119, 1992, 2592, 2653, 3268ff, 3272, 3277f, 3286, 3304, 3428
 Akṣa (a demon) 1793
 Akṣauhiṇī 821, 3279
 Akṣaya 2317, 3475
 Akṣayavata 2407, 3484
 Akṣika (a monkey) 1683
 Akṣoṭa (a holy place) 439
 Ākūti 29
 Alakā (a holy place) 438
 Alakanandā (a river) 2319, 2397, 3214
 Alakṣmī 796, 1591
 Alarka (a king) 2725
 Ālaya (a country) 1365
 Ālhādakārin (an epithet of Cupid) 339
 Amalagiri (a city) 2924
 Āmalakī 2492f, 2494f
 Āmalakī Ekādaśī 2491ff
 Amara (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Amara (a mountain) 2079
 Amarakaṇṭaka (a holy place) 211, 458, 960, 978, 1217, 1394, 1411, 2831, 2856
 Amarakaṇṭaka (a mountain) 1378, 1380, 1384, 1389, 2836
 Amarathoraga (a country) 1365
 Amarāvati 205, 1671, 2329, 2342, 2671f, 2774, 2968
 Āmaradakī (a tree) 2861
 Amareśvara (a holy place) 1217, 2789
 Amāvasu (a mane) 72
 Amāvasyā 72, 120, 1016, 1050
 Ambā 219
 Ambā (= Pārvatī) 2277
 Ambara (a holy place) 210
 Ambarastha (= Viṣṇu) 3472
 Ambarīṣa 68, 69, 1363, 1970, 2029, 2041f, 2047, 2071, 2083, 2635, 2644, 2328
 Ambikā (a deity) 1695, 2219, 2945, 3030, 3340
 Ambikā (a holy place) 439
 Arṇkoṭa (a holy place) 438
 Amoghā (Śantanu's wife) 752f, 755
 Amoghākṣī (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Amṛta (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Amṛta (a holy place) 2831
 Amṛtā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Amṛtā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Amṛtāmūrta (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Amṛteśvara 2969
 Amṛtodara 351
 Arisa (an Āditya) 524, 2330
 Arisaka (a country) 1364
 Arīṣumān (Asamañjasa's son) 69
 Arīṣumān (Pañcajana's son) 2397
 Āmūlika (a brāhmaṇa) 204
 Anādideva (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Anagha (a Gandharva) 221
 Ānakadundubhi 119f, 1604
 Anala (a country) 1365
 Anāmaya (= Viṣṇu) 2044, 2317, 3441, 3514, 3523
 Anamitra (Nighna's son) 70, 117, 118
 Ānanda (a forest on Meru) 1246, 1263, 1267
 Ānanda (bank of river Kāmadā) 2982
 Ānandabīja (= the Moon) 350
 Ānandā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Ānandakānana 1993
 Ānandakāriṇī 326
 Ānandapura (a holy place) 1478
 Ānandini 326
 Anaṅga (= Cupid) 339, 2639, 3394
 Anaṅgā (a deity) 325
 Anaṅgā (a river) 2364
 Anaṅgadāna 341
 Anaṅgadhāman 351
 Anaṅgamālinī (a deity) 1981
 Anaṅgasenā (a deity) 1981
 Ananta (an epithet of Brahmā) 432, 439
 Ananta or Anantaka (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 551, 1589, 2000, 2570, 2733, 2795, 2820, 3160f, 3232, 3282, 3472, 3544
 Ananta (= Kṛṣṇa) 3259
 Ananta (a serpent) 632, 782, 1588, 3127, 3159, 3172

- Anantā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Anantadātā (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Anantadhāman (=the Moon) 350
 Anantaphaladā (a vow) 323
 Anantaśayana (a place) 2696
 Anantaśayana (a vow) 3311
 Anantatṛtiyā 323
 Anapatyapati (a brāhmaṇa) 3539f
 Anaraṇya (Sarvakarman's son) 70
 Anarka (a holy place) 1438
 Ānarta (Śaryāti's son) 68
 Ānarta (a country) 68, 1365, 2047
 Anaśana (Śiva's attendant) 2310
 Anasūyā 30, 194, 950, 1111, 1652, 2587
 Anaupamyā (Bāṇa's wife) 1383
 Anāvṛṣṭi 119
 Anāyu (Dakṣa's daughter) 522
 Anāyuṣā (mother of Vyādhis i.e. diseases) 524
 Anchorite 180, 2973
 Andha (a country) 1365
 Andha (a demon) or Andhaka 320, 348, 455, 609, 614, 637f, 859, 889, 1388, 2382
 Andhakaghātin (=Śiva) 500
 Andhakāraka (a mountain) 1371
 Andhakārin (Viṣṇu's attendant) 3047
 Andhatāmisra (a hell) 28, 2711, 2800
 Aṅga (a country) 1365, 1846
 Aṅga (a Prajāpati) 60, 1042
 Aṅga (Atri's son) 1003, 1020f, 1023, 1025f
 Aṅga (Vedāṅga) 11, 3205, 3315
 Aṅgacatuṣṭaya 563
 Aṅgada (a monkey) 493, 1685, 1794, 1855f, 1912, 1918, 3243
 Aṅgāra (a country) 1365
 Aṅgāraka (=Mars) 341, 452
 Aṅgāraparnaka (a demon) 2333
 Aṅgāravāhikā (a river) 98
 Aṅgārakacaturthī 3427, 1396
 Aṅgāreśvara (a holy place) 1391, 1396
 Aṅgasenā (Riputāpa's wife) 1934
 Aṅgavardhana 438
 Aṅgiras (a sage) 163, 264, 289, 514, 522, 651, 1486, 1499, 1673, 1830, 2223, 2629, 2837, 2846, 3127
 Aṅgirasa (a holy place) 1396
 Anila (a Marut) 2331
 Aṇimā See 'Siddhi'
 Aniruddha 123, 1046, 1953, 1992, 1999f, 2582, 2612, 2733, 2883f, 3165, 3294, 3299, 3304
 Añjana 969
 Añjana (a quarter-elephant) 1372
 Anna (food), four kinds of 279
 Anṛta 30
 Antaka (Yama) 2561, 2737
 Anugraha (Creation) 22
 Aṇuha (a King of Pañcāla family) 91
 Anūpavṛta (a country) 1365
 Anurādhā (a Nakṣatra) 346
 Anurūpamāya (a god) 523
 Anuśāsika Parvan 2265
 Anuṣṇā (a river) 1364
 Anuṣṭubh (metre) 25
 Anvāhārya (monthly Śrāddha performed in honour of the manes on the new-moon day) 79
 Āpa (Vasiṣṭha's son) 58
 Āpagā (a river) 1431
 Apamārjana hymn 2610, 2616
 Apāna 650, 695, 2331
 Aparā (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Aparā Ekādaśī 2509
 Aparājita (a Rudra) 48
 Aparājitā (a deity) 2644
 Aparānta (a country) 1365
 Aparatāṅgaka (a country) 1365
 Aparāvārā 1470
 Aparāvartaka (a country) 1365
 Aparṇā 322, 1981
 Āpastamba (a sage) 1401
 Āpastamba (sacrifice) 54
 Āpoṣaṇa 2239
 Āpo vā idam (a hymn) 2145
 Apsaras 73
 Āpohiṣṭha 401, 446
 Āptoryāma 25
 Apūpa 263
 Arajā (daughter of Bhārgava i.e. Śukra) 481f
 Araṇi 4
 Araṇya (a demon) 847
 Āraṇyaka (a sage) 1797ff, 1801
 Āraṇyaka 2
 Āraṇya parvan 2265
 Aratni 355
 Arbuda (=mountain Abu) 1422, 2835, 2842
 Arbuda forest 1350, 2461, 2836
 Ardhaacandra (a kind of arrow) 825
 Ardhanārīśvara (=Śiva) 364
 Ardra (Viśva's son) 68
 Ādrā (a Nakṣatra) 80
 Arghadīrgha (a holy place) 1239, 1241, 1243ff
 Argala (a hell) 2711
 Arhat 139, 140, 1038
 Ārhata 137
 Arimardana (Khaḍgabāhu's elephant) 2963
 Ariṣṭa (a demon) 530, 546, 2591, 3264
 Ariṣṭa (Vaivasvata Manu's son) 65
 Ariṣṭā (Kāśyapa's wife and mother of Kinnaras and Gandharvas) 51

- Ariṣṭanemi (Vinatā's son) 221
 Arjuna 50, 159, 337, 349, 1155, 1945, 1975f, 1977f, 1986ff, 2594, 3006, 3302, 3305, 3308
 Arjuna (a tree) 2591
 Arka 83, 309, 346, 894, 2592
 Arkanayana (a demon) 224
 Army, fourfold 562
 Arogā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Ārṣa (a form of marriage) 1498, 1675
 Ārṣabha (a holy place) 1477
 Ārṣiṣeṇa (a sage) 1674
 Arteries 2124
 Artha (a goal of human life) 224, 1067, 1415, 1691, 2143, 2222, 2786
 Arthaghnī 2838
 Aruṇa (Vinatā's son) 50, 535, 1361, 2674
 Aruṇa (a Sādhya) 523
 Aruṇa (a place) 2925
 Aruṇā (a river) 1436
 Arundhatī 47, 194, 212, 268, 2164, 2219, 2241, 2594, 2967, 3030
 Arundhatī (tīrtha) 1463
 Aruṇi (Vinatā's son) 221
 Āruṇī (a river) 1482
 Arvābrhaspati (a sage) 58
 Arvāksrotas 25, 26
 Aryaman (an Āditya) 524, 2330
 Ārya (a region) 2838
 Āryans 1363f
 Āryāvarta 2595, 3418
 Āśāḍha 280f, 283, 347, 365, 1527, 1822, 2007, 2516, 2519, 2548, 2570, 2602f, 2647, 3320
 Āśāḍha Ekādaśī 714, 970, 2515
 Asamañjasa (son of Sagara and Bhānumatī) 69
 Asāmānya 117
 Aśani (a missile) 630
 Aśāntatikā (a deity) 1982
 Aśī (a river) 1364
 Asikuṇḍa (a holy place) 3063
 Asiloman (a demon) 225
 Asimardana 1631
 Asipatravana (a hell) 2800, 3411, 3531
 Asita (a sage) 1490, 1673
 Asitāṅga (a sage) 1760
 Āśleṣā (a Nakṣatra) 348
 Aśoka (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 2560
 Aśoka (a tree) 246, 366
 Aśoka (Rāma's Minister) 484
 Aśoka (grove or garden) 1960, 2489, 2767
 Aśokanidhi (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 292
 Aśokasundari 1280, 1283, 1285ff, 1289f, 1303ff, 1309, 1312, 1316, 1321, 1324
 Aśokavanavāsini 364
 Aśrubindumatī (Rati's daughter) 1190, 1197, 1199, 1202f
 Aśrutā (a deity) 1982
 Astācala (a mountain) 517
 Aṣṭaka (a sage) 264
 Aṣṭaka 2805
 Aṣṭakā (Virajā in Brahmaloḥa) 70
 Aṣṭamī 1586, 1602, 1604, 1606, 1607f, 2470, 2845, 2854
 Aṣṭamūrti (= Śiva) 2244
 Aṣṭāvakra (a sage) 3309
 Asthipura (a holy place) 1438
 Āstika (a sage) 2629, 2837
 Astrologers 3015f
 Āsubhakṣa 45
 Aśūnyaśayanavrata 342, 1227
 Asura 466, 526
 Asutāpa (Sutāpana) 1856
 Aśvabāhu 119
 Aśvaga (Sāvitrī's son) 523
 Aśvagrīvā 119
 Āśvaka (a holy place) 2832
 Aśvakarṇa (a tree) 75
 Aśvamedha (a sacrifice) 251, 358, 381, 383, 402, 440, 950, 1199, 1427, 1440, 1483, 2041, 2447
 Aśvamedhakara (a city) 2924
 Aśvamedhika (a holy place) 2314
 Aśvamedhaparvan 2265
 Aśvamukha (a demon) 2682
 Aśvapati (a king) 1121
 Aśvatara (a serpent) 50, 1499, 1908
 Aśvatara (a holy place) 1488
 Aśvatīrtha (a holy place) 1409
 Aśvattha 281, 349, 361, 1052, 1847, 2112, 2297, 2487, 2594, 2632, 2713f
 Aśvattha (a holy place) 212
 Aśvatthāman 59, 685, 863
 Āśvina (a month) 292, 325, 365, 1395, 1616, 1626, 2007f, 2158, 2532, 2647, 2658, 2740, 3002
 Aśvinī (a Nakṣatra) 347
 Aśvinī tīrtha (a holy place) 1428
 Aśvins 41, 64, 167, 221, 532, 681, 1385, 1701, 1704, 1892f, 2604, 2782
 Atala (a nether world) 3340
 Atandra 52
 Atarṇaka (a holy place) 1428
 Aṭaviśekhara (a country) 1365
 Aṭavitīrtha (a holy place) 1410
 Atharva 25, 61
 Atharvan 3157, 3160
 Atharvaṇa 181
 Atharvāṅgirasa 1526
 Atharvaśīras 1549
 Atharvaveda 147, 448
 Atheist 1546

- Atibala (Śiva) 2705
 (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Atibālā (a divine mother) 643
 Atihrasva 2613
 Atikāya (a demon) 495
 Atikāya (a monkey) 1794
 Atikṛcchra (a vow) 1554, 2726, 3128
 Atimukta (a creeper) 227
 Atirāja 25
 Atirātra (a sacrifice) 358, 1428, 1432, 1464
 Atirātra (a holy place) 1422
 Atisiddhauja (one of the Viśvedavas) 523
 Ātmadeva (a brāhmaṇa) 2989f
 Ātman 924, 929f, 931f, 934, 937f
 Ātmānandakāri 328
 Ātmavidhi (Sāvitri's son) 523
 Ātreya (a sage) 1490, 2610
 Atri 29, 31, 40, 59, 223, 264, 289, 413, 522, 1002, 1019f, 1026, 1031f, 1111, 1401, 1679, 2629, 3049, 3127, 3174, 3234
 Atri (family) 2720
 Atrinetrodhbava (an epithet of the Moon) 855
 Atrpta (an epithet of Śani) 2440
 Atulā (a river) 1364
 Ātyantika creation 10
 Aubhida (a country) 1370
 Audumbara 2737
 Audra (a country) 1365
 Audyanaka (a holy place) 1488
 Aurva (submarine fire) 69, 537, 2324
 Aurva (a preceptor) 2395
 Auśadhyā (a holy place) 2832
 Auśanasa 1435, 3195
 Auśanasa (an Upapurāṇa) 2266
 Auśinara Śibi 3127
 Austerities 2415
 Auttami Manu 58
 Avācaka (a Yavana tribe) 661
 Āvaha (a Marut) 631
 Avaiśākha (a goblin) 2115ff
 Avakirṇa (a holy place) 1436
 Avanti (a country) 1364, 3062
 Avanti (Avantikā—a city) 392, 1239, 1715, 2543, 2708, 2924
 Avara (a mountain) 2830
 Avaśa (Manu's son) 58
 Avasakthika 1528
 Avici or Avicimat (a hell) 28, 1843, 3531
 Avidyā 3340
 Avikāra (= Viṣṇu) 3282
 Avimukta (a holy place) 154, 1443, 1464, 1469f, 2762, 2777, 3038, 3040
 Aviyogadā (a well) 412
 Avyakta 16
 Avyaya (= Viṣṇu) 3473
 Avyaya (an epithet of Brahmā) 433, 3262
 Ayana 296, 444
 Ayodhyā 65, 413, 418, 421, 470, 490, 504f, 1667, 1653, 1715, 1737, 1760, 1779, 1868, 1930, 1932, 2141, 2261, 2590, 3020, 3040, 3069, 3157, 3223, 3243, 3248f
 Ayomukha (a mountain) 634
 Ayonisaṅgama (a holy place) 1396
 Āyu 1286, 1290ff, 1296, 1297ff, 1304ff, 1310, 1314f, 1316, 1318f, 1321, 1324
 Āyurveda 1921, 2590
 Ayutāyu (Sindhuvipa's son) 69
 Babhru 50
 Badara (Nārāyaṇa's hermitage) 3076
 Bābhra (a demon) 847
 Bābhra (also known as Pañcāla) 95
 Bādarāyaṇa (Parāśara's son) 73, 2593, 2981
 Badari (a holy place) 211, 2831, 3101, 3105
 (forest) 2656, 2658, 2979
 Badarikāśrama 205, 2318, 2468, 2661, 3079, 3099, 3311
 Badarītīrtha (or Badarikātīrtha) 100, 1484
 Badaryāśrama 1970, 3014
 Bādavi (a divine mother) 642
 Bahiscaryā (a river) 2859
 Bahṛc (a priest) 356, 640
 Bāhu (Vṛka's son) 69
 Bāhudā (a holy place) 1465
 Bāhudā (a river) 99
 Bahulā (Pavitra's wife) 3539
 Bahuhutā (a goddess) 1981
 Bahukalā (a goddess) 1981
 Bahubhūmi (Akrūra's son born of Aśvinī) 119
 Bahupradā (a goddess) 1981
 Bahuprayogā (a goddess) 1981
 Bahuputra (Trṣṭi's son) 116
 Bahuputra (Tittiri's son) 115
 Bahrūpa (a Rudra) 48, 2668
 Bahuvirya 2443
 Bāhya (a holy place) 2831
 Baka (a demon) 609, 3261
 Bakadālbhya (a sage) 2490
 Bakulā (a river) 2845
 Bakulāraṇya 1944
 Bakuleśa (Śiva) 2845
 Bala (Lakṣmi's son) 30
 Bala (a demon) 827, 830f, 988, 990f, 997, 2334ff
 Bala (a deity) 2089
 Balabhadra (= Balarāma) 1288, 2591, 3296, 3484f

Bālā (a divine mother) 643
 Baladeva 2023f, 2027, 3007f
 Balaghna (=Viṣṇu) 2612
 Balāhaka (Kadru's son) 51
 Balāhaka (a demon) 2682
 Balamitra (Viramaṇi's sister's son) 1813, 1818
 Bālamoda or Bālamodaka (Suratha's son) 1850, 1856
 Bālamuṣika (a country) 1365
 Bāla Nikumbha 523
 Bālāpa (a holy place) 2868, 2870
 Bālapendra (a holy place) 2871
 Balarāma 1155, 3007, 3014
 Balaratṭa (a country) 1365
 Balātirtha 2870
 Bālavidyā 1977
 Balāyu (Purūravas's son) 108
 Balbaja 687
 Bāleyī (a day dear to Brahmā) 214
 Bālhika (a country) 1365
 Bālhikas 634
 Bali (a demon) 124, 125, 214, 224, 245, 383, 628, 685, 741, 942, 1185, 2518, 2591, 2594, 2605, 2739f, 3099, 3209, 3211, 3213f, 3295, 3299
 Balidhvaṁsī 3471
 Balvala (a country) 1365
 Balvala (a demon) 3008
 Bāṇa (Bāṇāsura—a demon) 140, 1383, 1387, 2162, 2230, 2280, 2288, 2592, 2884, 3294f, 3297, 3299f, 3446, 3463
 Bandha (a tribe) 1365
 Bandin 1007
 Barbara (a country) 1365, 2677
 Bārbarī (a deity) 2689
 Barbarodbhūta (=Rāhu) 2677f
 Bārhaspatya (a smṛti) 3195
 Barhiṣads (sons of Pulastya) 73, 2085, 2741
 Barley 13
 Bāṣkala (a demon) 140
 Bāṣkali 225, 373f, 379ff, 383
 Bath, four kinds of 2719
 Baudha (a country) 1364
 Besmearing (of the floor of Viṣṇu temple) 1568
 Behaviour (with elders) 1517
 Bhadra (a demon) 843
 Bhadra (a doorkeeper in Vaikuṇṭha) 3157
 Bhadra or Subhadra (a cowherd) 1961
 Bhadra (a deity) 523, 1942, 2184
 Bhadrā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 322, 366
 Bhadrā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Bhadrā (a holy place) 158
 Bhadrā (a river) 2836, 2896f, 3214

Bhadrabāhu (a demon) 847
 Bhadrakālikā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Bhadrakarna (a holy place) 1468
 Bhadrakoṭi (a holy place) 1468
 Bhadrakriya (a brāhmaṇa) 3506
 Bhadramukhī (a river) 2844
 Bhādrapada 322, 325, 1404, 1586, 1604, 2009, 2525f, 2529, 2567, 2607, 2609, 2649, 2723, 2740, 3002, 3007, 3290, 3441f
 Bhadrapiṭha (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Bhadraprastha (a holy place) 635
 Bhadrāśāla (a grove) 1360
 Bhadrāsara (a sacred place) 97
 Bhadrāsena (Mahiṣmān's son) 110
 Bhadrāsundarī (a name of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Bhadrāśva (a king in Saurāṣṭra) 1592
 Bhadrāśva (a country) 299, 1356, 1360
 Bhadratanu (a brāhmaṇa) 3464f, 3469, 3471, 3478f, 3482
 Bhadravaṭa (a holy place) 1378
 Bhadrāvātī (a city) 2506
 Bhadravenī (a river) 1238
 Bhadreśvara (a holy place) 97, 2831
 Bhadreśvara (a king of Madhyadeśa) 880
 Bhadreśvarī (a name of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Bhaga (an Āditya) 221, 420, 524, 606, 2330
 Bhaga (a Rudra) 2331
 Bhaga (a demon) 500
 Bhagamālīnī (a divine mother) 643
 Bhagānandā (a divine mother) 643
 Bhaganetrahā (an epithet of Śiva) 597
 Bhagavat (a Rudra) 2331, 3149
 Bhāgavata Purāṇa 1162, 1562, 1681, 2144, 2266, 2542, 2971f, 2975f, 2980, 2982ff, 2986, 2988, 2994, 2997f, 2999ff, 3004f, 3194f, 3522
 Bhagiratha (Dilipa's son) 69, 1263, 1358, 1491, 2394, 2397, 2836, 2843, 3215
 Bhāgirathi 69, 437, 633, 684, 750, 795, 1092, 1351, 1483, 2400, 2746, 2815, 2918
 Bhairava (=Śiva) 2390, 2586, 2681, 3303
 Bhairava (a rudrākṣa) 782
 Bhairaveśa (a deity) 2905
 Bhaktānugrahakāraṇa 1944
 Bhāja (Bhājamāna's son) 115
 Bhaktavatsala (=Viṣṇu) 1730
 Bhakti (a goddess) 2974
 Bhakti (=devotion) 2634, 2876ff, 2981f
 Bhāṇḍī (a sage) 181

- Bhāṇḍira 1944
 Bhaṅgakāra 118
 Bhānu 47, 311, 642, 877f, 1956, 2883
 Bhānu (Rohiṇī's son) 122
 Bhānumatī (Sagara's wife) 69, 291
 Bhānumatī (a river) 1238
 Bhānu-vrata 286
 Bhārabhūta (a holy place) 1410
 Bharadvāja 59, 264, 414, 1491, 2157, 2299, 2455, 2629, 2816, 2837, 2846, 2877
 Bharadvāja (a country) 1366
 Bharadvāja (a smṛti) 3195
 Bhāradvājī (a river) 1364
 Bharata 262, 348, 387, 413, 446, 488, 490ff, 504, 524, 955, 1140, 1257, 1384, 1423, 1425, 1427, 1432f, 1438, 1441, 1466, 1480f, 1499f, 1508, 1878, 2472, 2625, 2920, 3057
 Bharata (Daśaratha's son) 1649ff, 1667, 1690, 1744, 1755, 1796, 1819f, 1823, 1862, 1875, 1881, 1884, 1924, 1934, 2282, 2307, 3227, 3230, 3243, 3253
 Bharata (Puṇḍarīka's brother) 3111, 3113, 3116
 Bhārata (a country) 139, 1363, 1837, 2057, 2152, 2999, 3311
 Bhārata (= Mahābhārata) 5, 83, 139, 2265, 3008, 3127, 3522
 Bharata (Science of Music and Dramaturgy) 2272
 Bhāratakhaṇḍa or Bhāratavarṣa 817, 1366, 3120, 3452
 Bharatāśrama 211
 Bharatatīrtha 100
 Bhārata (war) 1492
 Bhāratī (a deity) 2184, 2689
 Bhāratī (= Speech) 809
 Bhāratī (a celestial nymph) 2320
 Bhārga (a country) 1365
 Bhārgava 70, 109, 127, 343, 482, 888f, 958, 1030, 1272, 1343, 1429, 1749, 2324, 2336, 2394f, 2670ff, 2679, 2837, 2878, 3191, 3217f
 Bhārgava or Bhārgava Rāma 2601, 2982, 2998, 3219, 3230f
 Bhārgava (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Bhārgava Upapurāṇa 2267
 Bhārgaveśa (a holy place) 1400
 Bhāsi (Tāmrā's daughter) 50
 Bhāskara (= the Sun) 287, 314, 448, 453, 484, 549, 640, 874, 878, 882f, 2086, 2868, 2883, 2994
 Bhāskara (a country) 2831
 Bhāskara (= Yama) 831
 Bhāskari (Sun's son Śani) 2440
 Bhasmagātra (a Phallus) 2892
 Bhāsura (a country) 1365
 Bhauma (= Mars) 452, 885, 890
 Bhauma (a holy place) 2832
 Bhaurika (a demon) 847
 Bhautya (a future Manu) 59
 Bhava (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 1273
 Bhava (a Rudra) 221
 Bhava (an epithet of Śiva) 30, 31, 326, 500, 636, 756, 1282, 1387, 1666, 2344
 Bhava (a Sādhya) 523
 Bhava (Kālāgni) 2885
 Bhāvana (Svārociṣa Manu's son) 58
 Bhavanāśinī (a river) 2164
 Bhavānī (a deity) 1692
 Bhavānī (an epithet of Pārvatī) 321, 325, 326, 327, 364, 366, 571, 2363, 2390, 2544, 2738, 2957
 Bhavānī (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Bhavatīrtha 99
 Bhavātmaja (= Gaṇapati) 814
 Bhaviṣya Purāṇa 2145, 2266, 3007
 Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa 2145
 Bhavaśarman (a brāhmaṇa) 2930, 2932
 Bhavya 58
 Bhaya 30
 Bhayada (= Śani) 2440
 Bhayānaka (a demon) 2356
 Bhayānakā (an epithet of Gaurī) 394
 Bhayavivarjita (son of Dharma and Rājādhīdevī) 119
 Bhikṣu (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Bhikṣu (a brāhmaṇa) 2692
 Bhillas (a people) 1004
 Bhīma (a Pāṇḍava) 331, 336, 2214, 3128, 3302, 3305, 3463
 Bhīma (an epithet of Śiva) 1387
 Bhīma (Daśaratha's son) 114
 Bhīma (a demon) 847
 Bhīma (a śūdra) 1609
 Bhīmā (a name of Sāvitrī) 211
 Bhīmā (a river) 1363, 1421, 2789
 Bhīmadvādaśī 335f, 2101
 Bhīmahastā (an epithet of Gaurī) 394
 Bhīmaka (Yadu's son) 1309
 Bhīmakunḍa 3123, 3128
 Bhīmākṣī (an epithet of Gaurī) 394
 Bhīmanāda 3375
 Bhīmaratha (Rohini's son) 122
 Bhīmarathī (a river) 1363, 2110, 2925
 Bhīmarathyā (a river) 1051
 Bhīmarūpā (an epithet of Gaurī) 394
 Bhīmarūpiṇī (an epithet of Gaurī) 365
 Bhīmasena (= Bhīma) 331, 335, 2591
 Bhīmatīrtha 1424
 Bhīmeśvara (a holy place) 99, 1394
 Bhīṣaṇa (a demon) 843
 Bhīṣaṇa (Hṛdika's son) 117

Bhīṣaṇā (an epithet of Gaurī) 394
 Bhīṣma 11, 12, 13, 46, 112, 139, 141, 147, 168, 180, 184, 220, 382f, 425, 441, 812, 2592, 2618f, 2630, 2747, 2751, 3303, 3396
 Bhīṣma (Chief of Vasus) 863
 Bhīṣmācārya 2588
 Bhīṣmaka (a king) 2558, 3284
 Bhīṣmapañcaka 2747f, 2751
 Bhīṣma vow 2750
 Bhogadā (a deity) 1981
 Bhogavatī (a city, a holy place) 635, 1488, 1908
 Bhoginī 882
 Bhoja (a sage) 121
 Bhoja (Pratikṣatra's son) 116
 Bhoja (Yadu's son) 1309
 Bhoja (a country) 1364
 Bhoja 634, 2851
 Bhramara (a people) 1004
 Bhramarī (a form of Pārvatī) 2390
 Bhṛgu 8, 29, 31, 36, 37, 59, 124, 129f, 139, 197, 264, 428, 522, 892, 1328, 1334f, 2085, 2277, 2299, 2443, 2587, 2594, 2629, 2703, 2752, 2759f, 2766, 2837, 2982f, 3174, 3215, 3217, 3334
 Bhṛgukṣetra (a holy place) 436, 2813
 Bhṛgutūṅga (a holy place) 1489
 Bhṛgutīrtha (a holy place) 1406ff
 Bhṛngāra 440
 Bhṛngī (Śiva's attendant) 1281, 1823, 2357, 2362
 Bhṛngīrīṭi (Śiva's attendant) 644, 889, 2205, 2937f, 2941f
 Bhū (a world) 60, 316, 319, 362
 Bhū (Brahmā's mind-born son) 521
 Bhū (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Bhū (a deity) 3155, 3161, 3164, 3197, 3201, 3209
 Bhū (a śakti) 3315
 Bhūbhṛt (=Viṣṇu) 2613
 Bhūdhara (=Viṣṇu) 2612
 Bhūmavāhinī (a river) 1238
 Bhūmi 927
 Bhūmikhanda 1347, 1349, 1351, 2318
 Bhūr (a world) 2518, 3340
 Bhūṣaṇa (son of a Sādhyā) 2268
 Bhūtabhāvana (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Bhūtabhāvana (=Viṣṇu) 2081
 Bhūtadhārin (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 332
 Bhūtālaya 2889
 Bhūtānām Īśvari (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Bhūteśvara (an epithet of Brahmā) 500, 2845, 2892
 Bhūti (divine mother) 59, 205, 224

Bhūtida (an epithet of Śiva) 2841
 Bhūtida (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 2560
 Bhuva (Brahmā's mind-born son) 521
 Bhuvah (a world) 319, 362, 2518, 3340
 Bhuvana (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Bhuvana (a sage) 2629
 Bhuvanādhipa (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Bibhiṣaṇa 491, 496ff, 1647, 1650, 1664ff, 1793, 1795, 1849, 1934, 2143, 2150f, 2153, 2291, 2534, 2589, 2890, 3239, 3242f, 3244, 3257, 3428
 Biḍālajaṅgha (a demon) 2382
 Biḍānī (a divine mother) 643
 Biḍaujā (=Indra) 920
 Bilvaka (a sacred place) 100, 2831
 Bilvapatrikā (a name of Sāvitṛī) 211
 a holy place 2831
 Bimbikā (a river) 1238
 Bindumādhava (a deity) 3063
 Birds 160, 627
 Bisatantu (a demon) 1794
 Boar (Viṣṇu's incarnation) 633, 989, 2585, 3198, 3386
 Bodha (a country) 1364
 Bodhisattva (a holy fig tree) 764
 Body 1145, 1150f, 1333
 Bola (a country) 1365
 Bradhna (the Sun) 728
 Brahmā 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 21, 24, 26, 30, 33, 35, 36, 59, 74, 77, 83, 94, 96, 103, 105, 106, 108, 134, 141ff, 148, 151, 153, 157, 158, 162ff, 167ff, 170, 173ff, 186, 188ff, 194, 198, 202ff, 207, 209, 212ff, 215, 217f, 222f, 225, 230, 249, 263, 277, 298f, 301, 305, 311, 330, 362, 370, 373, 387f, 401, 404, 405ff, 420, 425, 428f, 436, 439, 445, 456, 471, 475, 477, 486, 502, 504, 513, 519ff, 522, 539, 556, 561, 567, 569, 590, 612, 618, 623f, 636, 640, 646, 652, 655f, 672, 679f, 685, 687, 710, 728, 752f, 781, 811, 832, 840, 852, 866ff, 876f, 878, 894, 897, 906, 919, 977, 984, 989, 999, 1003, 1005, 1021, 1030, 1032, 1038, 1046f, 1156, 1161, 1172f, 1208, 1272, 1277, 1334f, 1338, 1351, 1354, 1357f, 1394, 1406, 1409, 1426, 1430, 1431, 1436f, 1463, 1471, 1480, 1482, 1486ff, 1497, 1499, 1504, 1506, 1509, 1521, 1526, 1529, 1558, 1562, 1633, 1659, 1666f, 1694ff, 1731, 1835, 1849, 1930, 1933, 1939, 1949, 1962, 1970, 1976, 1987f, 1991, 1993, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2014, 2039f, 2044, 2054, 2062, 2082, 2086, 2091, 2094, 2106, 2110 2155f,

- Brahmā (cont.)** 2163, 2166f, 2183f, 2186ff, 2616, 2191, 2198, 2202, 2228, 2234ff, 2246, 2255, 2261, 2265, 2268, 2307, 2317, 2322, 2325, 2344f, 2382, 2384, 2387, 2402, 2430, 2432, 2434, 2438, 2447, 2493, 2517, 2519, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2538, 2549, 2575, 2580, 2582, 2584f, 2588ff, 2592, 2594, 2619, 2623f, 2628, 2633, 2644, 2653, 2655, 2658, 2662, 2669, 2675, 2697, 2703f, 2714, 2737, 2766f, 2771, 2786, 2789, 2793, 2796, 2819, 2829, 2836, 2854, 2856, 2892, 2894f, 2901, 2917, 2942, 2946, 2951, 2957, 2968f, 2972, 2981, 2986, 3002, 3005ff, 3012, 3014f, 3017, 3021, 3047f, 3051, 3054, 3059, 3071, 3074, 3081, 3090, 3096f, 3109, 3116, 3129f, 3134, 3136, 3150, 3153, 3155, 3162, 3170, 3173ff, 3179, 3183, 3185, 3189, 3201, 3206, 3223, 3225f, 3233, 3240, 3246f, 3253, 3256, 3262, 3268, 3272, 3328f, 3331, 3337, 3340f, 3344, 3352, 3358, 3395, 3409, 3462, 3484, 3492, 3500, 3504f, 3512, 3520, 3540
Brahmā (priest) 193, 424, 511, 1679, 1685
Brāhma (period) 2851
Brahmacārin (an epithet of Śiva) 500, an epithet of (Brahmā) 503
Brahmacāriṣa (a holy place) 2839
Brahmacarya 951
Brahmadala 1943
Brahmadatta 1902, 2840
Brahmadatta (Aṇuha's son) 91
Brahma (ghost) 2272
Brahmagiri 2925
Brahmahatyā 2893ff
Brahmakalā 212
Brahmakhaṇḍa 1351
Brahmakṣetra (a holy place = Prayāga) 1239, 1427, 2657, 3058
Brahmaloka 74
Brahmamaya (a holy place) 2832
Brahmamedhyā (a river) 1364
Brahmamūrtibhṛt 2451
Brahman 10, 12, 248, 275, 370, 406, 458, 520, 554f, 682, 866ff, 1023, 1027, 1047, 1469, 1475, 1500, 1555, 1741, 1760, 1948, 1959, 1970, 1973, 1992, 2019, 2037, 2040, 2079, 2082, 2109, 2148, 2160, 2253, 2400, 2467, 2528, 2568, 2580f, 2719, 2793f, 2796, 2825, 2829, 2835, 2919, 2931, 2943, 3021, 3071, 3079, 3126, 3145f, 3157, 3161f, 3246, 3298, 3319, 3387, 3407, 3422, 3454, 3459, 3468, 3511
Brāhmaṇa 4, 26, 38, 74, 93, 153, 173, 182, 199, 353, 650, 676, 679, 697, 700, 781, 1040, 1172f, 1359, 1411, 1444, 1489, 1608, 1848, 2254, 2294, 3138, 3545f
Brahmaṇāccharṁsi 425, 511
Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa 1562, 2666, 3194f
Brahmāṇḍa Upapurāṇa 2266
Brāhmaṇī (a deity) 219
Brāhmaṇī (a river) 1364
Brāhmaṇikā (a holy place) 1465
Brahmaṇya (an epithet of Śiva) 500
Brahmaṇya 45, 2214
Brahmaprasādhana 1944
Brahma Purāṇa 2144, 2265, 3194f
Brahmasaras (a holy place) 1479, 2837
Brahmaśiras (a missile) 630, 1825
Brahmāstra (a missile) 630, 1311, 1684, 1861
Brahmatīrtha 96, 1477, 1483
Brahmatuṅga (a holy place) 1424
Brahmavāda (a holy place) 438
Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa 2144, 2266, 3007, 3194f
Brahmavallī (a holy place) 2856f
Brahmāvarta (a holy place) 1391, 1430, 1443, 1463, 2762
Brahmavidyā 2079
Brahmavṛkṣa 960
Brahmeśa 1217
Brāhmī (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951
Brāhmī (a divine mother) 642, 1477, 3570
Brāhmī (a Yoginī) 2389f
Brāhmī (Prakṛti) 3340
Brahmin 4
Br̥hadaśva (Śāvasta's son) 68
Br̥haddhvaja (a demon) 3360
Br̥hadratha (a king) 2953
Br̥hadrūpa (Marutvatī's son) 523
Br̥hanta (Marutvatī's son) 523
Br̥haspati 104, 105, 106, 127, 132, 134, 135f, 163, 264, 427, 487, 525, 535, 892, 919, 1401, 1830, 2330, 2333, 2339, 2433, 2437, 2518, 2629, 2668, 2671f, 2878, 2939, 3012, 3020, 3022, 3098f, 3191
Br̥haspati (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
Br̥hatkalpa 290
Br̥hatkānti (a Sādhya) 523
Br̥hatsāma 25
Buddha (Viṣṇu's incarnation) 853, 1024, 2573, 2593, 2998, 3194, 3386, 3426
Buddha (son of Śakuni, a sage) 1461
Buddhadeva 2423
Buddhi 925f

Buddhi (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Buddhi (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 233
 Buddhi (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Budha 224, 356, 891, 893, 3097f
 Bull 679f

Caitra 214, 282, 284, 325, 338, 365,
 479, 617, 1398, 1427, 1574, 2044,
 2083, 2342, 2497, 2499ff, 2638, 3016,
 3049, 3128, 3320, 3452, 3484

Caitraratha (a brāhmaṇa) 2792
 Caitraratha or Caitrarathaka (a holy
 place) 211, 1707, 2830

Caitraratha (a forest) 2497, 2792
 Caitraratha (Kubera's garden) 2696

Cakra (a country) 1365

Cakrabhānu (a city) 1943

Cakradhṛk (=Viṣṇu) 982

Cakradhvaja (=Viṣṇu) 1408

Cakrakuṇḍa (a holy place) 2620

Cakranāḍī 2620

Cakrapāṇi (=Viṣṇu) 3472

Cakrapāṇika (an epithet of Brahmā)
 438

Cakrarūpin (=Viṣṇu) 2562

Cakratīrtha 2724

Cakravān (a mountain) 635

Cakrika (a mountaineer) 3460ff, 3464

Cakrin (=Viṣṇu) 332, 433, 2495

Cakṣu (Marutvati's son) 523

Cakṣu (a river) 3214

Cakṣurmaya (=Brahman) 3262

Cākṣusa (Manu) 523, 1001, 1010,
 1036, 2703

Cākṣusa Manvantara 7, 57, 59

Caladdala (holy fig tree) 764

Caladhruva (a Sādhya) 523

Camasa (a holy place) 1426

Camasodbheda (a holy place) 1426

Campaka (Suratha's son) 1850

Campaka (a city) 2472, 2476

Campakā (wife of king Suketumat)
 2478

Campakāraṇya 1482

Campatīrtha 1483

Cāmuṇḍā 394, 596

Cāmuṇḍā (a mother created by Śiva)
 642

Cāmuṇḍin (a demon) 2382

Cañcalāpāṅgi 1581

Caṇḍa (a doorkeeper in Vaikuṇṭha)
 3157

Caṇḍa (Śiva's attendant) 1281, 1823,
 1833, 2356, 2359, 2378f

Caṇḍa (Yama's servant) 3455ff, 3496

Caṇḍa (a wicked man) 2874

Caṇḍā (Caṇḍa's wife) 2875f

Caṇḍahāsa (Śiva's attendant) 1281,
 1823

Caṇḍaka (a barber) 3066, 3071, 3074ff,
 3077

Caṇḍaka (a holy place) 1239

Caṇḍaka (a country) 1365

Caṇḍakara (=the Sun) 347

Cāṇḍāla 214, 268, 649, 700, 712, 734,
 756, 788, 955, 1595, 2421, 3085

Candanā (a river) 1363, 2851, 2889

Caṇḍasena (Śiva) 2861

Caṇḍavegā (a river) 98, 2838

Caṇḍeśvara (Śiva) 2890

Caṇḍī (=Pārvatī) 1826

Caṇḍikā (a holy place) 2831

Caṇḍikā 614, 2000, 2934, 2951, 3038

Caṇḍikā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211

Caṇḍikeśvara 2846

Caṇḍin (a demon) 2382

Caṇḍin (Śiva's attendant) 2362

Caṇḍīśa (Śiva's attendant) 2359,
 2362, 2378f

Candra (the Moon) 251ff, 522, 685,
 1030, 1394, 2333, 3096ff

Candra (Candragiri's son) 70

Candra (a family) 2853

Candra (a region) 2831

Cāndra (a holy place) 2831

Candrā (a goddess) 1994

Candrā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950

Candrabhāgā (king Mucukunda's
 daughter) 2535ff

Candrabhāgā (a river) 211, 1238,
 1363, 1397, 1421, 1459, 2450f,
 2789, 2878, 2881, 3066, 3076

Candrabhāgā (Moon's daughter) 2567

Candracūḍa (=Śiva) 1810

Candrakā (a river) 100

Candrakalā (a goddess) 1982

Candrakalā 3382

Candrakānta (a gandharva) 2781

Candralikā (a goddess) 1982

Candramā (the Moon) 351, 554, 2333

Candramātā (a goddess) 1982

Candramukhapriya (an epithet of
 Śiva) 364

Candranadī (a river) 167

Candraprabha (a sage) 1966

Candraprabhā (a goddess) 1982

Candrārdhadhārīṇī (an epithet of
 Pārvatī) 324

Candrarekhā (a goddess) 1982

Candrarūpā (wife of king Prajāpati)
 2408

Candraśarman (a brāhmaṇa) 1241f,
 1244, 2074, 2651

Candraśarman (a king) 2935

Candrasena 2535

Candrāsya 45

Candratīrtha (a holy place) 1478

Candrāvahaphalī (a river) 1364

- Candrāvati (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950
 Candrāvati (a goddess) 1982
 Candrāvati (king Indradyumna's daughter) 2431
 Candrāvati (a city) 2467
 Candravrata 286
 Cāndrāyana (a vow) 168, 286, 658, 669, 768, 806, 1391, 1398, 1534, 1619, 1772, 2425, 2427, 2541, 2550, 2721, 2729, 2743, 2792, 2806, 3128
 Candraśvara (= Śiva) 2880
 Candrikā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Candrikā (a goddess) 1982
 Candrikā (Suprabha's daughter) 1413, 1419, 2781, 2787
 Candrikā (a river) 1238
 Cāṇikya (a sage) 1401
 Cāṇūra (a demon) 2591, 3259, 3277
 Capala (an insect) 1107
 Cāpāṅkuśadhara (an epithet of Cupid) 339
 Cārakanyā (an Ekādasī) 1227
 Caraṇa (Viṣṇu's disc) 3139
 Cāraṇa (a sacred place) 98
 Caranapriya (Ānakadundubhi's son) 120
 Cāritra (Sāvitṛī's son) 523
 Carmā (a river) 2102
 Carmacaṇḍika (a country) 1365
 Carmadā (a river) 2809
 Carmaṇvatī (a river) 98, 413, 633, 1051, 1363, 2108
 Caru 1425, 3321
 Cārubhadra (Rukmiṇī's son) 123
 Cārudeṣṇa (Rukmiṇī's son) 122
 Cāruhāsa (Rukmiṇī's son) 123
 Cārukarna (an epithet of Gaṇeśa) 814
 Cārumatī (Rukmiṇī's daughter) 123
 Cārumitra (Mitravindā's son) 123
 Cārunetrā (a celestial nymph) 628
 Cārvāka 2796, 3194
 Caste 4, 1534
 Caturaṅga sainya 390
 Caturbhuja (= Viṣṇu) 3472
 Cāturmāsya 2548, 2552ff, 2555f
 Caturmukha (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
 Caturānana (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
 Caturaṅga 18
 Caturdaśī 2874, 2901, 2905, 3347, 3354
 Caturvaṭa (a holy place) 437
 Catustika (a holy place) 2832
 Caura (a dynasty) 3376
 Celibacy 955
 Chandomaya (= Brahman) 3262
 Charity 956, 1048, 1545
 Chaste woman 701
 Caula (a country) 1250
 Cedi (a country) 1364, 3284
 Celibate student, rules of conduct 1523
 Charity 1545
 Chāyā 62, 893
 Chāyāputra (= Śani) 893
 China rose 1790
 Chinnapāpa (a holy place) 2919
 Cicchakti 3157
 Citi 189
 Cintāṅgadeśvaratirtha 1478
 Citra (a king in Drāviḍa country) 2799
 Citra (a mane) 2085
 Citra (= Yama) 2561, 2737
 Citra (Anamitra's son) 118
 Citra (one of the Viśvedavas) 523
 Citrā (wife of Suvira) 1221ff, 2066, 2069
 Citrabhā (a celestial nymph) 628
 Citradhvaja (Candraprabha's son) 1966f, 1968
 Citragandhā (daughter of Pracanda, a cowherd) 1963
 Citragupta 768, 770, 964, 1369, 2085, 2110, 2558, 2561, 2692f, 2709, 2737, 3350, 3410, 3432, 3496, 3526, 3528f
 Citrakalā 1968
 Citraketu 2890
 Citrakūṭa (a mountain) 412, 437, 1487, 1930, 1995, 2588, 3233, 3325
 Citrakūṭa (a holy place) 100
 Citralekhā (Urvaśī's friend) 108
 Citralekhā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950
 Citrāṅga (Subāhu's son) 1747, 1753ff
 Citrāṅgavadana (= Gayā-tirtha) 2860
 Citrarekhā (a goddess) 1994
 Citraraśmi (Sāvitṛī's son) 523
 Citraratha (a gandharva) 57, 221, 849, 1000, 2594
 Citraratha (a siddha) 824
 Citrarathā (a river) 1364
 Citrasena (a gandharva) 221, 2065, 2343, 2486
 Citrasena (king of Rūpadeśa) 1219, 1607
 Citravāhā (a river) 1363
 Citravṛndā (a goddess) 1982
 Citropalā (a river) 1364
 Citta (a mountain) 2832
 Cittadarśi (an ascetic) 91
 Cola (a country) 2959
 Cola -king 2696, 2698
 Conduct (of a man, a wife, etc.) 691ff, 703ff, 713, 861, 1061
 Cow 1635, 1771, 2562
 Creator 4, 6, 8, 833, 1113, 1191, 1211, 1369, 1581, 1587, 2045, 2268, 2452, 2517, 2603, 2622, 2656, 2784, 2794,

- 2796, 2815, 3134, 3158, 3174, 3261f, 3413, 3487
 Cūḍāmaṇi 716
 Culukā (a river) 1363
 Cupid 307, 317, 336, 348, 585, 593, 676, 705, 1034, 1088, 1109, 1111f, 1114, 1118f, 1120, 1184, 1186, 1188f, 1193, 1197, 1199f, 1209f, 1283f, 1290, 1300, 1304f, 1313, 1327, 1336, 1398f, 1414f, 1659, 1693ff, 1707f, 1871, 1929, 1939, 1948f, 1978, 1984, 1986, 1995, 2122f, 2139, 2156, 2167, 2170, 2172f, 2175, 2195, 2218, 2277, 2326, 2353, 2369, 2423, 2486, 2497f, 2515, 2583, 2736, 2761, 2767, 2774, 2782, 2797, 2939, 2987, 3051, 3053f, 3095, 3103, 3140, 3151, 3225, 3230, 3235, 3265, 3277, 3326, 3363, 3365, 3370, 3446, 3507
 Cyavana 58, 264, 958f, 1217f, 1276, 1338, 1342, 1344, 1700f, 1708f, 1711, 2629, 2837, 2982
 Dadhi (an ocean) 3341
 Dādhīca (Dadhīci's son) 2882f
 Dadhīca 2165, 2174ff
 Dadhīci (a sage) 2133, 2164, 2792, 2878
 Dadhicitirtha 1439
 Dadhimukha 1683
 Dadhivakra (an astrologer) 493
 Dadhna (=Yama) 2561
 Dadrū (a disease) 671
 Daily Sacrifices 1163
 Daitya 32, 33, 36, 51, 56, 509, 524, 527ff, 625, 825
 Daityanāśin (an epithet of Śiva) 500
 Daityaniṣūdana (=Viṣṇu) 351
 Daityaśatru (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Dākinī (an imp) 796
 Dakṣa 6, 29, 30, 31, 40, 44, 186, 206, 221, 223, 344, 362, 391, 420, 432, 522, 523, 591, 918, 1000, 1159, 2185, 2384, 3195, 3267, 3341, 3346
 Dakṣā (an epithet of Gaṅgā) 288, 2084
 Dakṣāntakārin (=Viṣṇu) 2452
 Dakṣayajñavināśana (an epithet of Śiva) 500
 Dakṣiṇā 29, 767
 Dakṣiṇa (ayana) 17
 Dakṣiṇakośala (a holy place) 3081
 Dakṣiṇāmūrti 2224
 Dālbhya (a sage) 58, 336, 2481, 2610, 2616
 Dama (=restraint) 629, 951, 957, 1112
 Dāmabaddha (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Damana (a king, Subāhu's son) 1738, 1740ff, 1744, 1746, 1748, 1757, 1759f, 1762, 1764
 Damana (a demon) 1701
 Damanakotsava 2638
 Dambhana 2362
 Dambholi (Pulaha's son) 3127
 Dāmodara 292, 332, 685, 1627, 2000, 2002, 2410, 2446, 2493f, 2560, 2591, 2612, 2732, 3143, 3282, 3332, 3422, 3426, 3444, 3462, 3471
 Dānapura (a holy place) 2969
 Dānava 32, 33, 57, 524ff, 1383
 Daṇḍa (Kriyā's son) 30
 Daṇḍa (a missile) 630
 Daṇḍa (=punishment) 954
 Daṇḍabhṛt (a king) 1684
 Daṇḍahasta (a deity) 394
 Daṇḍaka (a thief) 1568
 Daṇḍaka forest 800, 1350, 1486, 2316, 2520, 2589, 2983, 3235f, 3248, 3265, 3311, 3325
 Daṇḍakara (a Śūdra) 1633f
 Daṇḍaketu (Daṇḍapāṇi's brother) 3448
 Daṇḍanīti 369
 Daṇḍapāla (Paṇḍraka's son) 3301f
 Daṇḍapāla (a holy place) 1400
 Daṇḍapāṇi (a brāhmaṇa) 3448
 Daṇḍapuri (a holy place) 438
 Daṇḍārpaṇa (a holy place) 1483
 Daṇḍavakra 3303
 Daṇḍāyudha (Daṇḍapāṇi's brother) 3448
 Daṇḍin (Brahmā's epithet) 502
 Daṇḍin (Daṇḍapāṇi's brother) 3448
 Dānta (a sage) 3468, 3473, 3481
 Dantavakat (a demon) 1991
 Danu 50, 225, 381, 522, 524, 938, 989, 1000
 Darbha 79, 187, 687
 Darbhapāṇi (Brahmā's epithet) 502
 Darbhin 1436f
 Darpa (=pride) 629
 Darpavināśinī (a deity) 321
 Darśaka (a tribe) 1364
 Darśaniya (Brahmā's epithet) 503
 Dārūka (Viṣṇu's charioteer) 3279f, 3284, 3286, 3308
 Dārūṇa (a Yavana tribe) 661
 Darva (a tribe) 1364
 Darvi 188
 Darvi (a tribe) 1364
 Daśa (a tribe) 1365
 Daśagrīva (a demon) 628
 Daśakanyā (a holy place) 1409
 Daśamī 2472, 2547, 3187
 Daśamī vow 3523
 Daśāṅga (a mountain) 2862

- Daśaraṇya 1126
 Daśaratha 146, 405, 412f, 415, 496, 498, 749, 1487, 1647, 1659, 1680, 1792, 1867, 2140, 2268, 2271, 2275, 2277, 2281ff, 2286, 2438f, 2440, 2588, 2599, 2695, 3056, 3222ff, 3228, 3230, 3232f, 3236, 3242, 3249f
 Daśārka (a country) 2566
 Daśārṇa (a country) 1364, 1690
 Daśārṇā (a river) 98
 Daśāśvamedhika (a holy place) 1404, 1428, 1431, 1488, 2837, 2850
 Dāsī (a river) 1364
 Datta (Atri's son) 3127
 Dattabhū (Daṇḍapāṇi's brother) 3448
 Dattātreyā 950, 1293f, 1298, 1302f, 1323, 2587, 2763, 2779, 2837
 Dattavān (Daṇḍapāṇi's brother) 3448
 Dattavijaya (= Rāma) 2599
 Daurga (a Purāṇa) 2145
 Daurvāsasa (an Upapurāṇa) 2266
 Daurvāsika (a holy place) 147 8
 Dayā (= pity) 952, 1112
 Dayārṇava (a brāhmaṇa) 2928
 Death 1153, 1189, 1291, 1302, 1309, 1327, 1336, 1841, 2209, 2587, 2602, 2868, 2902, 2909, 2912, 2964, 2970, 3061, 3301, 3307
 Deeds 1249f, 1255, 1577
 Dehikā (a river) 1995
 Delusion 1189
 Destiny 1204f, 3412
 Deva (an epithet of the Sun) 308
 Devā (a holy place) 438
 Devābha (a mountain) 635
 Devabhāga (Mīdhuṣa's son) 119
 Devabhānu 58
 Devadāruvana (a holy place) 211, 438, 2832
 Devadāsa 2092, 3099, 3105
 Devadatta 2651
 Devadatta (a vital air) 695
 Devadeva (= Viṣṇu) 2452
 Devādhyakṣa (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Devadricī (a river) 1238
 Devadyuti (a brāhmaṇa) 2791, 2793, 2800
 Devagarbha (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
 Devahrada (a holy place) 450, 2620
 Devahūti 2590, 2700
 Devaka (a brāhmaṇa) 3044
 Devaka (son of Avanti king) 116
 Devaka (Ugrasena's brother) 3255
 Devakī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Devakī (Devaka's daughter) 116, 120, 121f, 1476, 1604f, 1995, 2591, 3222, 3255ff, 3259, 3268, 3277f, 3281, 3284, 3286, 3293, 3332, 3370, 3423, 3426, 3431
 Devakī (a holy place) 2789
 Devakinandana (Kṛṣṇa) 3471
 Devala (a sage) 1490, 2982, 3023ff, 3033f, 3036
 Devala (a brāhmaṇa) 775, 1414, 2837
 Devalaka (a brāhmaṇa) 656
 Devamātā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Devamātra (a holy place) 2831
 Devamīdhuṣa (Kroṣṭṛ's son) 117
 Devanātha (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Devāntaka (a demon) 833
 Devapatha (a holy place) 1486
 Devapura (a city) 1806, 1810f, 1836
 Devarakṣita (Devaka's son) 116
 Devarāta (a brāhmaṇa) 1972, 2982
 Devārha (Hṛdika's son) 117
 Devasarga 22
 Devaśarman (a brāhmaṇa) 2047f, 2052, 2369, 2607, 2651, 2837, 2910
 Devasatra (a sacrifice) 1486
 Devaśayani-Ekādaśī 2517
 Devaśikhā (a holy place) 1392
 Devaśravas (Mīdhuṣa's son) 119, 121
 Devavān (Devaka's son) 116
 Devavān (Akrūra's son) 119
 Devayāni (Bhārgava's daughter) 109, 1201
 Devī (an epithet of Lākṣmī) 293, 332, 394
 Devīcakra 224
 Devikā (a river) 211, 437, 1051, 1363, 2108, 2110
 Devikā (a holy place) 1425f
 Dhāman (Manu's son) 58
 Dhanada (= Kubera) 533, 549, 2331
 Dhanadamṣṭrā (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Dhanaka (Durdama's son) 110
 Dhanañjaya (= Arjuna) 119
 Dhanañjaya 50, 2164, 2211, 2468
 Dhanañjaya (a serpent) 633
 Dhanañjaya (a vital air) 695
 Dhanapāla (a vaiśya) 2506
 Dhanāśarman 2116
 Dhanayakṣa (= Dhaneśvara) 2712
 Dhaneśvara (a brāhmaṇa) 2708, 2710, 2712
 Dhanu (a nakṣatra) 869
 Dhanurdhvaja (a cāṇḍāla) 3356
 Dhanurveda 1294
 Dhanvantari (Physician of gods) 823, 1152, 1590, 2590
 Dhanvantari (a sage) 34, 123
 Dhanvi (Manu's son) 58
 Dhara (a god) 523
 Dharādhara (= Viṣṇu) 2612

Dharādhārā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Dhāraṇā (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Dhāraṇā (≈retentive memory) 935, 2196
 Dharaṇī (a deity) 3159
 Dharaṇī (=Earth) 3252, 3256
 Dharaṇīdhara (=Viṣṇu) 2612
 Dhārāpāla (king of Vidiśā) 2418
 Dhārīṇī (=Earth) 1981, 3249
 Dharma 1, 3, 11, 47, 97, 101, 105, 107, 165, 234, 427, 489, 522f, 525, 712, 720, 761, 825, 935, 950f, 953f, 958, 959, 961, 994f, 1023, 1037f, 1058, 1062, 1067, 1093, 1101, 1112, 1113, 1120f, 1139f, 1145, 1209, 1338, 1392, 1405, 1412, 1479, 1690, 1890, 1971, 2045, 2063, 2117, 2195f, 2222, 2328, 2587, 2590, 2599, 2605, 2618, 2629, 2695, 2700, 2715, 2786, 2813, 2852, 3099, 3157, 3160, 3230, 3255, 3265, 3268, 3315, 3474, 3530, 3545f
 Dharma (=Yama) 902, 1017, 1072, 1099, 1768, 2135, 2178
 Dharma (a king) 1645
 Dharma (a goal of human life) 234, 1417, 1926, 2000, 2143
 Dharmabuddhi (a king) 3376
 Dharmadatta 2691, 2694, 2696, 2702
 Dharmādhyakṣa (Brahmā's epithet) 503
 Dharmadravā (a part of Māyā) 809
 Dharmadravā (a goddess) 810
 Dharmadrṣṭi (Akrūra's son) 119
 Dharmaghaṭa 767
 Dharmakī Vāsukī Pool 1495
 Dharmakṣetra (=Kurukṣetra) 3106
 Dharmakūṭa (a king) 721
 Dharmaloka 2097
 Dharmāṅgada (Rukmabhūṣaṇa's son) 984f, 987f
 Dharmapāla (Rāma's minister) 484, 3245
 Dharmapratiṣṭhā (a holy place) 1479
 Dharmarāja (=Yama) 1114, 1166f, 1170, 1183f, 1223, 1448, 1456, 1505, 1543, 1570, 1767, 1770f, 2085, 2097, 2105, 2111, 2117f, 2558, 2560f, 3410, 3496, 3531
 Dharmāranya (a holy place) 800, 1350
 Dharmaratha (Sagara's son) 2396
 Dharmasamudbhava (a holy place) 1478
 Dharmasārman (a holy brāhmaṇa) 898, 901f, 1338f, 2114
 Dharma setu 505
 Dharmasva (a brāhmaṇa) 3389, 3393, 3396

Dharmatirtha 1440
 Dharmavati (a river) 2853
 Dhātā 31, 524
 Dhātā (an Āditya) 221
 Dhātrī 785f, 789, 1630f, 1634, 1981, 2004, 2330, 2450, 2492, 2690f, 2734, 3421, 3534, 3537f
 Dhaumya (a sage) 264, 2629, 2837
 Dhautapāpa (a holy place) 1407
 Dhavaleśa or Dhavaleśvara 2864, 2868
 Dhenu (a river) 1364
 Dhenuka (a sacrifice) 1479
 Dhenuka (a demon) 2591, 3256, 3263, 3462
 Dhenukāri (Kṛṣṇa) 3471
 Dhī (=understanding) 935
 Dhīradhī (a brāhmaṇa) 2937
 Dhṛṣṭa 112
 Dhṛṣṭabuddhi (Dhanapāla's son) 2506
 Dhṛtarāṣṭra 1493, 3305
 Dhṛtārcis (=Rāma) 2604
 Dhṛti 194, 211
 Dhṛti 30, 59, 194, 211, 224, 3172
 Dhṛtimat (a country) 3171
 Dhruva 9, 1461, 2629, 2644, 2695, 2876, 3117
 Dhruva (a god) 523
 Dhruvā (a river) 3064
 Dhūmārṇava (Śiva's attendant) 2358
 Dhūmatimira 2362
 Dhūmavrata 420
 Dhūmogra 45
 Dhūmorṇā 41, 194, 205, 2004
 Dhūmra (an epithet of Śiva) 500
 Dhūmra (Rāma's soldier) 493
 Dhūmra (a holy place) 2838
 Dhūmrākṣa (a demon) 495, 1794
 Dhūmrālocana (a demon) 2382
 Dhundhu (a demon) 820
 Dhundhukārī (Ātmadeva's son) 2992, 2994f
 Dhundhumāra (a king) 2504
 Dhundhuti (Ātmadeva's wife) 2989, 2991, 2998f
 Dhūrjaṭī (Śiva) 606, 2939
 Dhūsarā (a river) 2807
 Dhūtapāpā (a river) 1363
 Dhūtapātaka (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Dhvaja 125
 Dhvajinyutsavasāṅketa (a country) 1365
 Dhvanī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Dhyāna 925, 929, 935, 937, 2196
 Dhyānakośa (Śakuni's son) 1461
 Dīkṣā (=initiation) 809

- Dilipa (Amśumān's son) 69
 (Raghu's son) 70, 1363, 1374, 1490,
 1603, 2223, 2752, 2755, 2814,
 3028, 3033f, 3037f, 3129
 Dinānātha (a king) 1598, 1601
 Dipā (a river) 2398
 Dipāvali (festival) 2718, 2736
 Dipeśvara (a holy place) 1395
 Diptivrata 283
 Dirghabāhu (Aja's son) 70
 Dirghajihva 224
 Dirghaśāstra (a holy place) 1426
 Dirghaśmaśrujaṭa (= Śiva) 2440
 Dirghatapas (a sage) 1965
 Diś (a river) 1363
 Disc-holder (= Viṣṇu) 3459, 3549
 Diti 48, 51, 53, 56, 126, 509, 524, 536,
 556, 564, 635, 939, 941, 990, 997f,
 1000, 1423, 1873, 2587, 2671, 2771,
 2892, 3174, 3197
 Divākara (= the Sun) 299, 308, 313,
 448, 642, 877f, 2000, 2868
 Divākara (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Divodāsa (a king) 1219f, 2064f, 2061
 Divya (a kind of bath) 655, 2719
 Divyā (a celestial nymph) 627
 Divyā (a river) 1238
 Divyādevī (Divodāsa's daughter)
 1219f, 1222, 1230, 1233, 2064ff,
 2067, 2070f
 Divyajāyu (son of Purūravas) 108
 Divyapuṣpa (a horse) 3279
 Draupadī 864, 1373, 2045, 2571, 2976
 Draviḍa (a country) 1365, 2143, 2799,
 2974
 Dr̥ghavrata 283
 Dr̥ghāyu (son of Purūravas) 108
 Droṇa (= Droṇacārya) 2588, 3099
 Droṇa (a divine sage) 863
 Droṇa (mountain) 1795, 1828, 1830ff,
 1839, 1854, 2339
 Droṇa (a measure) 298
 Droṇaparvan 2265
 Droṣaka (a tribe) 1366
 Dr̥ṣadvāra (a holy place) 2838
 Dr̥ṣadvatī (a river) 1363f, 1433
 Dr̥ṣatpāna (a holy place) 1432
 Druhyu (Śarmiṣṭhā's son) 110
 Dugdha (an ocean) 3341
 Dugdhatīrtha 2878
 Dugdheśvara 2879f
 Duḥkha 30
 Duḥkhakartā (a demon) 628
 Duḥkhānta (= Śiva) 149
 Dulikāśrama (a holy place) 1377
 Dundubhi (a demon) 2285, 2589
 Dundubhi (another name of Nari) 116
 Dundubhisvāna (a country) 1371
 Durācārā (Hari Dīkṣita's wife) 2954
 Durādharṣa (an epithet of Brahmā)
 438
 Durdama 2912
 Durdama (Bhadrasena's son) 110
 Durdhara (Ānākadundubhi's son) 120
 Durdhareśa or Durdhareśvara 2872f
 Durgā 887, 1738, 2089, 2324, 2614,
 2807, 2884, 2899, 2951, 3002, 3284
 Durgā (a river) 1364
 Durganāśana (an epithet of Brahmā)
 439
 Durgaśaila (a mountain) 1369
 Durjaya (a king) 112
 Durmedha (a demon) 847
 Durmukha (Kadru's son) 51
 Durmukha (a demon) 834
 Durnirikṣya (= Śiva) 2440
 Durvāra (Suratha's son) 1850, 1856
 Durvāraṇa (Jālandhara's messenger)
 2327, 2334, 2375f, 2382
 Durvāsa 31, 32, 264, 950, 954f, 1423,
 1491, 1588, 1936, 2023, 2165f, 2361,
 2629, 2941, 2978, 3048f, 3103, 3110,
 3177, 3191, 3250
 Duryodhana 863, 1493
 Dūṣaṇa (a demon) 2589, 3236
 Dussaha (Purukutsa's son) 69
 Duśśāsa 2861
 Duśśāsa (Khaḍgabāhu's son's ser-
 vant) 2965
 Dvādaśāditya 1943
 Dvādaśātman (= the Sun) 2997
 Dvādaśī 1612, 1614f, 2101, 2269, 2314,
 2455, 2470f, 2488, 2505, 2512ff,
 2545, 2726, 2902, 3133, 3324
 Dvādaśī vrata 278, 292, 2449, 2456,
 2459ff, 2559, 2569, 2665, 2743,
 2761, 3002, 3007, 3172, 3186, 3476
 Dvaimātura (Gaṇeśa) 814
 Dvaipāyana (a sage) 331, 506, 2510
 Dvaita 1679
 Dvāpara yuga 5, 72, 144, 145, 152,
 249, 445, 463, 472, 508, 894, 917,
 1042, 1085, 1274, 1366, 1443, 1489,
 1581, 1592, 1598, 2152, 2252, 2522,
 2573, 2579, 2719, 2858, 2977, 3007,
 3284, 3350, 3410, 3461, 3494, 3542,
 3545, 3547
 Dvārakā 898, 1061, 1942, 1989, 2002,
 2314, 2450, 2455, 2573, 2592, 2633,
 2649, 2690, 2720, 2734, 2836, 2884,
 2935, 3014, 3040, 3051, 3055, 3059f,
 3062, 3064, 3128, 3143, 3288, 3300,
 3304
 Dvāravati 211, 437, 458, 1229, 1239,
 1422, 1716, 1724, 1992, 1995, 2001,
 2557, 2733, 2832, 2924, 3018, 3142,
 3281, 3292, 3295, 3300, 3309, 3311

Dvijapriya (an epithet of Brahmā) 438

Dvijātayah 1043

Dvijendra (an epithet of Brahmā) 438

Dvimūrdhan (a priest) 1012

Dvipada (a place) 1943

Dvipeśvara (a holy place) 1407

Dvividā (a demon) 2591

Dvividā (Rāma's soldier) 493

Dyuti (Divine mother) 224

Dyutimān (a mountain) 1370

Dyutimat (a king) 53, 2506

Ears 928

Earth 597, 933, 1007, 1009f

Ekacakra 224

Ekadaṇḍadhara 751

Ekādaśī 990, 1247, 1349, 1755, 1774, 2445, 2456, 2462, 2465, 2471, 2475, 2486, 2489, 2500f, 2503, 2508, 2514, 2517, 2526f, 2529, 2532f, 2537, 2546, 2655, 2658, 2745, 3184, 3346, 3368, 3334

Ekoddiṣṭa (a śrāddha performed for one definite deceased individual, not including other ancestors) 86, 87

Elements 933

Eraṇḍī (a holy place) 1398

Etymology 8

Fig tree 61, 227, 1000, 3439

Fire 217, 950, 1388

Fish (incarnation of Viṣṇu) 3174, 3175

Food 1263f

Gabhastī 877

Gabhastimat 2997

Gadādhara 2317, 2402, 2452, 2924, 3472

Gadāgraja 2612

Gādhi 1414

Gadin 332, 339, 2495

Gagana (a holy place) 439

Gaganapriya (a demon) 224

Gaja 348, 493, 3110

Gajacchāyā day (the day when the elephant's shadow falls in the east) 80

Gajakarṇa (a sacred place) 98

Gajānana 44, 814, 2349, 2358, 2362, 2376f, 2679ff, 2682, 3062, 3160, 3296

Gajaskandha 2000

Gajāśya 2000

Galantika 447

Gālava 59, 264, 1598f, 2629

Gallika (a holy place) 2632

Gallikā (a river) 2831, 2836

Gambhīrā (a river) 1238

Gaṇa 517, 772, 815ff, 820, 827, 838, 843f

Gaṇādhipa 814

Gaṇanāyaka 2892

Gaṇapati 772, 785, 812, 817, 1399

Gāṇapatyatīrtha 2314, 2831, 2891

Gaṇatīrtha 2845, 2891

Gaṇḍakī (a river) 1480, 1723, 1728, 2108, 2570, 2619, 2701, 2789

Gandha (a demon) 847

Gandhamādāna (a mountain) 210, 299, 304, 493, 517, 1356, 1358, 2450, 2830f, 3243

Gāndhāra 1365, 2753

Gāndhārī (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 122

Gāndhārī (Kroṣṭṛ's wife) 117

Gāndhārī 864

Gandharvas 14, 24, 35, 50, 51, 73, 104, 111, 191, 196, 220, 261f, 288, 299, 313, 331, 428, 473, 509, 532, 534, 548, 564, 595, 600, 623, 629, 640, 651, 668, 690, 755, 773, 799, 815, 825, 828, 843, 848f, 919, 960, 979f, 989, 994, 1000, 1012, 1021, 1026, 1068, 1080, 1124f, 1184, 1211f, 1300, 1312, 1357, 1359, 1385, 1401, 1440, 1500, 1509, 1922, 1953, 2084, 2194, 2252, 2320ff, 2486, 2501, 2590, 2674, 2720, 2771, 2774, 2779, 2782, 2815, 2876, 2959, 2968, 3092, 3182, 3223, 3380

Gandharva - rāga 3119

Gandharvāstra 630

Gāndharva marriage 198, 1199, 1418, 2326, 2786

Gandhāṣṭaka 2009

Gandhika 1365

Gaṇḍikā (a river) 2315, 2451, 2602f

Gaṇeśa 685, 690, 782, 812, 814, 816ff, 827, 844, 846, 849, 1350, 2224, 2262, 2361, 2660, 2704, 3002

Gaṇeśvara (a holy place) 1404

Gaṅgā (Ganges) 12, 32, 35, 69, 97, 100, 101, 155, 194, 281, 288, 404f, 407f, 455, 458, 492, 501, 505, 594, 598, 603, 633, 648, 697, 700, 713, 716f, 754, 786, 795, 800ff, 802, 804ff, 806ff, 1015, 1041, 1051, 1056, 1061, 1063, 1068, 1074, 1122, 1215, 1229, 1238, 1243f, 1278f, 1282, 1289, 1291f, 1325, 1334, 1336, 1357f, 1368, 1378, 1381, 1391, 1439, 1454, 1456, 1458, 1460, 1487, 1489, 1495, 1497ff, 1501f, 1508, 1521, 1560, 1591, 1612, 1617, 1682, 1719, 1729f, 1736, 1775, 1800, 1807, 1821, 1839, 1875, 1883f, 1888, 1891, 1915, 1921, 1943, 1993, 2003f, 2040,

- 2044, 2047, 2053, 2061, 2064, 2075f, 2094, 2096, 2116, 2126, 2171, 2217, 2229, 2235, 2272, 2288, 2314, 2319, 2322, 2326, 2378, 2394, 2398ff, 2403ff, 2409, 2420, 2443, 2447f, 2507, 2533, 2539, 2555, 2570, 2594, 2619, 2629, 2631, 2644, 2653, 2657, 2664, 2669, 2690, 2725, 2731, 2762, 2770, 2788ff, 2794, 2803, 2811, 2813f, 2815f, 2819, 2823, 2836, 2846, 2859, 2878, 2898, 2920, 2923, 2983f, 3017, 3022, 3063, 3069, 3076, 3079, 3098, 3113, 3115, 3120, 3214, 3217, 3238, 3248, 3339, 3341, 3346, 3348, 3352f, 3355, 3357f, 3361, 3373, 3376, 3379, 3382, 3389f, 3394, 3395ff, 3401ff, 3406ff, 3411ff, 3422, 3434, 3446, 3536
- Gaṅgadā (a cow) 2562
- Gaṅgādhara 327, 438, 2841, 3446
- Gaṅgādvāra 11, 12, 46, 205, 211, 437, 811, 1381, 1442, 1501, 2394, 2831, 2982, 3353f
- Gaṅgāhrada (a holy place) 1438
- Gaṅgāsāgara (a holy place) 96, 1508, 2837
- Gaṅgāsuta 400
- Gaṅgātīrtha 1430, 1477
- Gaṅgāvarta (a holy place) 2632
- Gaṅgāvartasamāhāra 2
- Gaṅgāvatarāṇa 1395
- Gāṅgeya 598
- Gaṅgodbheda (a holy place) 96, 404, 1465, 2838
- Gara (Subāhu's son) 2394f
- Garga 1272, 2747, 3259
- Gārgya 1575, 2276
- Gārhapatya fire 146
- Gariṣṭha (a demon) 225
- Garjana (a holy place) 1391
- Garuḍa 50, 152, 221, 332, 385, 432, 528, 535, 551, 655, 659f, 662, 664, 666ff, 839, 849, 975, 991, 1213, 1460, 1760, 1794, 2019, 2035, 2089, 2265, 2319, 2337, 2342, 2364, 2444, 2475, 2508, 2533, 2545, 2583, 2592, 2594, 2649, 2674, 2725, 2793f, 3047, 3079, 3081, 3094, 3115, 3123, 3126, 3159, 3172, 3182, 3194, 3263, 3279, 3291ff, 3306, 3359, 3426, 3450, 3514, 3528
- Garuḍa (a mountain) 3311
- Garuḍa-bannered (god) 1293, 1459, 1644
- Garuḍadhvaja 3472
- Garuḍapriya 438
- Garuḍa Purāṇa 2144, 2265f
- Gau 60, 74
- Gauḍadeśa 1841, 2924
- Gauri (Pārvatī) 194, 205, 210f, 321, 323, 325, 327ff, 365, 429, 442, 685, 754, 1396, 1413, 1605, 2000, 2362, 2383, 2593, 2689, 2738, 3014, 3025, 3028, 3167
- Gauri (Varuṇa's wife) 194
- Gaurikānta 500
- Gaurī-vrata 280
- Gautama 59, 264, 438, 486, 522, 746, 1113, 1241, 1401, 1480, 1490, 1575, 1710, 1792, 1989, 1991, 2165, 2226, 2230f, 2236ff, 2256ff, 2296, 2297, 2526, 2629, 2830, 2837, 2877, 2982, 3191f, 3195, 3215
- Gautamālaya (a holy place) 2925
- Gautameśvara (a holy place) 100, 1407
- Gautamī (a river) 2157, 2267, 2295, 2509, 2570, 2806, 2925, 3248
- Gava 493
- Gavākṣa 493
- Gavāntīrtha 1430
- Gavaya 493, 1683
- Gaveśaṇa (Akrūra's son) 119
- Gaveśaṇa (Devakī's son) 120
- Gaveśaṇa (a sage) 181
- Gaviṣṭha (Diti's son) 628
- Gaya (Sudyumna's son) 68
- Gayā 65, 97, 99, 101, 458, 786, 800, 1401, 1468, 1479, 1508, 2317, 2434, 2443, 2509, 2533, 2578, 2818, 2924, 2984, 2995f, 3063, 3086f, 3238, 3354
- Gayāśīrṣa (a holy place) 2568
- Gayātīrtha 2860
- Gāyatra 25
- Gāyatrī 154, 199ff, 212, 215ff, 224, 254, 329, 430, 448, 457, 503, 571, 648f, 651ff, 669, 808f, 1485, 1526, 1529, 1531, 1548, 2089, 2146, 2277, 2703, 2705, 3146, 3465
- Ghaṇṭākarna (Śiva's attendant) 1281 2311
- Gharghara (a big river) 98, 1051
- Gharghara (a demon) 2356
- Ghasmara 2682
- Ghaṭābha (a demon) 628
- Ghaṭāvaha (Śiva's attendant) 1281
- Ghaṭeśvaratīrtha 2889
- Ghaṭotkaca 1477
- Ghora (a demon) 500, 847, 2440
- Ghr̥ṇi (Kūvalāśva's son) 69
- Ghr̥tācī (a celestial nymph) 628, 1694, 1759, 1964, 2343, 2771
- Ghr̥tadhenu 295
- Ghr̥taśaila 297
- Ghr̥tavatī (a river) 1364
- Ghurṇā (an imp) 796
- Ghuśr̥ṇeśa 2969
- Gifts 1048ff, 1052ff, 1056, 1160, 1168,

1263f, 1344f, 1542f, 1637, 2106, 2108, 2412, 2416, 2433, 2599, 3504, 3513
 Girigahvara (a tribe) 1366
 Gilli (a holy place) 2315
 Girijā 1334f, 2219, 2277, 2384, 2388, 2925, 3152, 3159, 3166, 3172
 Girikarṇa (a holy place) 2830
 Girikarṇi (a deity) 2155
 Giriketu (a demon) 2356
 Girikuṇḍja (a holy place) 1424
 Giriśa 45, 596, 610, 1472, 2331, 2348, 3174
 Gitā 2906, 2910, 2913, 2915, 2920, 2922, 2928, 2932, 2936f, 2941ff, 2944, 2948, 2957, 2960, 2964, 2970
 Gītaśāstradhara (= Raṅgavidyādhara, a gandharva) 1077f
 Gobhila (a demon) 1088, 1090, 1094
 Gocarman 1635, 2433, 3500
 Godāvarī 79, 633, 754, 1051, 1217, 1239, 1363, 2102, 2108, 2110, 2314, 2520, 2789, 2819, 2843, 2871, 2912, 2919f, 2922, 2925, 2944, 2969f, 2973, 3110, 3112, 3235, 3238
 Gods 576f, 629, 668, 688, 757, 1068, 1124, 1173, 1275, 1280, 1357, 1359, 1401, 1922
 Gokāmukha (a sacred place) 99
 Gokarṇa (a holy place) 98, 211, 1359, 1485, 2831, 2995, 2998f, 3001, 3006, 3017, 3125
 Gokarṇeśvara 2288
 Gokhurā (a river) 2847
 Gokula 799, 1942, 1963f, 2591, 2634, 2738, 3001, 3259, 3265, 3269
 Gokulanātha 1983
 Goloka 909, 1585, 1942, 1988, 2549, 2857, 3000
 Gomanta 210, 438, 1364, 2721
 Gomati (a river) 96, 210, 633, 1363, 1716, 2451, 2619, 2789, 2924, 3014, 3063, 3221
 Gomeda 457, 893, 2321
 Gomedha 472, 3248
 Gonarda (a holy place) 437f
 Gopa 2612
 Gopāla (= Viṣṇu) 976, 1944, 2634, 2641
 Gopāla (= Brahmā) 438
 Gopālakaccha 1365
 Goparāṣṭra 1365
 Gopī (= cowherdess) 799
 Gopicandana 2420, 2450, 2563
 Gopīndra 437
 Gopīpuṣkara (a holy place) 2563
 Gopīśvara 1944
 Goplakṣa (a holy place) 437
 Goprabha (a holy place) 960

Gopratāra (a holy place) 1465f, 3063
 Goprekṣa (a holy place) 1478
 Gorocana 320
 Gotīrtha 2888
 Govardhana (a mountain) 2373, 2591, 2738, 3270
 Govardhanadhara 3472
 Govinda 19, 117f, 293, 339, 342, 663, 685, 735, 971, 1024, 1044, 1180f, 1228, 1334, 1350, 1456, 1476, 1589, 1943, 1946f, 1950f, 1954, 1967f, 1976, 1984, 1995, 1999, 2007, 2035, 2064, 2081, 2093, 2235, 2570, 2579, 2591, 2611ff, 2626, 2637, 2642, 2769, 2978, 3015, 3039, 3050, 3143, 3162, 3164, 3181, 3197, 3263, 3265f, 3273f, 3282, 3299, 3310, 3332f, 3359, 3457, 3461, 3472, 3518, 3544
 Govinda (a mountain) 1371
 Govraja 3263, 3265, 3269, 3309
 Graheśvara 878
 Grains, kinds of 27
 Grāmayājaka 656
 Grāvastut 426
 Grdhraṇa 1479
 Greed 968
 Grief 1189
 Guardians of Quarters 549, 1131, 1212
 Guḍācala 297
 Guḍa-dhenu 295
 Guḍākeśa 2035
 Guḍa-vrata 284
 Guha (= Kārttikeya) 556, 572, 849, 1437, 1466, 2378, 3251
 Guhārāṇī (= Pārvati) 572
 Guhasthāna (a holy place) 1487
 Guhāvāsin 503
 Guheśa 1475
 Guhya (= Guha) 618
 Guhyas, Guhyakas 533, 1275, 1358f
 Guhyaka 44, 392, 846, 1013
 Guhyapati 2451
 Guṇādhika 1461
 Guṇākara 3378
 Guṇatrayamayī (= Prakṛti) 3154
 Guṇavati (Devaśarman's daughter) 2651f, 2015
 Guṇavati 1981
 Guṇḍikāmaṇḍapa 3485
 Guptalomaka 2359
 Guptanetra 2362
 Gurjara (a country) 1097, 2974
 Guru (= Brhaspati) 135, 891f, 1030, 2967, 3018
 Hāhā (a gandharva) 221, 1357, 3047, 3117

- Haihaya (Satyajit's son) 110, 112, 3219
 Haihaya (a country) 1007
 Halāhala 125, 2445
 Haṁsa 221, 516
 Haṁsaketu (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Haṁsatīrtha 100
 Haṁsanātha (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Haṁsapāda 1238
 Haṁsaprapatana (a holy place) 1488, 1500
 Haṁsavāhana (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Haṁsavega 1238
 Hanūmat 493, 495, 685, 800, 1155, 1649f, 1711, 1759, 1774, 1779, 1783, 1787, 1793, 1795, 1803f, 1806, 1816f, 1822f, 1825f, 1829, 1831, 1833f, 1838f, 1851, 1856, 1862ff, 1901, 1911f, 1931, 2236f, 2239f, 2242, 2244, 2251, 2283, 2287, 2290, 2305, 2310, 2489, 2589, 3055, 3239, 3243, 3245, 3252, 3325, 3484
 Hara 104, 143, 224, 364, 440, 502, 581, 596, 606, 608, 642, 838, 1030, 1045, 1273, 1397, 1603, 2322, 2383, 2390, 2905
 Hara (a Rudra) 48
 Harakarna (a sage) 2162
 Haravara (a holy place) 1505
 Hārāvali 1982
 Hari 27, 35, 51, 124, 151, 224, 293, 296, 311, 338, 342, 381, 502, 524ff, 543, 553f, 636, 641, 652, 662, 667f, 704, 737, 757, 786, 890, 922, 943, 982, 984, 1020, 1024, 1026, 1088, 1162, 1180f, 1224, 1228, 1266, 1269, 1272, 1275, 1346, 1351, 1444, 1486, 1559, 1657, 1773, 1799, 1967, 1993, 1998, 2001, 2006, 2014, 2021, 2024, 2029, 2040, 2093, 2096, 2582, 2615, 2624f, 2693, 2977, 2986, 3113, 3148, 3150, 3172f, 3224, 3310, 3317, 3387, 3457, 3461, 3472, 3525, 3544
 Haribodhinī 2539
 Haricakra (a holy place) 3139
 Haridatta (Vimala's son) 3056f
 Haridattaja 3062
 Haridhāman (a sage) 1961
 Haridikṣita (a brāhmaṇa) 2954
 Haridvāra 1715, 2314, 2397, 3014, 3018, 3040, 3063, 3108
 Harihara 2925, 2954, 2969
 Harihayabhāsvān (=the Sun) 2997
 Harikṣetra (a holy place) 2702, 2973
 Harimitra (a brāhmaṇa) 1450
 Hārīṇī 3206
 Hariprastha (a holy place) 3016, 3087
 Haripriyā 211, 1950, 1994, 2831
 Hariśarman (a brāhmaṇa) 3496ff, 3510, 3512
 Hariścandra (Satyaratha's son) 69, 490, 955, 2394, 2430, 2432, 2525f, 3030
 Hariścandra (a sacred place) 99
 Hariśmaśru (an epithet of Brahmā) 504
 Hārīta 1673, 2754, 2902
 Haritāśva (Sudyumna's son) 68
 Harivaṁśa 1162, 2266
 Harivīra 2115
 Harodbheda (a sacred place) 99, 2838
 Harṣa 30
 Haryakṣa (Suratha's son) 1850, 1856
 Hāsa (Śiva's attendant) 2356f
 Hasta (354, 873
 Hastimatī (a river) 2838, 2858f
 Hastināpura 211, 437, 3128, 3495
 Hastisomā (a river) 1363
 Hāṭaka (a holy place) 1715
 Hatyā 2893, 2903
 Havaniya (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Havi (Vasiṣṭha's son) 58
 Haviṣmān (a Sādhyā) 523
 Haviṣmanta (a mane) 2085
 Haviṣmantas (sages) 289
 Haviśravā (a river) 1364
 Haviṣyāṇna 871
 Havya 45
 Havyapa (Manu's son) 58
 Havyavāha 2894
 Hayagrīva 530, 546, 977, 2000, 2585, 2613, 3174
 Heaven 1252f, 1256ff, 2100, 2102f
 Hell 10, 28, 1255f
 Hemā 1238, 1364
 Hemagarbha 1238
 Hemakuṇḍala (a merchant) 1446
 Hemakūṭa 212, 810, 1356, 1358, 1692, 1837, 2789, 2832
 Hemamālin 2515
 Hemāṅgī (Vīravarma's daughter) 3119f, 3121
 Hema-parvata 297
 Hemaprabhā (king Manobhadra's wife) 3348
 Hemaprabhāvati 1579, 1613
 Hematāladhvaja 632
 Heramba 814, 818, 843, 849
 Heretics 3486
 Himālaya 31, 61, 211, 323, 429, 437, 465, 564, 573ff, 578, 585f, 588, 592, 594, 597, 607, 609, 613f, 629, 732, 799, 812, 888, 1013, 1234, 1282, 1350, 1536, 2145, 2216, 2317f, 2335, 2406, 2450, 2487, 2516, 2568,

- 2579, 2583, 2597, 2600, 2602, 2610, 2620, 2628, 2635f, 2638, 2641f, 2646f, 2651, 2676, 2719, 2758, 2792, 2831, 2833, 2840, 2842, 2860, 2877, 2893, 2895, 2897, 2923, 2933, 2955, 2960, 2967, 3026, 3028, 3033f, 3056, 3068, 3079, 3082, 3222, 3258, 3270, 3276, 3323, 3326
Himavat 46, 517, 1356, 1359, 1933, 2289
Hindu Religion 1675
Hiraṇmaya (a country) 1361, 3148
Hiraṇmayī (a river) 2844
Hiraṇvatī (a river) 1361
Hiraṇyā (a river) 2849f
Hiraṇyagarbha (an epithet of Brahmā) 502, 1478, 3148, 3161, 3269
Hiraṇyaka 3195, 3222, 3284
Hiraṇyakaśipu 537, 551, 618, 624, 627f, 630, 633, 914, 921, 989f, 2585f, 2608, 2900, 2976, 3011, 3174, 3196, 3198, 3201, 3204, 3386
Hiraṇyākṣa 125, 140, 211, 378, 818ff, 850ff, 974, 2095, 2113, 2850, 3174, 3195, 3222, 3256, 3284
Hiraṇyākṣa (a country) 1358
Hiraṇyapura 50
Hiraṇyaroman 57, 58
Hiraṇyaretas 877
Hiraṇyasaṅgameśvara (a holy place) 2850
Hlādinī 2014
Hoḍa (a sage) 2846
Holy places 158
Horse sacrifice 1135
Hotṛ 425, 511
Householder 178f, 1529, 2600
Hrām (a mystic syllable) 784, 879
Hṛdayeśa (an epithet of Cupid) 339
Hṛdika (Bhoja's son) 116
Hṛī (a divine mother) 224
Hṛīm (a mystic syllable) 784, 879
Hṛṣikeśa 118, 333, 436, 520, 534, 916, 940f, 970, 977, 985, 987, 1020, 1025, 1032, 1181, 1227, 1229, 1231, 1266, 1294, 1476, 1543, 1999, 2002, 2035, 2082, 2603, 2612f, 2907, 3259, 3296, 3323, 3422, 3472
Hṛṣiketu 2396
Hṛsya (Rukmiṇi's son) 123
Hūhū (a gandharva) 221, 1357, 3047
Hūṇa 1365, 2012
Huṇḍa 1286, 1288f, 1292, 1297f, 1300, 1305, 1307, 1310, 1314ff, 1320, 1324, 1326
Hutāśana 453, 615, 2434
Hutāśanī 1238
Hymns, sacred 784
Iḍā 1107, 1985, 2124
Ījika (a tribe) 1365
Ikṣu 1396
Ikṣusāgara 1637, 3341
Ikṣumati (a holy place) 97
Ikṣuvardhanikā 1369
Ikṣvāku 65, 478, 1062, 1067, 1069, 1072, 1080, 1100, 1140, 1363, 1669, 2196f, 3231, 3252, 3328
Ikṣvāku race 70
Ila (Vaivasvata Manu's son) 65
Ilāspada (a holy place) 1432
Illegitimate intercourse 1619
Ilvala 50
Incarnations 8, 19
India 3063
Indirā 1350, 1588, 2530
Indra 4, 7, 28, 32, 40, 55, 83, 125f, 132, 141, 167, 194f, 206, 208f, 210, 217, 225, 256, 290, 297, 316f, 360, 371, 376f, 379, 431, 448f, 457, 481, 523f, 536f, 545, 547, 553f, 558f, 562ff, 567f, 573, 590, 600, 629, 631, 635, 636f, 667, 704, 746ff, 749f, 823, 829, 835f, 840ff, 848f, 852, 864, 866, 877, 879, 900, 904ff, 913, 915, 917f, 941, 950, 974, 987f, 991, 994, 996, 997f, 1005, 1019f, 1028, 1036, 1080, 1102f, 1108f, 1110ff, 1114, 1116f, 1132f, 1137ff, 1174f, 1176f, 1202f, 1209, 1237f, 1239, 1241, 1293, 1311, 1318, 1324, 1358, 1381, 1385, 1393, 1398, 1401, 1407, 1491, 1692f, 1695, 1709, 1724, 1773, 1806, 1819, 1828f, 2277, 2321f, 2327f, 2330, 2332, 2344, 2433f, 2436, 2467, 2482, 2518, 2550, 2577, 2587, 2589f, 2604, 2654, 2655, 2658, 2672, 2678, 2686, 2774f, 2814f, 2857, 2863, 2872, 2894, 2920, 2960, 2967f, 3012, 3015f, 3017, 3021, 3043, 3048, 3054, 3059, 3063f, 3082, 3089, 3104, 3150, 3160, 3172, 3178, 3209, 3211, 3215, 3217, 3233, 3245, 3283f, 3290, 3292, 3315, 3357, 3363, 3399, 3403, 3409, 3414, 3440, 3463, 3502, 3522, 3534, 3542
Indra (Vasiṣṭha's son) 58
Indradyumna (a king) 2431
Indradyumna (a lake) 3311
Indragrāma 2863
Indrajit 495, 1794, 2290f, 2590, 3240
Indrakālā (a river) 99
Indrākṣī 746
Indramārga (a holy place) 97, 422, 1438
Indrāṇī 194, 211, 1278, 2014, 3246
Indraprastha 3018, 3021, 3038, 3050,

- 3059, 3064, 3078, 3102, 3107, 3121,
 3124, 3127f, 3303
 Indrapurī 438
 Indrasena (Lord of Māhiṣmatī) 2530f
 Indratāpana 225
 Indumati 1297, 1304, 1322f
 Intellect, Intelligence 928, 950, 1113,
 1120
 Irā 48, 51
 Irāvati 1363
 Īśa (Manu's son) 58
 Īśā (a divine power) 3172
 Īśāna 31, 448, 500, 847, 1509
 Īśāneśa (a holy place) 1394
 Iṣṭāpūrta 273
 Īśvara 685, 2639
 Īśvara (a city) 2831
 Itihāsa 3009, 3252
- Jābāli 1272, 1491, 1962, 2196f, 3244
 Jaḍa (a brāhmaṇa) 2914
 Jagadambā/Jagadambikā 1919, 3026
 Jagaddhāman (=the Sun) 2997
 Jagadīśa 3457, 3462
 Jaganmaya 3471
 Jagannātha 2315, 3282, 3437, 3471
 Jagannātha 685, 2454, 2559, 2640
 Jagatī (metre) 25
 Jagatkartā 3471
 Jagatpati (=Brahmā) 433
 Jagatpati (=Kṛṣṇa) 3259
 Jagatśrī (=Pārvatī) 324
 Jāgava (a bow) 105
 Jaggery 302, 3488
 Jāhnavī 155, 288, 455, 2040, 2084,
 2397, 3172, 3405, 3408
 Jahnu 2039, 3395
 Jaigīṣavya (Himālaya's son-in-law) 71
 Jaimini 1251, 1505, 3191, 3359, 3375,
 3381, 3396, 3404f, 3417, 3457, 3465,
 3477, 3481, 3484, 3493, 3495, 3498,
 3512, 3537, 3545, 3547
 Jaina 109, 2796
 Jaina faith 1039, 1043f
 Jala (an ocean) 3341
 Jaladhara 288, 1369
 Jālānanda (=Brahmā) 437
 Jālandhara 2320f, 2323ff, 2325ff, 2329,
 2331f, 2333, 2336ff, 2339ff, 2344f,
 2347f, 2350f, 2352, 2354, 2361,
 2364, 2367, 2371f, 2373ff, 2376f,
 2378, 2380, 2382, 2384ff, 2388ff,
 2391, 2669, 2671ff, 2675, 2678, 2681,
 2682ff, 2685, 2687
 Jālandhara (a mountain) 100, 211,
 437, 2831
 Jalapriyā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Jalaśāpi (=Brahmā) 438
 Jalaśāyī (=Viṣṇu) 292f
- Jalodara (=the Moon) 351
 Jamadagni 264, 414, 917, 1155, 1411,
 1484, 1486, 2179, 2203, 2587, 2629,
 2837, 3215, 3220, 3223, 3325
 Jāmadagnya 99, 2495f, 3191, 3216
 Jāmadagnya Rāma 2629
 Jamba (a demon) 3174
 Jambālinī (a river) 2807
 Jāmbavān 117, 118, 2268, 2289, 2306,
 2862, 3251f
 Jāmbavanta 1683
 Jāmbavateśa 2862
 Jāmbavati 336, 1952, 3288, 3290, 3306
 Jambha (a demon) 258, 2333, 2356,
 2379
 Jambhaka 561f
 Jambhāru (a demon) 2739
 Jambu (a holy place) 1377, 2862
 Jambudvīpa 9, 299, 1361, 1367, 1369,
 1497, 2014, 2324, 2598, 2830, 2838,
 3311
 Jambumārga 1350, 1379
 Jambunadī 1358, 1364
 Jāmi 47
 Jamunā 97
 Jana (a world) 316, 368, 2105, 2518
 Janaka 1480, 1651, 1760, 1770, 1918,
 1920, 1953, 2281, 2594, 3099
 Janakāntā 205
 Jānakī 414, 1867, 1871, 1877, 1884,
 1891, 1893, 1905, 2914, 1922, 1927,
 2039, 3192, 3246
 Janamejaya 385
 Janārdana 16, 97, 104, 118, 136, 143,
 153, 301, 331, 372, 382, 407, 453,
 459, 685, 700, 711, 757, 974, 977,
 985, 987, 1023, 1025, 1132, 1226,
 1228, 1232, 1334f, 1399, 2155, 2319,
 2411, 2452, 2463, 2466, 2525, 2543,
 2579, 2614, 2624, 2639, 3265, 3310,
 3395, 3422, 3425, 3427f, 3434, 3461,
 3472, 3520
 Janasthāna 3237
 Janēśvara 1379
 Jāṅgala (a country) 1364f
 Jāṅgala (a holy place) 2818
 Jāṅgalī 2124
 Jāṅghapūta (a sage) 1964
 Janmaṛkṣa 444
 Janmāṣṭamī 1227, 1567, 2317
 Janya (Manu's son) 58
 Jarā (Mṛtyu's daughter) 30
 Jarā (Karkāṭa's wife) 3125
 Jaradgavā (Mohinī's maid) 3118
 Jarāsandha 1155, 2591, 2851, 3256,
 3280, 3283ff, 3303
 Jaratkāru 386
 Jātas (a sage) 3170
 Jātavedas 355

Jaṭāyu 50, 492, 2489, 2589, 3237
 Jaṭhara (a country) 1364
 Jaṭila (a sage) 1964
 Jātimātrahraḍa (a holy place) 1486
 Jaṭin 500, 502
 Jātukarṇa 2067, 2070f
 Jātukarṇya 7, 1673, 1679
 Jaya (=Śiva) 500
 Jaya (a Brahṁā priest) 2701
 Jaya (a doorkeeper of Viṣṇu) 2665, 2700, 2702, 3157, 3195
 Jaya (an elephant) 2695
 Jaya (=Mahābhārata) 2417
 Jayā 205, 211, 325, 329, 1227, 2101, 2361f, 2383, 2462, 2488, 2644
 Jayadeva 2965
 Jayadevī (=Vaitaraṇī) 2561
 Jayamaṅgala (Paravṛt's son) 113
 Jayanandana 2382
 Jayānandin (=Brahṁā) 437
 Jayanta 119, 437, 825f, 847, 849, 2330, 2333f, 3325
 Jayantī 119, 131, 211, 1227, 1573ff, 1577, 2101, 2177, 2432, 2462, 3377, 3384
 Jayantī (a holy place) 437
 Jayaratha 112
 Jayaśarman (Śivaśarman's son) 2544
 Jebuka (a brāhmaṇa) 3112
 Jhallika (a country) 1365
 Jhaṣa (a fish) 528, 579
 Jimūta (Bhīmasena's son) 114
 Jina 1040, 1042, 2796
 Jiṣṇu 1108, 1287, 2099, 2604, 3282
 Jitakāma 1461
 Jiva 2443
 Jivamjivaka 255
 Jivanmukta 805
 Jñāna 924f, 930f, 935, 937, 1113, 1550, 2974, 2978ff, 2981, 3159
 Jñānagamyā (Viṣṇu) 2447, 2452, 2454
 Jñānaśruti (a king) 2923f
 Jñānavāpi 3063
 Jñapti (cognition) 2196
 Jñātā (an ascetic) 91
 Jñātapārāga (an ascetic) 91
 Jñātidharma (a cowherd) 3542
 Jṛmbhakā (a goddess) 2957
 Jupiter 632, 891, 2261, 2806, 2944, 2969, 3110, 3321
 Jvālā (a river) 98, 1238
 Jvalahutāśārciniruddha-maṇḍala-pradeśa 433
 Jvalamānāsyā 394
 Jvalana 628
 Jvālavaktra or Jvālamukha 2209
 Jvāleśvara 1217, 1388f
 Jvara (a demon) 2357
 Jyāmagha 113, 114

Jyāmeśvara 3484
 Jyeṣṭha (a holy place) 52, 219, 233, 235, 297, 411
 Jyeṣṭha (a month) 322, 325, 347, 365, 877, 1403, 2508, 2512, 2523, 2641, 2723, 3002, 3007, 3098, 3439f
 Jyeṣṭhā 1329
 Jyeṣṭhasāmaga 503
 Jyotiratha (Vasiṣṭha's son) 58
 Jyotirathi (a river) 1484
 Jyotirmātra (a holy place) 1485
 Jyotiṣmat 58, 1461
 Kabandha (a demon) 1931, 2489, 3238
 Kāccha (a tribe) 1365
 Kadamba 1943, 1945, 1971f, 2838
 Kadrū (Mother of Nāgas, Dakṣa's daughter) 50, 522, 668
 Kahoḍa (a sage) 2837
 Kaikasī (Vidyunmālin's daughter) 1664
 Kaikeyī 1792, 1925, 3223, 3225f, 3232, 3252
 Kailāsa 32, 36, 420, 517, 634f, 756, 780, 888, 1278, 1285, 1290, 1312, 1358, 1666, 1691, 1810, 2142, 2215, 2319, 2321, 2344, 2353, 2361, 2389, 2397, 2574f, 2577, 2667, 2675f, 2679, 2758, 2776, 2819, 2828, 2859, 2867, 2967, 3125f, 3135, 3329, 3333
 Kaiṭabha (a demon) 486, 551, 809, 2330, 2967, 3200, 3342ff, 3353, 3386, 3537
 Kaiṭabhāri 3472
 Kaivalya (Mokṣa) 3156
 Kaivartaka (a king) 2861
 Kakara (Hṛdika's son) 117
 Kākatuṇḍa (Śiva's charioteer) 2354
 Kākola 2800
 Kakṣa (a country) 1365
 Kakṣivat 1480, 2837
 Kakudmin (Reva's son) 68
 Kākunḍaka (a tribe) 1365
 Kakutstha/Kākutstha 68, 423, 465f, 469, 472, 492, 2143, 2151, 2260, 2287, 2293, 2463, 3223, 3230f, 3233, 3238f, 3242, 3245, 3248, 3250f, 3253
 Kāla (Śiva's warrior) 2378
 Kāla 494, 509, 584, 847, 849, 1017, 2346, 2355, 2379, 2561, 2586, 2568, 2737, 3161, 3232
 Kalā (Śoṇa's wife) 2213, 2216
 Kalā (Hemāṅgi's friend) 3119
 Kalā (mother of Kālakeyas) 524
 Kalā (Dakṣa's daughter) 522
 Kalā (an epithet of Sāvitṛ) 211
 Kalā (a river) 1238
 Kālabhairava (a god) 1716

- Kālada (a country) 1365
 Kāladamṣṭra (Yadu's son) 1309
 Kāladharmā (Yama) 2419
 Kalagitā (a deity) 1981
 Kālāgnirūpa (Śani) 2440
 Kalahā 2693, 2706
 Kālajit (commander-in-chief of Rama's army) 1678f, 1894ff, 1897
 Kālaka (a demon) 225
 Kalakā (a demoness) 50, 2691f
 Kālakaḥ (Ratnākara's servant) 3389, 3391, 3394, 3397
 Kalakānta (a demon) 225
 Kālakeya 256, 259, 816, 823f
 Kālakhāṇja 50
 Kālakuṣṭha (a disease) 671
 Kālakūṭa 3055, 3180
 Kalanābha 50
 Kālanemi (a demon) 548, 550, 553, 554, 561f, 620ff, 922, 2326, 2333, 2583, 2680, 2682
 Kālāṇjara 93, 95, 97, 211, 1243, 1478, 1487, 3014
 Kālāntaka 2591
 Kalāpavana 1440
 Kālāpriya 878
 Kālāpuruṣa 2935f
 Kālārātri (a deity) 392, 394
 Kālāśeśvara (a holy place) 1477
 Kālāśi (a holy place) 1432
 Kālāsūrā (a deity) 1981
 Kālāsūtra (a hell) 28, 672, 1842, 2800, 2809, 3531
 Kālātīrtha 1484
 Kālatoṣaka (a country) 1364
 Kālāvati (a deity) 1981
 Kālāyavana 3281, 3462
 Kālāśvara 1239, 1398, 2970
 Kālāya (demons) 254, 256, 262, 825f
 Kālī 164, 221, 508, 801, 2147, 2973, 2975, 3181, 3310, 3538
 Kālī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Kālī (a deity) 394, 527, 596, 2366 3063
 Kālīhrada 1943
 Kālīkā (a river) 98
 Kālīkāgrāma 2970
 Kālīkāsaṅgama 1482
 Kālinda (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Kālindī 1445, 1946, 1988, 1992, 2316, 2831, 2926, 3010, 3082, 3386
 Kālindī (Sun's daughter and Kṛṣṇa's third wife) 3287, 3290
 Kālindī grove 1942
 Kālindītīrtha 1443
 Kālīṅga 634, 1081, 1364, 1366, 1378, 1846, 3102, 3104, 3106f
 Kālīṅjara (a holy place) 1239
 Kālīṅjara (a mountain) 2831, 2838
 Kalipriyā (wife of Śaṅkara—a śūdra) 1624f
 Kālīya (a serpent) 633, 1006, 2591, 3263
 Kaliyuga 248, 464, 520, 796, 798, 811, 864, 894, 1043, 1275, 1347, 1349, 1366f, 1384, 1443, 1489, 1556, 2003, 2006, 2041, 2104, 2150, 2263, 2398, 2402, 2405, 2457, 2459, 2510, 2512, 2545f, 2564, 2572f, 2575, 2593, 2598, 2635f, 2660f, 2706, 2723, 2729f, 2734, 2762, 2772f, 2834, 2839f, 2842, 2859, 2864, 2873, 2877, 2881f, 2888, 2905, 2971f, 2975, 2977, 2985f, 2988, 3127, 3194, 3222, 3338, 3546
 Kalki (Viṣṇu's incarnation) 853, 2317, 2423, 2573, 2593, 2602, 2998, 3166, 3386, 3426
 Kalkinātha 2612
 Kalmāṣapāda (Rtuparna's son) 10, 70
 Kalpa 5, 8, 10, 24, 30, 96, 286f, 313f, 330f, 341f, 353, 367, 386, 410, 525, 739, 765, 772, 883, 895, 895, 987, 1354, 1451, 1966, 3318, 3502
 Kalpa (a tribe) 1365
 Kalpa (a desire-yielding tree) 1013, 1283
 Kalpāgrāma 3102
 Kalpānta 838
 Kalparūpa (a holy place) 2831
 Kalpavīrya 50
 Kaluṣā 2740f
 Kalyāṇa (a holy place) 2831
 Kalyāṇa-saptamī 307, 309
 Kalyāṇi (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Kalyāṇinī (=Bhīmadvādaśi) 335
 Kāma/Kāmadeva 30, 105, 107, 234, 338f, 340, 585, 593, 1110, 1118, 1184, 1201, 1388, 1399, 1692, 2423, 2638f
 Kāma (=desire) 887f, 2786
 Kāma (satisfaction of desire) 1417, 1691, 2000
 Kāmā (a celestial nymph) 2320
 Kāmacārīṇi (an epithet of Sāvitri) 210
 Kāmadā (a city) 2982
 Kāmadā Ekādaśi 2500, 2502f, 2546
 Kāmadāyini (a deity) 1981
 Kāmadruma (a place) 1943
 Kāmadugha 74
 Kāmagamā (Ugrāśva's wife) 1934
 Kāmakalā (a deity) 1981
 Kāmākṣā (a deity) 1698
 Kamalā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 323f, 325, 366
 Kamalā (=Lakṣmī) 355, 1180, 1226, 1261, 1590, 1593ff, 2019, 2944, 2951, 3153, 3183, 3188, 3439
 Kamalā (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211

- Kamalā Ekādaśī 2543f, 2546
 Kamalā (a woman) 914
 Kamalākṣa (a demon) 316
 Kamalālayā (a divine power) 3172
 Kamalapatrākṣa (an epithet of Brahmā) 435
 Kamalāsana (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
 Kamalā-saptamī 307
 Kāmapāla (=Viṣṇu) 1228
 Kāmaprada (=Viṣṇu) 2446
 Kāmāranya 1944
 Kāmarūpa (a holy place) 437
 Kāmarūpa (a country) 2810
 Kāmasukhaprada (an epithet of the Moon) 351
 Kamaṭha 1181
 Kambala (a holy place) 1488
 Kambala (a serpent) 50, 221, 1499, 1508
 Kambalabarhiṣa (Hṛdika's son) 117
 Kāmboja 1365, 2256, 2395
 Kambotikeśvara (a holy place) 1396
 Kambu-tīrtha 2853f
 Kāmeśvara (=Viṣṇu) 2640
 Kāmikā 2517ff, 2520
 Kāmikā vow 2520
 Kamilya 91
 Kāminī (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Kāmōda 1325, 1327f
 Kāmōdā (a woman) 1328ff, 1331, 1334f, 1336
 Kampana (a demon) 1212, 1794
 Kampana (a missile) 630
 Kampila (a holy place) 2831
 Kāmpila (a mountain) 2831
 Kāmpilya (a region) 437, 3051, 3052
 Kaṁsa (Ugrasena's son) 116, 122, 1096, 1603f, 1606, 2591, 2851, 3082, 3255f, 3258, 3268, 3271f, 3276ff, 3279, 3358, 3386, 3462
 Kaṁsā (Ugrasena's daughter) 116
 Kaṁsaghna 2612
 Kaṁsāri 331, 3471
 Kaṁsavatī (Ugrasena's daughter) 116
 Kāmukā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 210
 Kāmya grove 1942, 2320
 Kāmya Śrāddha 76
 Kaṇāda (a sage) 3191
 Kāṇāda 3194
 Kanaka (a country) 1365
 Kanakā (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 403
 Kanakapriya (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Kanakhala (a holy place) 1378, 1401, 1407, 1442, 1488, 2061, 2632
 Kanakhaleśvara 2288
 Kānana (a country) 1365
 Kāñcana (a city) 1282, 1298
 Kāñcanā (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 228
 Kāñcanamālā 1982
 Kāñcanamālinī 2772f, 2777f
 Kāñcī (a holy place) 158, 1392, 3040, 3311
 Kāñcī (a city) 1713, 1715
 Kandali (a celestial nymph) 2320
 Kandarpa (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 2560
 Kandarpa (Cupid) 2639
 Kandarpesvara (a holy place) 1471
 Kaṇḍu (a brāhmaṇa) 1414
 Kanika (a hunter) 3474
 Kaniṣṭha Kuṇḍa 233
 Kaṅka 2012
 Kaṅkā (Ugrasena's daughter) 116
 Kaṇṭhasṭhāna (a city) 2945
 Kānti (a deity) 321, 1981
 Kāntimatī (Puṣkala's wife) 1689, 1934
 Kāntimatī (wife of Ambarīṣa) 2093
 Kāntimatī (a hall in Brahmā's mansion) 157
 Kāntipura 2696
 Kaṇva (a sage) 11, 264, 1679, 2629, 2837, 2868
 Kānyakubja 211, 436, 490, 2830, 2871, 3041f
 Kanyārddhi (a holy place) 1409
 Kanyāśrama (a holy place) 1485
 Kanyātīrtha 1434, 1439, 1485
 Kanyāvastha (a holy place) 1482
 Kapāla (a missile) 630
 Kāpāla (a follower of the Śākta sect) 2484
 Kāpāla (a holy place) 438
 Kapālabhṛt (=Śiva) 2815
 Kapālakuṇḍa 2843
 Kapālamocana (a holy place) 153, 211, 1435, 1468, 2832, 2842
 Kapāleśvara 2849
 Kapālin (a Rudra) 523, 2231
 Kapālin (an epithet of Śani) 2440
 Kapardin 221, 523, 1475, 2668
 Kapardiśvara (a holy place) 1472ff
 Kapi (Tāmasa Manu's son) 58
 Kapila (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 977
 Kapila (a sage) 189, 520, 521, 635, 978, 1673, 1999, 2590, 2594, 2731, 2793, 3102, 3104
 Kapila (a brāhmaṇa) 2426f
 Kapila (Kardama's son, knower of Yoga) 2700
 Kapila (Vasudeva's son) 121
 Kapila (Kadrū's son) 51
 Kapilā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Kapila (a holy place) 1371, 1442, 1466, 1477
 Kapilā (a river) 1051, 1238, 1364, 1380, 2108, 2766, 2838, 2944
 Kapiladvāra (a holy place) 2945

- Kāpila Sāṃkhya 3194
 Kapilāsaṅgama (a holy place) 972
 Kapilāśrama 3127
 Kapila Upapurāṇa 2144, 2266
 Kapilāśva (Kūvalāśva's son) 69
 Kapilatīrtha 1391, 1397, 1403, 1430
 Kapileśa 1217
 Kapilodaka 97
 Kapiñjala (Kūñjala's son) 1218, 1325, 1328
 Kapiñjalā (a river) 1238, 1364
 Kapisthala (a holy place) 1431
 Kapiśvara (a holy place) 2854
 Kapiśvarāditya 2854
 Kapitīrtha 2854
 Kapota (= Śiva) 2887
 Kapotikātīrtha 2886
 Kāra (a river) 99
 Karabhañjaka (a weapon) 1366
 Karālavikrānta (a deity) 394
 Karālī (a deity) 394
 Karālīnī (a deity) 394
 Karamba (a weaver) 1731, 1733, 1735
 Kāraṇa (a tribe) 1365
 Kāraṇḍaka (a holy place) 1440
 Karandhama (Hṛdika's son) 117
 Karatoyā (a river) 1364, 1483
 Karavīra (a holy place) 100, 2691, 3311
 Karavīra (a city) 1615, 2831
 Karbu (a sage) 1964
 Kardama (Prajāpati) 74, 2590, 2700, 3174
 Kāriṣa (a tribe) 1365
 Kāriṣa (a serpent) 782
 Kariṣṇī (a river) 1364
 Karkaṭa (a bhilla) 3125
 Karkoṭa/Karkoṭaka 50, 633, 2831
 Karma (= Fate) 929, 940
 Karmadā (a river) 1480
 Karmanāśinī (a river) 2398
 Karmasannyāsī 1550
 Karmayoga 1515f
 Kārmuka (a holy place) 2830
 Karṇa 863, 1493, 1575
 Karṇadvīpa (a country) 1359
 Karṇahrada (a holy place) 1463
 Karṇakuṇḍala (a holy place) 1400
 Karṇāṭaka (a country) 1365, 2974
 Karṇavedhana 359
 Karṇika (a holy place) 211
 Karṇikāra (Jaṭāyu's son) 50
 Karṇikāra (a grove) 1357
 Kārpāsa parvata 297
 Karpūrā (a celestial nymph) 2320
 Kartā (an epithet of the Sun) 878
 Kārtavarman (Hṛdika's son) 116
 Kārtavīrya (a king) 1140, 1491, 1575, 2585, 2763, 3217, 3220, 3386
 Kārtika 213f, 220, 233, 253, 283, 322, 325, 400, 445f, 457, 460, 477, 1050, 1229, 1376, 1402, 1426, 1464, 1547, 1571ff, 1594, 1624ff, 1627ff, 1631f, 2043, 2060, 2079, 2095, 2315, 2392, 2409, 2427f, 2470, 2534, 2536f, 2539, 2548, 2647, 2654f, 2662, 2665, 2682, 2697, 2701, 2706f, 2712f, 2717f, 2719ff, 2722f, 2726, 2733ff, 2736f, 2740, 2742f, 2747ff, 2756, 2805, 2831, 2834, 2836, 2859, 2877, 3321, 3444f, 3517
 Kārtika-vow 1626, 1629, 2653, 2661, 2663f, 2666, 2690f, 2694, 2708, 2712f, 2750
 Karttikeya(=Skanda=Guha=Kumāra) 556, 617, 621, 639, 680f, 783, 828, 832f, 847, 1286, 1435, 1815, 2349, 2357, 2362, 2379f, 2679, 2681, 2718, 2719ff, 2722, 2728, 2731, 2734f, 2737ff, 2741f, 2746, 2750f, 3159, 3296, 3361, 3381
 Kārtikeya (a holy place) 211, 1436
 Karuṇa (Dhanañjaya's son) 2164f
 Kāruṣa (Vaivasvata Manu's son) 65
 Kāruṣā 68, 120, 1364, 3054
 Kāśa (a country) 1364
 Kaśa 633
 Kāśī 158, 634, 1459, 1716, 1728, 1973, 2196, 2255, 2421, 2460, 2509, 2533, 2559, 2573, 2776, 2818, 2888, 2932, 2936, 2968, 2973, 3017, 3059, 3123ff, 3125, 3302, 3311, 3354
 Kāśī (a country) 1364
 Kāśīnātha (= Śiva) 2288
 Kāśīrāja 119, 2592
 Kāśīśvara (a holy place) 1430
 Kāśmīra (a region) 211, 438, 1365, 1425, 2227, 2832, 2927, 2957
 Kāśmīra (a city) 2926
 Kāṣṭhā 17, 187
 Kāstūrī 1982
 Kaśyapa (a sage) 122, 264, 372, 377, 384, 522, 524, 591, 918f, 923, 941, 987, 990, 992, 997, 1020, 1126, 1272, 1357, 1401, 1490, 1679, 2141, 2179, 2337, 2587, 2591, 2613, 2629, 2835f, 2837, 2839, 2874, 2888, 3174, 3195, 3210, 3215f, 3244
 Kaśyapa (a serpent) 221
 Kāśyapadvīpa (a country) 1359
 Kāśyapī (a river) 2570, 2836, 2888, 2892, 2899
 Kaiṭabha (a demon) 331, 2574
 Kātyāyana (a deity) 1943
 Kātyāyana (a sage) 1401, 3195
 Kātyāyanī 321, 2023, 2027
 Kaukkuṭaka (a country) 1365
 Kaulika 789

Kaumāra (a country) 1369
 Kaumāra Upapurāṇa 2267
 Kaumārī (a yoginī) 2389
 Kaumodaki (Viṣṇu's mace) 852, 1226, 2035
 Kaumudī festival 2740
 Kauṇḍinya (a sage) 1111, 1490, 2507, 2858
 Kauṇḍinya (a village) 2558
 Kaupītaka 2858
 Kaurava 1493, 2592, 2831, 2971
 Kaurma Purāṇa 2144, 2265f, 3007, 3194
 Kaurmya (a holy place) 3311
 Kausalyā 1653, 1799, 1924, 1932, 2270, 2299, 3222f, 3225ff, 3386
 Kauśāmbī 437
 Kauśika 204, 943, 1082, 2047, 2299, 3228
 Kauśika (a lake) 1482
 Kauśikī (a goddess) 612
 Kauśikī (a river) 100, 633, 1363, 1433, 1481, 1482, 2836
 Kauśitaka (a sage) 2846, 2885
 Kauṣmāṇḍa (a hymn) 356
 Kaustubha 1587, 1948, 1985, 2089f, 2137, 2234, 2338, 2582, 2626, 2634, 2715, 2732, 2761, 2820, 2987, 3093, 3158, 3178, 3209, 3224ff, 3257
 Kāverī (a river) 633, 754, 1051, 1238, 1363, 1390f, 1484, 1841, 2108, 2450, 2570, 2789, 2836, 2838
 Kāverī Karṇikā 2969
 Kavi (= Śukra) 845
 Kavyānala (a mane) 2085
 Kāvya-vārohaṇa (a holy place) 211
 Kāyaśodhana (a holy place) 1429
 Kāyasthas 2317
 Kāyatīrtha 2872
 Kedāra (holy place) 96, 211, 439, 1061, 1468, 1478, 2255, 2837, 2859, 2924
 Kedārāśrama 3127
 Kedāreśvara (= Śiva) 2288
 Kekasī (Bibhīṣaṇa's mother, Sumālin's daughter) 497, 3222
 Kekaya (a country) 1365
 Kerala (a country) 634, 1364, 2803, 2814, 3119
 Keralite 2813
 Keśa 2795
 Keśarandhra (a holy place) 2835
 Keśarikiṅkara (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Kesarin (a mountain) 1369
 Keśava 5, 20, 35, 37, 331, 333f, 337f, 340, 366, 378, 435, 440, 551, 687, 897, 916, 941, 985, 1024, 1133,

1181, 1274, 1444, 1481, 1966, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2030, 2032, 2081, 2093, 2114, 2168, 2255, 2411, 2496, 2526, 2545, 2560, 2570, 2576, 2579, 2599, 2612f, 2625, 2795, 2828, 2830, 3003, 3143, 3160, 3175, 3190, 3265, 3267, 3274, 3290f, 3298, 3311, 3315, 3332f, 3345, 3422, 3430, 3457, 3461f, 3474, 3525
 Keśava (a brāhmaṇa) 2960
 Keśimathana 331
 Keśin (a demon) 107, 2591
 Keśitīrtha 2022
 Ketakī grove 1943
 Ketu 893, 1591, 2333, 2378f
 Ketumāla (a forest) 300
 Ketumāla (an island) 1356
 Ketumāla (a mountain) 1357
 Ketumān (a demon) 224f
 Ketumanta 57, 2356
 Khaḍgabāhu (a king) 2963
 Khaḍgaroman (a demon) 2338, 2360, 2682
 Khaḍga/Khaḍgadhāra 2860, 2873f, 2877f
 Khaḍgeśvara 2860
 Khadira wood 77
 Khadiraka grove 1942
 Khaṇḍa (a form of Dharma) 2857
 Khaṇḍana grove 1943
 Khaṇḍasphuṭita (a rite) 405
 Khaṇḍatīrtha 2857
 Khāṇḍava forest 2329, 3010, 3016, 3038, 3043, 3059, 3087
 Khāṇḍika (a country) 1366
 Khara (a demon) 848, 1931, 2589, 3236, 3325
 Kharpa (a Yavana tribe) 661
 Khasa 2012
 Khasā (mother of many yakṣas and demons) 48, 51
 Khasṛma 50
 Khaṭaka (a holy place) 2836
 Khaṭvāṅga (a missile) 1823, 2575
 Khyāti 30, 31, 96
 Kikaṭa (a country) 100, 1728
 Kīṁdāna (a holy place) 1432
 Kīṁjalpa (a holy place) 1432
 Kīṁjalkavarṇāgraja (= Viṣṇu) 2613
 Kīṁkiṇī 1951
 Kinnara 51, 55, 105, 157, 196, 548, 568, 597, 599ff, 619, 640, 828, 835, 989, 994, 1068, 1187, 1211f, 1230, 1246, 1300, 1401, 1406, 1416, 1500, 2295, 2332, 2771, 2782, 3241, 3443
 Kirāta 1004, 1365, 1366, 3082
 Kīrti (a sage) 59
 Kīrti (a deity) 205

- Kīrti (Pīvarī's daughter and Sātvata's wife) 73
 Kīrtimatī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Kīrtimukha (Śiva's attendant) 2349, 2677
 Kīrtivardhana (Svārociṣa Manu's son) 58
 Kīrti vrata 282
 Kiṣkindhā 505, 1930f, 2284, 3062
 Kiśora (a demon) 546
 Kleśanāśana 331
 Knowledge 223, 515, 1120, 1340f
 Kocaraśa (a king) 3523
 Kokā (a river) 1364
 Kokāmukha (=Puṣkara) 97, 190, 1468, 1482
 Kokaṇa (a country) 1365
 Kola (a demon) 2882
 Kolāhala (a demon) 2883
 Kolāhala (Śiva's warrior) 2357, 2378f
 Koṅkaṇa (a region) 437
 Koraka (a country) 1365
 Kośala 634, 1063, 1070, 1364, 1867, 1926, 3014, 3018, 3029, 3063, 3066, 3070, 3074, 3077f, 3079f
 Koṭarākṣa (=Śani) 2440
 Koṭarākṣi 2884
 Koṭavī (=Durgā) 364, 888
 Koṭavī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Koṭavī (a holy place) 211
 Koṭibhāskara 871
 Koṭikeśvara (a holy place) 1395
 Koṭitīrtha 1393, 1428, 1442, 1487, 2831
 Krakaca (a hell) 2711
 Kramapadā (a deity) 1981
 Krapatha (a demon) 224
 Kratha (a demon) 224
 Krathana 45
 Kratu 29, 40, 221, 264, 522, 2085, 2610, 2629
 Kratusthala (a holy place) 438
 Krauñca (a demon) 847, 2379
 Krauñca (a missile) 630
 Krauñca (a mountain) 71, 635, 1750
 Krauñca (an array) 1748, 1750, 1753
 Krauñcadvīpa 71, 1367, 1370f
 Krauñcaniṣūdana (a holy place) 1483
 Kṛcchra (a vow) 168, 172, 1554, 1619f, 1772, 2061, 2425, 2427, 2721, 2806, 3128
 Kṛcchracāndrāyana 52
 Kriyā 30, 2381, 2644, 3159
 Kriyākhaṇḍa 1351
 Kriyāvatī (a deity) 1981
 Kṛkala (a vaiśya) 1056, 1058f, 1103, 1108, 1114, 1117, 1121, 1125
 Kṛkara (a vital air) 695
 Krodha (born from Mṛtyu) 30
 Krodhavardhana (a demon) 225
 Krodhavaśā (mother of demons) 48, 51
 Krodhavimokṣaṇa (a demon) 225
 Kṛpa 685
 Kṛśāśva 47, 522
 Kṛṣṇa 112, 117, 121, 123, 288, 332, 337, 366, 685, 799, 977, 982, 984f, 1020, 1022, 1025, 1030, 1159, 1176, 1181, 1211, 1227, 1233, 1330, 1334f, 1350, 1512, 1514, 1566, 1584f, 1594, 1606, 1624f, 1632, 1642f, 1943f, 1949f, 1954, 1958, 1963f, 1967f, 1978, 1977f, 1983f, 1987, 1989f, 1994f, 2000, 2005f, 2009, 2011f, 2015f, 2021, 2023f, 2027f, 2032, 2046, 2091, 2093, 2099, 2136f, 2139, 2318, 2386, 2405, 2431f, 2440, 2442f, 2460, 2463, 2468, 2483, 2547, 2572f, 2580, 2591f, 2605, 2611, 2613, 2636f, 2642, 2648f, 2656, 2703, 2705, 2724, 2730, 2741, 2749f, 2752, 2794, 2821, 2824, 2827, 2829, 2851, 2884, 2924, 2971f, 2976, 2978, 2981f, 2984, 3000, 3003, 3005, 3007, 3010, 3019, 3031, 3059, 3128, 3136, 3144, 3162, 3164, 3166, 3201, 3254, 3257f, 3259, 3261, 3263f, 3266, 3268, 3269f, 3275f, 3279f, 3281f, 3284f, 3292, 3294, 3297, 3300, 3304, 3310, 3332f, 3370, 3395, 3423, 3425f, 3431, 3440, 3443, 3458, 3471, 3478, 3485, 3515, 3525
 Kṛṣṇā (a river) 1364
 Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana 5, 264, 2593, 3534
 Kṛṣṇagaṅgā (a river) 1051, 2108, 3063
 Kṛṣṇagaurā (a kind of Tulasī) 2111
 Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī /Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī 1574, 1602f, 1606, 1608
 Kṛṣṇalā (a river) 1364
 Kṛṣṇa-Rādhāṣṭamī 1575
 Kṛṣṇaśarman (a brāhmaṇa) 1644
 Kṛṣṇaśiloccaya/Kṛṣṇaparvata 832
 Kṛṣṇatīrtha (a sacred place) 98
 Kṛṣṇavenā (a river) 99, 1485
 Kṛṣṇavenī/Kṛṣṇavenikā (a river) 633, 1363f, 1421, 2509, 2693, 2806, 2969
 Kṛṣṇa-vrata 285
 Kṛta (a sage) 264
 Kṛtaghna (a goblin) 2115
 Kṛtāmālā (a river) 1693
 Kṛtānta (an epithet of Śani) 2440
 Kṛtaśauca (a holy place) 211, 1428
 Kṛtavatī (a river) 2836
 Kṛtavraṇa (a sage) 181, 264, 2629
 Kṛtayuga 17, 18, 221, 247, 328, 368, 444, 471, 478, 507, 525, 778, 862, 894, 987, 1274, 1288, 1349, 1366, 1443, 1446, 1488, 1800, 2252, 2466,

- 2528, 2530, 2573, 2651, 2719, 2722, 2762, 2772, 2836, 2864, 2971, 3009, 3453, 3494
 Kṛttikā 347, 616, 2438, 2831, 2836
 Kṛttivāsa/Kṛttivāseśvara (a holy place) 1471, 1472
 Kṛtyā (a deity) 2611, 2882, 3301, 3309
 Krūra (a demon) 847
 Krūrakeśi (a river) 3063
 Kṣamā (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Kṣamā (a divine mother) 24
 Kṣamā (forbearance) 935, 952, 1122, 1516
 Kṣaṇa (Rohiṇi's son) 123
 Kṣānti 224
 Kṣaranaraka 1843
 Kṣatrabandhu (a king) 2625
 Kṣatriya 4, 26, 38, 74, 676, 760, 917, 961, 992, 1002, 1005, 1201, 1229, 1274, 1363, 1365, 1367, 1369, 1429, 1444, 1467, 1868, 1900, 1914, 2200, 2254, 2850, 2883, 3220, 3547
 Kṣemaṅkari (=Gaṅgā) 755, 2084
 Kṣemavardhana (Puṇḍarīka's son) 70
 Kṣetrapāla (a holy place) 1400
 Kṣiprā (a river) 2451, 2838
 Kṣīrodatanayā (=Lakṣmī) 3152
 Kṣitiśa (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Kṣubhitakṣayā (=Śivadūti) 394
 Kṣudhārta (=Śani) 2440
 Kubera 193, 306, 432, 483f, 505, 533, 549, 554, 564, 629, 441, 820, 828, 847, 848, 980, 1088, 1135, 1287, 1313, 1357, 1390, 1398, 1413, 1446, 1664f, 1691, 1707, 2321, 2333, 2516, 2534, 2644, 2655, 2781, 2817, 3201, 3242, 3246, 3495, 3534
 Kuberośinara 1363
 Kubjā (a river) 1238, 1245
 Kubja (a holy place) 100, 1463, 1485
 Kubjamāra (a holy place) 1468, 2830, 2831
 Kubjikā (a brāhmaṇa woman) 2765
 Kucirā (a river) 1364
 Kuḍmala 2800
 Kuhū 50
 Kukardama (a king) 2847
 Kukura (=Daśārha—a country) 116, 1364
 Kulabhadra (a brāhmaṇa) 3491
 Kulādhīpa (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Kulampuna (a holy place) 1433
 Kulaparvata 4158
 Kulasambhava (a demon) 224
 Kulatya (a tribe) 1365
 Kulika (a Nāga) 384
 Kulinda (a country) 1365
 Kumāra (=Skanda=Kārttikeya) 392, 617, 621, 781, 1402, 1575
 Kumāras 2979ff, 2982, 2987, 3007, 3006
 Kumārī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Kumārī (an epithet of Pārvatī) 2944
 Kumārī (a river) 635, 1364, 1369
 Kumati (Kusvala's wife) 2931
 Kumbha (a demon) 224, 846, 1794, 2356
 Kumbhaka 650, 652
 Kumbhakarna (a demon) 495, 498, 1794, 1830, 2268, 2292, 3240f
 Kumbha Śrāddha 2158
 Kumbhīpāka (a hell) 672, 1066, 1162, 1725f, 1836, 2174, 2551, 2709, 2711, 2809, 2948, 3531
 Kumbhodara (Śiva's attendant) 3034
 Kumuda (Sugrīva's follower) 493
 Kumuda (a doorkeeper in Viṣṇu) 3157
 Kumuda (a holy place) 212, 1944
 Kumuda (a mountain) 2832
 Kumuda grove 1942
 Kumudā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 322, 323ff, 366
 Kumudā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 210
 Kumudā (a river) 1238
 Kumudākṣa (a doorkeeper in Viṣṇu) 3157
 Kumudottara (a country) 1369
 Kumudvatī 1982
 Kundā (Śravaṇa's wife) 3124
 Kuṇḍala (a brāhmaṇa) 1126, 1129, 1131, 1137
 Kuṇḍala (a demon) 225
 Kuṇḍalapura 1847, 1851
 Kuṇḍalavīgraha (a holy place) 1424
 Kuṇḍaleśvara (a holy place) 1392
 Kuṇḍanagara (a city) 2609
 Kuṇḍavāpī (a holy place) 439
 Kuṇḍja (a holy place) 1434
 Kuṇḍjala (a parrot) 1217f, 1224, 1230, 1234, 1237, 1241f, 1248, 1266, 1268, 1274, 1276, 1280, 1282, 1299, 1306, 1316f, 1323, 1326, 1329f, 1336, 1338, 1341f
 Kuṇḍjara (Yadu's son) 1309
 Kuṇḍjara (a mountain) 634
 Kuṇḍkura (a country) 1365
 Kuntala (a tribe) 1365
 Kuntī (=Prthā=daughter of Sūra and wife of Pāṇḍu) 119, 864, 1384, 1490, 1493, 1505, 2045, 2111, 2532
 Kuntī (a country) 1364
 Kuraṇṭaka (Śravaṇa's brother) 3124
 Kūrma 46, 2560, 2574, 2612, 2627, 2732, 3166, 3315
 Kūrma (an outer wind of the body) 695
 Kūrmadeva 2422

- Kūrma Purāṇa 1562, 2317
 Kūrmārūpa (a demon) 1481
 Kūrmāvatāra 2585
 Kuru (a demon) 224
 Kuru 331, 334, 507, 525, 892, 1138, 1196, 1373, 1423, 1429, 1466, 1490, 1497, 1509, 2818
 Kuru (a family) 12, 215, 384, 506
 Kurūdbhava (a holy place) 2831
 Kurujāṅgala 95, 3124
 Kurukṣetra (a region) 1126
 Kurukṣetra (a holy place) 93, 98, 158, 205, 212, 444, 722, 1350, 1378, 1401, 1427f, 1434, 1436f, 1440, 1443, 1468, 1488f, 1500, 1508, 2316, 2406, 2448, 2450, 2504, 2514, 2533, 2550, 2573, 2620, 2719, 2725, 2762, 2771, 2838, 2926, 2935, 2973, 3063, 3305, 3354
 Kurupāñcāla (a country) 1364
 Kuruṭa (a country) 1365
 Kuruvarṇaka (a tribe) 1365
 Kuśa 78, 1893, 1899, 1903, 1906f, 1908ff, 1912, 1920, 1923, 3248
 Kuśa (a sage) 2629
 Kuśabindu (a tribe) 1365
 Kuśacīra/Kuśacīrī (a river) 1364
 Kuśadhvaṇa 1823, 1833, 1854, 1856
 Kuśadvīpa (a holy place) 212, 1367, 2832
 Kuśahasta (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Kuśaka (a tribe) 1365
 Kuśala (a country) 1371
 Kuśala (a brāhmaṇa) 3082
 Kuśanābha (Ila's son) 65
 Kuśasthālī (=Dvāravatī) 331
 Kuśasthālī (capital of Ānarta) 68, 2851
 Kuśaṭṭa (a country) 1365
 Kuśāvarta 2632
 Kuśeśvara 2888
 Kuśika (Śauri's son) 120
 Kuśīla (a country) 1364
 Kuśīvala (a brāhmaṇa) 2931
 Kuśmāṇḍa (a demon) 356, 2356f, 2359, 2362, 2681, 2739
 Kuśodaka (a holy place) 2832
 Kuśodakā (an epithet of Sāvitri) 212
 Kuśogra (a demon) 224
 Kusuma (an ascetic) 91
 Kusumamohini (Menā's friend) 608, 610
 Kusumeśvara (a holy place) 1399f
 Kutapa (a measure of time) 719
 Kutapaka kāla 415
 Kūṭasālmali (a hell) 2711
 Kutsapa (a country) 1364
 Kuṭṭa (a country) 1365
 Kutunḍa (a sage) 58
 Kuvalāśva (Bṛhadaśva's son) 68, also known as Dhundhumāra 69
 Kuvalayāpiḍa (an elephant) 3276
 Laguḍin (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Laiṅga Purāṇa 2144, 2265f
 Lajjā 30
 Lakṣmana 413, 422, 464, 488, 492, 495, 682, 800, 1648, 1655, 1656, 1677, 1690, 1791, 1792, 1794f, 1799, 1884ff, 1889f, 1923f, 1926ff, 1931f, 1934, 2271, 2282, 2289ff, 2489f, 2590, 3227, 3228ff, 3233f, 3236, 3239f, 3243, 3248, 3250f
 Lakṣmaṇā (Viṣṇu's wife) 122
 Lakṣmī 30, 31, 35, 36, 108, 194f, 197, 205, 209, 211, 217, 219, 281, 290, 295, 300, 328f, 332, 407, 428, 430, 441, 486, 528, 729, 795, 976f, 985, 1024, 1085, 1088, 1097, 1100, 1178, 1180, 1228, 1271, 1277, 1329, 1569, 1592, 1593ff, 1596ff, 1603, 1713, 1790, 1918, 1935, 1955, 1957, 1960, 2000, 2043, 2061, 2087, 2093, 2155f, 2162, 2273, 2293, 2307, 2318, 2328, 2330, 2341f, 2352, 2365, 2409f, 2422, 2424, 2427, 2482, 2543f, 2546, 2596, 2637, 2639, 2647, 2675, 2678, 2689, 2700, 2715, 2739, 2771, 2796f, 2818, 2830, 2906ff, 2924, 2932, 2941, 2943, 3015, 3080, 3093, 3099, 3108, 3134, 3136, 3141f, 3151f, 3159, 3167, 3171, 3177, 3179, 3183, 3206ff, 3232, 3245f, 3299, 3383, 3417, 3423, 3437, 3449ff, 3463, 3471, 3479, 3481, 3483, 3489, 3496, 3515, 3519, 3535, 3538, 3548
 Lakṣmīnidhi (Janaka's son) 1684, 1686, 1737, 1753, 1778f, 1782, 1787, 1818, 1934
 Lalitā/Lalitā Devī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 210, 211, 320ff, 323f, 365f, 2837
 Lalitā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950, 1990
 Lalitā (wife of Lalita, a gandharva) 2501
 Lalita/Lalitavana (a holy place) 1981
 Lamba (a demon) 531, 546
 Lambā 47, 438
 Lambana (a country) 1370
 Lambatunḍa (=Gaṇeśa) 814
 Lambodara (=Gaṇeśa) 814, 2362
 Lāṅgala tirtha 1396
 Laṅkā 112, 461, 468, 472, 494, 496f, 500, 505, 1647, 1657, 1793, 1830, 1854, 1931, 2150, 2289, 2291, 2489, 2589, 3237, 3239f

- Lauhitya (an ocean) 634
 Lauhityā (a river) 817
 Laumaharṣaṇa 2, 3008
 Lava 1869, 1893, 1895, 1896ff, 1900f, 1903ff, 1906ff, 1912, 1923
 Lavaṇa (a demon) 1853, 1863, 1867, 1893, 2382
 Lavaṇa (a sea) 3483
 Lavaṇācala 297
 Lāvanyavati (Puṣpavardhana's wife) 277
 Lavāṇaka (a holy place) 1430
 Lāvīdhikā (a river) 1483
 Lekhaka (an evil spirit) 397, 2077f
 Līlā (a deity) 3161, 3315
 Līlāvati (Hārīta's wife) 2902, 2905
 Līlāvati (a prostitute) 290
 Liṅga 438, 1387, 1470, 2730
 Liṅgā (a river) 1238
 Liṅgabhakṣa (a demon) 224
 Liṅgadhārīnī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 210
 Liṅga purāṇa 1562, 3194
 Liṅgasahasra (a sacred place) 99
 Lobha (=Sulobha) 1016
 Loha (Lohavana—a grove) 1942, 1944
 Lohadaṇḍa (a holy place) 100
 Lohaśa 2800
 Lohita 717
 Lohitāṅga (=Mars) 886
 Lohityā (a river) 1364
 Lokabhāvana (=Śaṅkara) 2236
 Lokacāraka (a hell) 2800
 Lokadvāra (a holy place) 3139
 Lokāloka (a mountain) 3120, 3340
 Lokamātā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Lokaprabodhaka (=the Sun) 2997
 Lokaprasādinī (=Gaṅgā) 288, 2084
 Lokārka (a holy place) 1478
 Lokasākṣin (=the Sun) 2997
 Lokasundarī (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Lokeśa 365
 Lokeśvara (Śiva's attendant) 2355
 Lokoddhāra (a holy place) 1430
 Lolā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Lomaharṣaṇa 2752, 2837, 3007
 Lomapāla (Vidarbha's son) 114
 Lomaśa (a sage) 414, 1420, 1788, 1791, 2496, 2522f, 2781, 2787f, 2816, 2838, 3539f
 Loṇāra (a tank in Viṣṇugayā) 2924
 Lopāmudrā (Agastya's wife) 1652, 1663, 1688, 1870
 Lumpaka (Māhiṣmata's son) 2476f
 Macakruka (a deity) 1439
 Mada (a demon) 225
 Madālasā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 32, 2968
 Madana (=Cupid) 579, 2356, 2359, 2590, 2593, 2639, 2676, 3294, 3299
 Madanā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Madanā (a celestial nymph) 2320
 Madanasundarī (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950, 1994
 Madanavāsini (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Madayanti (a goddess) 1981
 Mādhava 20, 147, 292f, 325, 339, 428, 644, 685, 915, 917, 975, 982, 1052, 1180f, 1214f, 1228, 1273, 1510, 1723, 1959, 2031f, 2047, 2076, 2079, 2086f, 2091, 2371, 2446, 2582, 2628, 2637, 2642, 2769, 2831, 2836, 2933, 3063, 3143, 3299, 3311, 3332, 3381, 3386ff, 3422, 3426, 3435, 3440, 3457
 Mādhava (Manu's son) 58
 Mādhava (a king) 3361f, 3366, 3370, 3373, 3375, 3377, 3382ff
 Mādhavi (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Mādhavi (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324ff
 Mādhavi forest 211
 Madhu (=Viṣṇu) 253, 757, 1012, 1294
 Madhu (Manu's son) 58
 Madhu (Devakṣatra's son) 114
 Madhu (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Madhu (a demon) 258, 296, 303, 486, 518, 520, 551, 809, 820, 824, 837, 839, 894, 1013, 1229, 2043, 2058, 2083, 2095, 2111, 2113, 2118, 2366, 2585, 2596, 2612, 2741, 2851, 2366, 2585, 2596, 2612, 2741, 2851, 3285, 3342, 3344, 3358, 3386
 Madhubhid (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 292
 Madhucchandās 181, 205
 Madhu-dhenu 295
 Madhumat (a sage) 2837
 Madhumatī (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950, 1995
 Madhumatta (a city) 479
 Madhuparka 1138, 1521, 3217, 3230, 3234
 Madhurapriya (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Madhurārka (a deity) 2851
 Madhurātīrtha 2851
 Madhusūdana 340ff, 552, 709, 840, 917, 982, 986, 1024, 1178, 1181, 1214, 1227, 1250, 1259, 1282, 1376, 1590, 1999, 2003, 2043, 2060, 2081, 2083, 2092f, 2101, 2466, 2522, 2532, 2542, 3163, 3211, 3260, 3263, 3268, 3275, 3291, 3387, 3425
 Madhuvana (a holy place) 1433, 1793, 1942, 3018, 3071, 3073, 3081f, 3087ff, 3099

- Madhvāranya (a holy place) 3014
 Madhyadeśa 68, 880, 1461
 Madhyakuṇḍa (a holy place) 232
 Madhyama Puṣkara 235, 411
 Madhyamā 2951
 Madhyameśa/Madhyameśvara (a holy place) 1471, 1476
 Madotkaṭa (a holy place) 2830
 Madra (a country) 3248
 Madrākṣa (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Mādreya (a country) 1364
 Mādri (Kroṣṭr's wife) 117
 Mādri (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 122
 Magadha (a country) 1242, 3035, 3040, 3099, 3302
 Māgadha 3, 1005ff, 2074, 2256
 Māgha 309, 313, 322, 325, 336, 366, 870f, 873, 877, 1050, 1229, 1397, 1502, 1528, 1543, 1792, 1794f, 2008, 2041, 2043, 2255, 2315, 2359, 2392, 2482, 2485, 2509, 2648, 2657f, 2664, 2666, 2697, 2705, 2724, 2752, 2755f, 2761ff, 2764, 2766, 2768, 2770, 2772, 2776, 2778ff, 2781, 2788ff, 2805, 2816f, 2874, 2885, 2063, 3109, 3114f, 3127, 3319, 3355, 3361, 3415ff
 Maghā (a nakṣatra) 80, 1675
 Maghvan 920
 Maha (Jñānaśruti's charioteer) 2924
 Maha (a world) 316, 362, 367, 2105, 2518, 3340
 Mahā (a grove) 1942
 Mahābāhu (a demon) 847
 Mahābāhupriya (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mahābalā (a deity) 394, 1468, 2089, 2705
 Mahābala (=Balarāma) 3259
 Mahābala (Rāma's minister) 484
 Mahābala (Diti's son) 628, 2356
 Mahābalabalāntaka (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mahābhārata 5, 2152, 2417, 2419, 2593, 2960
 Mahābhiṣa (a king) 1491
 Mahābhujā (=Kṛṣṇa) 2472
 Mahābodhin (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Mahābuddhi (Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mahācakra (a demon) 224
 Mahādaṇḍin (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Mahādbhutarasasthala 1944
 Mahādeva 31, 33, 34, 127, 156, 301, 326, 330, 429, 438, 500, 590, 637, 1117, 1280f, 1378, 1382, 1387, 1390, 1401, 1406, 1409, 1425, 1428, 1434, 1438, 1466f, 1469f, 1487, 1499, 1555, 2211, 2217, 2360, 2404, 2430, 2462, 2577, 2613, 2633, 2645, 2677, 2679, 2857, 2867, 2871ff, 2876, 2950, 2971, 2997, 3012, 3025f, 3126, 3135, 3190, 3200, 3224, 3269, 3289, 3324, 3447
 Mahādevi 578, 1423, 1426, 1435, 2084, 2357, 3152, 3172
 Mahādevi (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Mahādhvani (a demon) 224
 Mahāgauri (a river) 1364
 Mahāgrāma (a village) 2096
 Mahāhanu (Ānakadundubhi's son) 120
 Mahājaya (a particular day in Māgha) 872
 Mahājihva (a demon) 224
 Mahākāla (=Śiva) 149, 166, 606, 1400, 1835, 1908, 2356, 2359, 2924, 3246
 Mahākāla (Śiva's attendant) 1281, 2354f, 2362, 2378, 2867f
 Mahākāla (a holy place) 1377, 2789, 2831, 2838
 Mahākālamahī (a river) 633
 Mahākāleśvara 2845
 Mahākālī (a deity) 394, 3246
 Mahākālpa 506
 Mahākāśa (a country) 1369
 Mahākāya (a demon) 2290
 Mahākrauñca (a mountain) 1370
 Mahākūrma (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mahālakṣmī 1682, 2592, 2945, 2950, 3158, 3181f
 Mahālakṣmī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211, 685
 Mahālakṣmī 2000, 2014
 Mahālaya (a holy place) 211, 1489, 2831, 2859
 Mahāmārī (a deity) 394
 Mahāmāya (=Kṛṣṇa) 3473
 Mahāmāyā (a deity) 394, 2008, 2951, 3257, 3270
 Mahāmūrti (Bibhiṣana's wife) 1934
 Mahānadi 1369, 2836
 Mahānandā 244
 Mahānaraka (a hell) 2800
 Mahānidrā 3257
 Mahānila 50
 Mahāpadma (a holy place) 2831
 Mahāpadma (a serpent) 51, 384, 633
 Mahāpadmā (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Mahāpadmin (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Mahāpāpa 2712
 Mahāpārśva (Diti's son) 628, 2378
 Mahāpātaka 793, 867
 Mahāpathā (a river) 1364
 Mahāpatti (a place) 438
 Mahāpuṇyā (a Mother) 643
 Mahārāṣṭra 2922, 2960, 2974

Mahāratna (a holy place) 1239
 Mahāraurava (a hell) 28, 670, 672, 1542, 2800, 3531
 Mahārudra (= Śiva) 1823, 1911, 2288, 2317, 2582
 Mahārūpa (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Mahāśālā (a river) 98
 Mahāśaiva 3191
 Mahāsattva (= Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mahāsena (= Kārttikeya) 622, 786, 1487, 2735
 Mahāsena (a mountain) 635
 Mahāsura (a demon) 224
 Mahāsiddha (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Mahāśiva 2587
 Mahāśrama (a holy place) 1464
 Mahat 8, 14, 16, 1352, 1354, 2793, 3146, 3162, 3298
 Mahat (an epithet of Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mahātala (a nether world) 3340
 Mahātejas (= Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mahatejas (a Rudra) 523
 Mahatpati 433
 Mahaujasa 3139
 Mahauśadhi (a sacred place) 98
 Mahāvarāha 2580
 Mahāveṇā (a river) 98
 Mahāvīci (a hell) 2800
 Mahāvidyā 2212
 Mahāvipra (= the Sun) 878
 Mahāvīra (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Mahāvīra (a king) 1684
 Mahāviṣṇu 1989, 2581, 3165
 Mahāviśveśvara (a Rudra) 523
 Mahāyajña 438, 2545
 Mahāyaśas (an epithet of Brahmā) 522
 Mahendra (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Mahendra (a mountain) 555, 1350, 1363, 1793, 2329
 Mahendra (a holy place) 98
 Mahendrasukhadā (a river) 2570
 Mahendri (a yoginī) 2389
 Maheśa 142, 1388, 1836, 1976, 2191, 2229, 2314, 2347, 2886, 3003, 3329
 Maheśa Upapurāṇa 2266
 Maheśāna (= Śiva) 2186
 Maheśapada (a holy place) 1481
 Maheśi (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951
 Maheśvara 127, 130, 147, 202, 366, 373, 433, 685, 984, 1228, 1239, 1387f, 1390, 1392f, 1464, 1480, 1495, 1509, 2019f, 2191, 2254, 2389, 2576, 2636, 2725, 2810, 2831, 2843, 2858, 2871f, 2878, 2885, 2908, 2956, 3126, 3235ff, 3247, 3251f, 3279, 3283, 3301
 Maheśvara (a city) 211

Maheśvari (an epithet of Pārvati) 2010
 Maheśvari (a yoginī) 2389
 Maheśvari (a river) 1238, 1425
 Mahijit (king of Māhiṣmatī) 2522f
 Mahiratha (a king) 2119, 2128
 Mahiṣa (a demon) 560f, 2708
 Mahiṣaka (a country) 1365
 Māhiṣman (Samhata's son) 110
 Māhiṣmatī 111, 1245, 2522, 2530f, 2708
 Mahitā (a river) 1364
 Mahodārā (a deity) 394
 Mahodaya (a holy place) 438
 Mahodaya (Huṇḍa's city) 1311
 Mahoraga (one of the Viśvedavas) 523
 Mahotsava (= Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Maināka (a mountain, Himālaya's son) 71, 1358, 1371, 2328
 Mainda 493
 Maithilī (= Sitā) 1879
 Maitra (= Anurādhā nakṣatra) 873
 Maitrāvaruṇa 426, 477, 511
 Makara (a sage) 3174
 Makarākṣa (a demon) 1794
 Māla (a country) 1364
 Malada (a holy place) 1425
 Maladhara (a son of Śrisiddheśvara) 1596f
 Malandarā (a river) 100
 Malāpahā (a river) 2956
 Malara (a country) 1365
 Mālārka (a deity) 2860
 Mālatī (city of snakes) 634
 Mālatī 2689
 Mālava (a brāhmaṇa) 3110f
 Mālava / Mālavaka (a country) 634, 1241, 1365, 2966
 Mālāvatī (a river) 98, 1364
 Malaya (a mountain) 211, 555, 634, 1359, 1363, 1368f, 1489, 1978, 1985, 2830f, 2923, 2954, 3060
 Mālinī (Citrasena's daughter) 2486
 Mālinī (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Malla (a country) 634, 1365
 Mallajit (= Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mallaka (a country) 1369
 Malli/Mallikā (a goddess) 1982, 2155
 Mallika (a mountain) 1715
 Mallikākṣa (a holy place) 437
 Mallikārjuna (a deity) 2393
 Mallinātha (Śiva's epithet) 2925
 Mālyasenī (a country) 1365
 Mālyavān (a holy place) 438
 Mālyavat (Śiva's attendant) 2356, 2359, 2378
 Mālyavat (son of Puṣpadanta Gandharva) 2486
 Mālyavat (a demon) 2357, 2379

- Mālyavat (a mountain) 1356, 1359, 1361, 3237
 Mānada 325
 Mānasa (a country) 1369
 Mānasa (a lake) 75, 93, 102, 210, 299, 635, 720, 1051, 1234, 1245, 1960, 2353, 2788, 2821, 2830
 Mānasottara 2375
 Mānavāhaka (a holy place) 1239
 Mānava Upapurāṇa 2266
 Mānavī (a river) 1364
 Māṇḍa Upapurāṇa 2266
 Mandagā (a river) 1364
 Mandagati (= Śani) 2440
 Mandākinī (wife of Viśravas) 1664
 Mandākinī (a river) 1364, 1487, 1497, 2373f, 2838, 3214
 Maṇḍala (a disease) 671
 Maṇḍapa (a region) 2831
 Mandara 34, 210, 299, 304, 517, 530, 545, 635, 1384, 1588, 2119, 2194f, 2328f, 2331, 2335, 2351, 2356, 2512, 2536, 2539, 2746, 2830, 3179, 3263, 3340
 Mandāra 313, 365
 Mandārabhavana 314
 Mandāranātha 314
 Mandārasaptamī 307, 313f
 Mandāravāsini 327
 Mandavāhini (a river) 1364
 Māṇḍavī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Māṇḍavī (Bharata's wife) 1934, 3230
 Māṇḍavya (a sage) 727, 730, 2851ff
 Māṇḍavya (a holy place) 211
 Māṇdhātṛ (Yuvanāśva's son) 69, 1362, 1853, 2492, 2496, 2504
 Mandodari 50
 Manes 224, 688, 3331
 Manes (deities of Parvans) 76
 ,things dear to 75
 Maṅgalā 322, 364, 366
 Maṅgalā (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Maṅgalā (Śivaśarman's wife) 1097f
 Maṅgaleśvara (a holy place) 1245
 Maṅgaleśvari (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Maṇi (a mountain) 2757, 2762
 Maṇibhadra (Śiva's attendant) 2360, 2362, 2378
 Maṇibhadra (a yakṣa) 1012
 Maṇidhara (a sage) 123
 Manifestation of the cosmic form 2944
 Maṇigrivā (a goddess) 1981
 Maṇijalā (a river) 1369
 Maṇikāñcana (a country) 1369
 Maṇikarni/Maṇikarnikā/Maṇikarnya (a holy place) 1477, 1716, 2102, 2403, 3063
 Maṇikeśa (a king) 2926
 Maṇikuṇḍa (a holy place) 2950
 Maṇikūṭa (a mountain) 2758
 Maṇikūṭa (a river) 2761
 Māṇikyeśvara (an epithet of Śiva) 2926
 Maṇiparvata 3292
 Man-lion 3282
 Maṇimālikā (a goddess) 1982
 Maṇimanta (a holy place) 1425
 Maṇimaya mountain 1358
 Maṇināga (a holy place) 1480
 Mānini 244
 Maṇiprabhā (a goddess) 1982
 Maṇiṣiṇī (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Maṇiśvara (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Maṇivālaka (a country) 1365
 Maṇjughoṣā (a celestial nymph) 2343, 2497f, 2500
 Maṇjulā (a river) 1238
 Maṇjuma (a holy place) 2850
 Maṅkaṇaka (a brāhmaṇa) 228
 Maṅki (Kaupitaka's son) 2855f
 Maṅki (a holy place) 2855f
 Manmatha (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 292
 Manmatha (an epithet of Brahmā) 52
 Manmatha (=Cupid) 579, 2593, 2639
 Manmatha (a holy place) 2832
 Manmatha (a demon) 561
 Manmathā (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Manmathāhvā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Manobhadra (a king) 3347f, 3349
 Manodurgā (a deity) 394
 Manohara (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Manojava (a holy place) 1432
 Manojavā (Vāyu's wife) 205
 Manojayā (a deity) 394
 Manomanī (a deity) 2644
 Manomaya yajña 3262
 Manonuga (a country) 1371
 Manorathā Ekādaśī 1227, 2101
 Manorathā (a river) 1238
 Manorathā (a holy place) 1239
 Manovāka (a sage) 181
 Mantra 3144
 Mantracintāmaṇi (a pair of prayers addressed to Kṛṣṇa) 2011
 Mantravrata 285
 Manu 8, 9, 10, 18, 29, 41, 51, 58, 146, 186, 254, 331, 427, 470, 478f, 629, 987, 1010, 1050, 1063, 1066f, 1070, 1072f, 1080, 1100, 1358, 1374, 1482, 1521, 1525, 1553, 1672, 1702f, 2267, 2448, 2510, 2553, 2588, 2647, 2703, 2747, 3085, 3165, 3190, 3410, 3414, 3416, 3423, 3431f, 3449, 3503
 Mānuṣa (a holy place) 1431

- Manu, Sāvarṇi 59
 Manvantara 7, 688, 871, 1001
 Mārgadāyikā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Mārgaśirṣa 281, 310, 320, 322, 327, 349, 358, 365, 877, 1464, 1594, 1792, 2422, 2471, 2474, 2559, 2594, 2725, 3002, 3450
 Mārīca 50, 71, 1931, 2213, 2279f, 2589, 2610, 3229, 3237, 3325, 3386
 Marīca Upapurāṇa 2266
 Marici (a sage) 29, 30, 193, 221, 223, 289, 522, 591, 2085, 2594, 3127, 3174, 3216
 Marīṣa (a country) 1365
 Mārkaṇḍa (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Mārkaṇḍeśa 1217
 Mārkaṇḍa/Mārkaṇḍeya 264, 407, 408, 427, 512ff, 1132f, 1397, 1400f, 1411, 1490, 1492f, 1504, 1506, 1509, 2516, 2629, 3194f, 3244, 3467, 3483
 Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa 1562, 2144, 2266
 Mars 886f, 890f
 Mārtaṇḍa (=the Sun) 308, 1631, 2883
 Mārtaṇḍa Purāṇa 2144
 Maru (a country) 3055, 3104
 Marujāṅgala (a country) 2566
 Maruka (a herb) 2640
 Marut 41, 51, 56, 105, 190, 224, 420, 524, 564, 623, 629, 640, 651, 998, 1212, 1376, 1382, 1433, 1849, 2331, 2390, 2493, 2592, 2771, 3160, 3172, 3209, 3293
 Māruta (a deity) 2155, 2331
 Māruti 1911, 3251
 Marutta (a king) 1671, 1933, 2701
 Marutvatī 47, 523f
 Marutvats (Marutvatī's sons) 523
 Maryādā mountain (a holy place) 419
 Maśaka (a country) 1369
 Māseśvara (a holy place) 1397
 Masiknī (a river) 1364
 Mātā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Mātalī 532, 667, 831, 835, 1137, 1140, 1144, 1159, 1167, 1172, 1174ff, 1184, 1207, 1319, 1795, 2330, 2335, 3240
 Mataṅga (a holy place) 1484
 Mataṅga (a sage) 3237
 Mathana (a missile) 630
 Māthura/Māthuraka (a region) 1089, 1094f, 1239, 1942
 Mathurā 211, 504, 1446, 1608, 1973f, 1989, 1991, 2014, 2724, 2925, 3040, 3063, 3255, 3258, 3260, 3271, 3273, 3279, 3281, 3283, 3303, 3311
 Mati 329
 Mati (a divine mother) 223
 Mati (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 233
 Mati (=intellect) 629
 Matibhū (a sage) 2629
 Mātṛ (a divine mother) 212f, 606
 Mātṛ (a deity) 212, 2888
 Mātṛgraha (a planet) 2807
 Mātṛgrha (a sacred place) 100
 Mātṛkā (a holy place) 807, 2832
 Mātṛkāsthāna (a holy place) 438
 Matrmaṇḍala (a holy place) 2847
 Matrmandā (a Mother) 643
 Mātṛtīrtha (a holy place) 1430, 2847
 Matsya (a country) 1364
 Matsya (an incarnation of Viṣṇu) 977, 1181, 1996, 2000, 2422, 2560, 2573, 2585, 2612, 2627, 2732, 3160, 3166, 3194, 3315
 Matsyadeva (Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Matsyanadī 99
 Matsya Purāṇa 1162, 1562, 2144, 2266, 2317, 3007
 Matsyodari (a river) 1471
 Mattakarna (a holy place) 1427
 Maudgalya (a sage) 3244
 Maulistāna (a holy place) 2901, 2905
 Maya 50, 316, 529, 536, 543f, 546, 552, 820, 1159, 2324, 2333, 2739, 3174, 3290, 3455
 Māyā (a holy place) 1239
 Māyā 30, 357, 524, 640, 746, 808, 888, 1326, 1334, 1961, 1993, 2019, 2409, 2676, 2686, 2688, 2796, 2802, 2810f, 2822, 2917, 2976, 2986, 3007, 3012f, 3034, 3056, 3061, 3081, 3094, 3114, 3154, 3163, 3185, 3194, 3200, 3258, 3326, 3343, 3358, 3435, 3463, 3466, 3475
 Māyā (a river) 2831
 Māyāmoha 136ff
 Māyāpura/Māyāpurī (a holy place) 96, 438, 2651, 2831
 Māyāsaptamī (a vow) 873
 Māyāvati (Revatī in a former birth) 1288
 Mayūra (a missile) 1684
 Medhā 58, 328
 Medhā (Dakṣa's daughter) 30, 194
 Medhā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Medhā (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 233
 Medhā (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Medhātithi (a sage) 58, 181, 264, 2629, 2982
 Medhāvana (a holy place) 1487
 Medhāvin (a sage, Cyavana's son) 2497f
 Medinī (=Earth) 486, 1013, 2389
 Medura (a city) 859
 Megha 57, 561
 Megha (a mountain) 635

- Megha (a missile) 1684
 Meghanāda (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Meghanāda (=Indrajit) 499
 Meghanāda (a holy place) 1245, 1391
 Meghaṅkara (a city) 2943f
 Meghaṅkara (a holy place) 2968
 Megharāva (a holy place) 1391
 Meghasakha (a mountain) 635
 Meghavāsas (Diti's son) 628
 Mekalā (Vipulā's attendant) 1298
 Mekhalā (a holy place) 2944
 Mekhalin (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Melaka (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Menā 31, 46, 571ff, 574f, 578, 2771
 Menā (a river) 1364
 Menakā/Menikā (a celestial nymph) 904f, 1113, 1202f, 1322, 1759, 2385, 2711
 Mendicant 743
 Meritorious acts 2435
 Meru 61, 64, 68, 157, 260, 297ff, 372, 496, 517, 528, 533, 548, 565, 635, 830, 869, 990, 997, 1013, 1021, 1068, 1077, 1212, 1246, 1333, 1356, 1359, 1368f, 1373, 1426, 1466, 1779, 1841, 2119, 2325, 2329, 2331, 2351, 2382, 2430, 2450, 2507, 2512, 2539, 2572, 2594, 2654, 2693, 2743, 2746, 2816, 2968, 3058, 3198, 3214, 3263, 3340, 3354, 3392, 3418, 3430, 3451
 Metaphysical knowledge 1525, 1532
 Metre 25
 Mīdhuṣa (Aikṣvāki's son) 119
 Milky Ocean /Milky Sea 35, 36, 989, 2327, 2391, 2442, 2582, 2771, 2906, 2916, 2932, 2961, 2969, 3172, 3178, 3180, 3182, 3185, 3256, 3259, 3330
 Mīmāṃsā 2142, 2144, 3262
 Mīna (a sign of zodiac) 869
 Mind 15, 1353
 Mind-born sons 29
 Miśraka (a holy place) 1432
 Miśraka Naimiṣa (a forest) 1988
 Miśrakeśī (a celestial nymph) 628
 Missiles 1684
 Mithilā 2276, 3229f
 Mithuna (a sign of the zodiac) 869
 Miti (a sage) 58
 Mitra 317f, 523f, 877f, 1921, 2330
 Mitra (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1952
 Mitradrohaka (a righteous man) 711
 Mitrapada (a holy place) 2837
 Mitrasaha (Sudāsa's son) 2843
 Mitrāvaruṇa 317, 3328
 Mitravat (a goatherd) 2911
 Mitravindā (Vindānuvinda's daughter and Kṛṣṇa's wife) 3287, 3290
 Mleccha 174, 518, 661, 733, 855ff, 977, 1004, 1044, 1364f, 1371, 1387, 3386, 3450, 3547
 Modotkaṭā (an epithet of Sāvitṛi) 210
 Moha (delusion) 629, 935
 Mohada (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mohaka (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Mohaka (Suratha's son) 1850, 1856
 Mohana (=Kṛṣṇa) 1983f
 Mohana (a missile) 630
 Mohanā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Mohana 1934
 Mohanāśana (an epithet of Brahmā) 435
 Mohanāśana (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Mohanāstra 1834
 Mohinī 985, 1957, 2506
 Mohinī (a prostitute in Māhiṣmatī) 3117ff
 Mohinī Ekādaśī 2507
 Mohinī vow 2508
 Mohotpalā (an epithet of Sāvitṛi) 211
 Mokṣa 234, 1691, 1971, 2143, 3155f
 Mokṣada (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 1181
 Mokṣadā Ekādaśī 2472, 2474
 Mokṣavrata 285
 Monkeys 1683
 Moon 193, 295, 350, 451, 457, 483, 533, 549, 555, 560, 567, 600, 624, 629, 632, 716, 848, 885f, 891, 893, 1216, 1328, 1356f, 1398, 1576, 1591, 1983, 1995, 2227, 2328, 2333, 2407f, 2417, 2432, 2434, 2439, 2442, 2544, 2584, 2594, 2604, 2643, 2646, 2768, 2779, 2881, 2903, 2922, 3096, 3153, 3157, 3182, 3246, 3379, 3409, 3441, 3517
 Mother, importance of 1517
 Mrātakeśvarī 1468
 Mṛḍakāya (a demon) 224
 Mṛḍapriya (a demon) 224
 Mṛḍu (Akrūra's son) 119
 Mṛga (a country) 1369, 2831
 Mṛga (a nakṣatra) 873
 Mṛgadhūma (a holy place) 1433
 Mṛgaketana (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Mṛgavyādha 523
 Mṛgiyantra 2800
 Mṛgodbhavā (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Mṛkaṇḍa (a sage) 1272, 3191
 Mṛkaṇḍu (a sage) 408, 2815, 3467
 Mṛtasañjivani (a vidyā) 2326, 2872
 Mṛtyu 30, 503, 849, 1002, 1017ff, 1026, 1030f, 1034, 1042, 2210, 2333, 2561, 2737
 Mṛtyuñjaya hymn 2165, 2181
 Muci (a demon) 140, 820, 831
 Mucukunda (Māndhātṛ's son) 69, 1363, 2534, 2537, 2592

Mucukunda (a sage) 3282
 Mudgala (Bhīṣmaka's son) 2558
 Mudgala (Cola's preceptor) 2697, 2699
 Mudrā 695, 876, 1976, 2645, 3131
 Muhūrta 17, 47
 Mūka (a cāṇḍāla) 700, 709, 757
 Mukhadarśana (a holy place) 227
 Mukhamaṇḍi 2807
 Mukhamaṇḍitā (a Mother) 643
 Mukhavāsa 285
 Mukhya sarga 22
 Mukta (Manu's son) 58
 Muktakarman 2911
 Mukti 2977
 Muktidā (a deity) 2644
 Muktidhāra 2247f
 Mukunda 1181, 1228, 2031, 2080, 2093, 2137, 3282, 3387
 Mukunda (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Mukunda (a brāhmaṇa) 3065ff, 3068ff, 3075
 Mukuṭa 2831
 Mūla (a nakṣatra) 1675
 Mūla Prakṛti 2688
 Mūlasthāna (=the Sun) 878
 Muṇḍa 45, 500, 2375
 Muni (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Muni (mother of many sages and celestial nymphs) 51
 Muni (Manu's son) 58
 Muni (mother of gandharvas) 524
 Munideśa (a country) 1371
 Munindra (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Muniśarman (a sage) 1075f, 2080f
 Muñjāvata (a holy place) 1428
 Mura (a demon) 297, 515, 894, 1178, 2288, 2467f, 2592, 2612, 2906, 3451, 3458, 3474, 3477, 3536
 Murāri 315, 351, 986, 1180, 1228, 2083, 3006, 3489
 Musala (a country) 1365
 Mūṣika (a country) 1365
 Muṣṭika (a demon) 2591, 3277
 Muṣṭikāri (=Kṛṣṇa) 3472
 Nabha (Svārociṣa Manu's son) 58
 Nābhāga (Bhagīratha's son) 69
 Nābhāga (Vaivaṣvata Manu's son) 65
 Nābhi 9
 Nabhas (Nala's son) 70
 Nabhāsyā (Svārociṣa's son) 58
 Nābhiketu (a sage) 2837
 Nācitā (a river) 1363
 Nādi 1333
 Nadi-trirātra vow 2569, 2571
 Nāga 21, 34, 40, 384, 989, 1011, 1398, 1409, 1425, 1442
 Nāga (a city) 1325, 2067

Nāgadanta (a holy place) 2969
 Nāgakuṇḍa/Nāgatīrtha 98, 384, 387
 Nāganātha (a deity) 2969
 Nāgapura (a city) 2501
 Nāgarāja (=Śeṣa) 799
 Nāgavistāraviṣṭambha (a grove) 1943
 Nāgeśvara (a holy place) 1398
 Nāgnajitī (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 122
 Nāgnajitī (a lady dear to Vāsudeva) 1952, 3290
 Nagnaka (a Yavana) 660
 Nāgodbheda (a holy place) 1426
 Nāhalaka 1004
 Nāharī (a river) 1238
 Nahuṣa 51, 108, 210, 218, 988, 1137f, 1140, 1182ff, 1185, 1187, 1210, 1212, 1287, 1292, 1300, 1303ff, 1308, 1309f, 1312, 1315ff, 1317f, 1319ff, 1322ff, 1326, 1363, 2434, 2463
 Naimiṣa/Naimiṣāranya 97, 101, 158, 205, 210, 438, 444, 1434, 1465, 1468, 1506, 1508, 1988, 2406, 2461, 2550, 2620, 2818, 2835f, 2837, 3007, 3014, 3063, 3221, 3311
 Naimittika creation 10
 Naimittika Śrāddha 76
 Nairta (a country) 1365
 Nairṛta (a god) 847
 Nirṛti 3534
 Naivedya 786
 Nakṣatra (a brāhmaṇa) 656
 Nakula 1684, 2511, 2890, 3305
 Nala (Niṣadha's son, Virasena's son) 685, 1263
 Nala (a monkey) 490, 1683, 3243, 3251
 Nalakūbara (a king) 1000
 Nalaratna (a warrior) 1750
 Nalva (a measure of distance) 529
 Nāmaśarman (Vidyādhara's son) 1338f
 Namuci (a demon) 224, 378, 388, 820, 827, 831, 835, 2333, 3190
 Nanda 200, 1605, 1944, 1947, 1955f, 1958, 1970, 1984, 1992, 2089, 2140, 3001, 3257, 3259, 3266, 3268, 3270, 3286
 Nanda (a vaiśya) 2074
 Nandā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211, 403
 Nandā (a cow) 237, 238ff, 2562
 Nandā 220, 228, 416, 2547, 2837
 Nandā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 322, 324
 Nandagokula 3263
 Nandagovraja (Nanda Vraja) 3268, 3304
 Nandahrada (a holy place) 2838
 Nandaka (Viṣṇu's sword) 527, 630, 839, 2005, 2337, 2583

- Nandakin (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Nandanandanakhaṇḍa (a grove) 1943
 Nandana/Nandanavana 994, 995, 1019, 1280ff, 1286, 1297, 1311, 1326f, 1587, 1694f, 1707, 1943f, 2329, 3176
 Nāndavya 1111
 Nandi (Son of Mīdhuṣa and Bhojā) 119
 Nandi 420, 888f, 1113, 1281, 1395, 1400, 1405, 1666, 1823, 1826, 2277, 2321, 2348, 2354ff, 2358f, 2361f, 2363, 2382, 2384, 2390, 2592, 2676, 2679, 2843, 2865, 2867, 2937, 3329
 Nandigrāma 1646, 3243
 Nandikeśvara 2378, 2924
 Nandikuṇḍa (a holy place) 2842
 Nandimukha Śrāddha 715, 816
 Nandinī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Nandinī (an epithet of Gaṅgā) 288, 2084
 Nandinī (a cow) 2562, 3032, 3035
 Nandinī (a lake) 1482, 1995
 Nandipuri 436
 Nandiśvara 1943f
 Nanditirtha (a holy place) 1395, 2842, 2844
 Nara 143f, 146, 317, 1358, 1987, 2613, 3018, 3148, 3170
 Nara-Nārāyaṇa 2318, 3220
 Nārā (water) 2255, 2407, 2527, 3147
 Nārada (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Nārada 38, 41, 46, 59, 123, 193, 264, 289, 337, 457, 463, 574, 577ff, 644, 650, 669, 672, 683, 732, 810, 820f, 890, 1238, 1269, 1272, 1302f, 1322, 1330f, 1334f, 1352, 1357, 1373, 1378, 1382ff, 1391, 1394, 1400f, 1412, 1419, 1422, 1432, 1491, 1574, 1583f, 1639, 1673, 1718, 1955f, 1987f, 1991, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2227, 2029, 2042, 2048, 2062, 2070, 2085, 2091, 2136, 2144, 2155, 2175f, 2177, 2179, 2183, 2276, 2288, 2299, 2314, 2316, 2318, 2320, 2352, 2361, 2392, 2398, 2409, 2421, 2483, 2520, 2527, 2530, 2538, 2549, 2564, 2572, 2574ff, 2577, 2594, 2603, 2619, 2621, 2625, 2629, 2637, 2648f, 2654, 2660, 2667, 2684, 2709, 2760, 2763, 2972, 2974, 2976, 2978f, 2983, 2987f, 2994ff, 2999f, 2003, 3005f, 3008, 3010f, 3051, 3053, 3065, 3067, 3075f, 3078, 3083, 3091, 3095, 3097, 3101, 3106, 3113, 3115, 3124, 3127, 3129, 3134, 3268, 3300, 3382, 3428, 3517
 Nārada-tīrth 1398
 Nāradiya Purāṇa 1562, 2266, 3194f
 Nāradiya Upapurāṇa 2266
 Narahari 2968
 Naraka (a demon) 225, 297, 628, 894, 2583, 2592, 2737
 Narakāntaka (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Naraka Caturdaśī 2663
 Naraka (Vipracitti's son) 50
 Naraka (Earth's son) 3290
 Naraka (a holy place) 1403
 Naramedha (a sacrifice) 1598, 1600
 Narāntaka (a demon) 847
 Narasiṃha (=Viṣṇu) 97, 124f, 623, 626, 628ff, 636, 974, 1181, 1354, 2164, 2560, 2612f, 2615, 2644, 3166, 3198, 3332
 Narasiṃha (a king) 2960
 Narasiṃha (a sacred place) 98
 Narasiṃha (a mountain) 3143
 Narasiṃhadeva 2422
 Narasiṃha Upapurāṇa 2266
 Nārasiṃhī (a Mother) 642, 2951
 Nārāyaṇa 5, 31, 70, 97, 104, 108, 142, 144f, 150ff, 194, 219, 222, 287, 332, 339, 342, 371, 433, 435, 438, 506, 509, 514, 520, 521, 525, 551, 591, 636, 648, 662, 665, 837, 890, 971, 981f, 983f, 989, 1091, 1177, 1181, 1213, 1227, 1357, 1370, 1438, 1456, 1481, 1556, 1773, 1955, 1959, 1987, 1998f, 2000, 2002, 2018, 2030, 2037, 2040, 2043, 2045, 2061, 2063, 2077, 2080, 2084, 2090, 2101, 2108, 2154f, 2156f, 2255, 2287, 2319, 2410, 2490, 2550, 2572f, 2580, 2586, 2618, 2625, 2732, 2768, 2802, 2831f, 2850, 2929, 3011, 3015, 3018, 3063, 3078, 3130, 3143, 3145, 3147f, 3152f, 3161f, 3164, 3170, 3200, 3203, 3210, 3232, 3274, 3299, 3317, 3332, 3343, 3377, 3385, 3387, 3395, 3407, 3419, 3422, 3426, 3429, 3436, 3457, 3471, 3520, 3525, 3544
 Nārāyaṇa (a missile) 1785
 Nārāyaṇāstra 630
 Nārāyaṇī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Nārāyaṇī Māyā 3256
 Nari (Bahuputra's son) 116
 Nariṣyanta (Vaivasvata Manu's son) 65
 Narmadā (Dussaha's wife) 69
 Narmadā (a river) 75, 111, 137, 633, 984, 1217, 1235, 1245, 1363, 1378, 1380ff, 1384, 1391ff, 1394f, 1397, 1399, 1407f, 1411f, 1421f, 1468, 1484, 1575, 2080, 2110, 2390, 2620, 2708, 2766, 2788, 2790, 2831, 2924, 3062
 Narmadākāra (a holy place) 2838

Narmadātirtha 1412
 Narmadeśvara (a holy place) 1393, 1397, 1408
 Narottama (a brāhmaṇa) 698, 723
 Nāsatiya 1521
 Naśmī (an imp) 796
 Nātha (=Śrīkṛṣṇa) 2986
 Navamallikā 1982
 Navamī 1607
 Navanābha (a deity) 445
 Navaratha (Bhīmaratha's son) 114
 Navaśirṣa (a demon) 2380
 Naya 30
 Nemi 3139
 Nemika (Bhāja's son) 115
 Nidhi (an epithet of Sāvitṛi) 212
 Nidhi (Kubera's treasure) 1135
 Nigama 30
 Nigamabodhaka 3014, 3020, 3040, 3043, 3045, 3047
 Nighna (Anaranya's son) 70
 Nighna (Anamitra's son) 117
 Nighna (a demon) 847
 Nihprabha (a demon) 224
 Nikapṛṣṭha (a country) 1364
 Nikṛti 30
 Nikumbha (Haryaśva's son) 69
 Nikumbha (one of the Viśvedevas) 523
 Nikumbha (a monkey) 1794
 Nila (=Kṛṣṇa) 332
 Nila (=Yama) 2085, 2737
 Nila (Yadu's son) 110
 Nila (a monkey) 493, 1683, 1794, 2450, 2561, 2632, 3243, 3251
 Nilā (a goddess) 3151f, 3158, 3164
 Nilā (a river) 1364
 Nilagiri/Nilaparvata 100, 101, 388f, 390, 517, 1359, 1361, 1713, 1716f, 1719, 1723, 1729, 1731, 1736
 Nilagrīva (an epithet of Śiva) 500, 502, 1666, 2344
 Nilakaṇṭha (an epithet of Śiva) 407, 2815
 Nilakaṇṭha (a holy place) 2789, 2838, 2898
 Nīlāñjanacaya (a mountain peak) 400
 Nīlaratna 1684, 1757, 1814, 1854, 1934
 Nīlaśikhaṇḍa (an epithet of Śiva) 500
 Nīlavrata 280
 Nīlakaṇṭha Hara 325
 Nilika 2002
 Nimeṣa 17
 Nimi (Ikṣvāku's son) 68
 Nimi (a demon) 561f
 Nimiṣa (a holy place) 437, 1239
 Nimurta (Śoṇāśva's son) 116
 Nirajeśvara (a holy place) 1393

Nirañjana (=Viṣṇu) 2858
 Nirhāda (a demon) 2323
 Nirjarāntaka (a demon) 843
 Nirmalā 2741
 Nirmāmsamoha (=Śani) 2440
 Nirmoha (son of Śakuni, a sage) 1461
 Nirmoha (Manu's son) 58
 Nirṛti (Lord of Rākṣasas) 41
 Nirṛti (a Rudra) 221, 447, 523, 2321
 Nirudara (a demon) 224
 Nirupādhi 3149
 Nirutsuka (Manu's son) 58
 Nirvāṇa 3156
 Niśā (a goddess) 571, 612, 635
 Niśāda (a king) 523
 Niśāda 1004, 1044, 1365, 3243
 Niśadha (Atithi's son) 70
 Niśadha (a country) 1365
 Niśadha (a city) 1446
 Niśadha (a mountain) 517, 1356, 1359, 1361, 2450
 Niṣka 262
 Niṣkūṭa (a country) 1365
 Niśśreyas 3156
 Nistriṃśa (=Śani) 2440
 Niśumbha (a demon) 2333, 2343, 2355f, 2378, 2382, 2674, 2680, 2682, 2687
 Nīti 224
 Nitya Śrāddha 76, 2158
 Nityavṛndākānana 1944
 Nityayācaka (a ghost) 2077
 Nityodaya (a Śūdra) 3525
 Nivārā 1363
 Nivātakavaca 50
 Nivṛtti (Sṛṣṭa's son) 114
 Niyama 951
 Nṛga (a king) 1363, 2434
 Nṛhari 3013, 3476, 3489
 Nṛsinha 368, 635, 853, 977, 982, 989, 1024, 1730, 1999, 2081, 2144, 2164, 2573, 2580, 2586, 2613f, 2676, 2731, 2902, 2904ff, 3011, 3166, 3204, 3206, 3299, 3472
 Nṛtyapriyā 327
 Nyagrodha (Ugrasena's son) 116
 Nyagrodha tree 765
 Nyāsa 1976, 1984, 2088, 3131
 Nyāya 5, 2142
 Ocean of Milk 2339
 Oceans, seven 9
 Ocean's Son 2339
 Odour 223
 Om 217, 515, 635, 652, 814, 1269, 1350, 1475, 2144
 Omkāra 224, 503, 565, 1269, 1486, 1526, 1553, 2196, 2414, 2924, 3275

- Omkāravaktrā (a deity) 571
 Omkāratirtha 1245
 Organs of sense 15

 Padakrama 1300
 Pādamātraga 523
 Padma (a Nāga) 384
 Padma (Kadrū's son) 50
 Padma 3160
 Padmā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950
 Padmā (a divine power) 3172
 Padmabodhana (=Brahmā) 438
 Padmādhyākṣa (=Brahmā) 439
 Padmā Ekādaśī 2526f, 2529
 Padmaga (a tribe) 1366
 Padmagandha 3399, 3401
 Padmagarbha (=Brahmā) 502
 Padmagrha (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Padmahasta 313, 878
 Padmahastā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Padmajanman (Brahmā) 435f
 Padmaketana (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Padmākṣī (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Padmālayā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152, 3170
 Padmamukha 52
 Padmāṅka 503
 Padmanābha (=Viṣṇu) 292, 520, 534, 551, 976, 1228, 1438, 2002, 2080, 2447, 2454, 2495, 2532, 2563, 2582, 2612, 2627, 3172, 3472
 Padmanābha (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Padmanibha (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
 Padmanidhi 518
 Padmapāṇi 437, 3472
 Padmapriyā (=Lakṣmī) 352
 Padmapura 438
 Padma Purāṇa 3, 6, 450, 1162, 1347, 1349, 1351f, 1562f, 2144, 2225, 2265, 2317f, 2450, 2486, 3007, 3194
 Padmāsana 446, 2228, 2237, 2288, 2372, 2393
 Padmatanu (=Brahmā) 437
 Padmavarṇa (an epithet of Brahmā) 436, 438
 Padmāvati (a holy place) 439
 Padmāvati (Satyaketu's daughter) 1085f, 1089f, 1095f
 Padmāvati (Pṛaṇidhi's wife) 3355, 3359f
 Padminī (a goddess) 1982
 Padmodarā 321
 Paila 3009
 Paśāci (language of Mlecchas) 855
 Paitya (a holy place) 2831
 Pākaśāsana 378, 590
 Pakṣa Samvārdhinī Ekādaśī 2101, 2453, 2455
 Pala 284, 302
 Palāśinī (a river) 1364
 Pampā 1931
 Panasa 493
 Pañcadaśa 25
 Pañcagandhaka 2217
 Pañcagavya 363, 1149
 Pañcāgni 465, 557
 Pañcāgnisādhana 2455
 Pañcāgnitapas 538
 Pañcājana (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 332
 Pañcājana (Amśumat's father) 74, 2396
 Pāñcājanya (Viṣṇu's conch) 2089, 3133, 3291
 Pañcaka 1633
 Pañcākhyāna 697
 Pañcāla (a yakṣa) 612
 Pañcāla (a country) 1364, 1690
 Pañcamakha 949
 Pañcameḍhra (a demon) 2182
 Pañcāmṛta 282, 2248, 2454, 2545, 3133, 3520
 Pañcanada (a holy place) 1424, 1428
 Pañcanadī (a river) 2924
 Pañcanakha 1541
 Pañcāṅga 504
 Pañcanidhāna-sūkta 356
 Pañcaśara (=Cupid) 579
 Pañcaśikha (a sage) 287, 3170
 Pañcāsya 45
 Pañcatapas 286
 Pañcavakra 2908
 Pañcavana 1942
 Pañcavaṭa (a holy place) 1437
 Pañcavaṭi 1792, 2316, 2489
 Pañcayajña (a holy place) 1441
 Pañcāyatana 1470, 1471
 Pāṇḍava 864, 1159, 1379, 1381f, 1388, 1393, 1493, 1510, 2045, 2320, 2465, 2468, 2594, 3517
 Pāṇḍava-dvādaśī 2514
 Pāṇḍaveśvara (a holy place) 1396
 Pāṇḍu 387, 1030, 1381, 1389, 1403, 1492, 2045, 2855, 3303, 3305
 Pāṇḍurāryā (a deity) 2890
 Pāṇḍyas (a people) 634
 Paṇi (Kadrū's son) 51
 Pāṇikhyāta (a holy place) 1432
 Pāñjikāsthali (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Paṅkala (a country) 1365
 Pannagas 2771
 Panthāna 2800
 Pāpahara (a holy place) 98
 Pāpaharā (a river) 1364

Pāpahā 439
 Pāpahāriṇī (a deity) 394
 Pāpahāriṇī (a river) 2836
 Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī 2496f, 2499f
 Pāpanāśinī Ekādaśī 970, 1227, 2101, 2462
 Pāpāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī 2532f
 Pāpaprāṇāśana (a holy place) 1450
 Para 7
 Para (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Para (Nahuṣa's son) 109
 Parā (a kind of Vāk) 2951
 Parabrahman (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Pārada (a tribe) 2395
 Paradise 2967
 Pārāka (a vow) 2726, 2743, 2806
 Parākṣa (a country) 1364
 Paramakleśanāśin (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Paramānanda 3050
 Paramāṇu (Vipracitti's son) 50
 Paramasukhada (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Paramātman (an epithet of Brahmā) 435f
 Paramātman (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Parameṣṭhin 152, 437, 2085, 2737
 Parameśvara (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Parameśvaratīrtha 1398
 Parameśvarī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Parānta (a country) 1365
 Parantapa (Manu's son) 58
 Parāśara 41, 11, 72, 506, 982, 1414, 2982, 3009, 3114
 Pārāśara Smṛti 3195
 Pārāśara Upapurāṇa 2266
 Pārāśarī (a river) 1238
 Pārāśarya 982, 2448
 Pārasika (a tribe) 1365
 Paraśu (a vaiśya) 3453
 Paraśurāma 112, 685, 754, 853, 917, 977, 1155, 1428f, 1440, 1886, 2318, 2998, 3166, 3216, 3220, 3231, 3325
 Paravaha (a Marut) 631
 Parents, service to 1135f
 Pareśa (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Parigha (a demon) 224
 Parigha (Parāvṛt's son) 113
 Pārijāta 34, 803, 1590, 1952, 1969, 3292
 Parīkṣit (a king) 2972, 2975, 2983, 3009
 Pāriplava (a holy place) 1428
 Parirambhiṇī 326
 Parivaha (a Marut) 631
 Pāriyātra (a mountain) 503, 629, 635, 1363
 Parjanya (Raivata Manu's son) 58
 Parjanya (an Āditya) 221, 524, 2330
 Parjanya (a gandharva) 221
 Parṇā (Menā's daughter) 71

Parnagrāma (a holy place) 2969
 Parnāśa (a river) 1364
 Pārśvaparivartana 1614
 Pārśvaroman (a tribe) 1365
 Parvan 6, 85, 296, 645, 763
 Pārvaṇa Śrāddha 76, 714
 Parvata (Rukmadeva's son) 113
 Parvata (a sage) 264, 1673, 1684, 2473, 2629, 3010, 3244
 Parvata (a holy place) 1477
 Parvateśvara (king of Vindhya region) 2808
 Pārvati 211, 277, 321, 323, 327, 393, 418, 429f, 595, 598, 600, 607, 611, 732, 812f, 815, 888, 1124, 1211, 1278, 1281, 1285, 1287, 1334, 1336, 1358, 1413, 1466, 1682, 1798, 1817, 1957, 2141, 2145, 2196, 2209, 2216, 2218f, 2220, 2241, 2242f, 2260, 2277, 2288, 2304, 2308, 2345, 2347, 2352, 2358, 2362, 2364f, 2374, 2376, 2383f, 2396, 2418, 2544, 2576, 2579, 2587, 2590, 2602, 2633, 2650, 2660, 2675, 2683, 2687, 2771, 2776, 2782, 2785, 2820, 2836, 2840, 2842, 2845, 2847, 2858, 2861, 2882f, 2954, 2967, 3005, 3007, 3034, 3037, 3051, 3135, 3170, 3173, 3246, 3252, 3266, 3297, 3322f, 3446
 Pārvatiśvara 2288
 Pārvatiya (a tribe) 1365
 Paryūṣita (an evil spirit) 397, 2077
 Pāśahastā (a deity) 394
 Paśu (a tribe) 1366
 Paśupāla 814
 Pāśupata (a missile) 630, 642, 1861, 2533, 2873
 Pāśupata System 3191, 3200
 Paśupati 31
 Pāśupatyāstra 1684
 Paśyantī (a kind of Vāk) 2951
 Pātāla (a monkey) 493
 Pātāla (a city) 2838
 Pātāla (nether world) 383, 390, 633, 635, 741, 799, 2674
 Pātāla (a holy place) 211, 2831
 Pāṭalā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 321, 324
 Pāṭalā (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211
 Pātālaketu (a demon) 2357
 Pātālakhaṇḍa 1351, 2318
 Pāṭaliputra (a city) 2928
 Patañjali (Kadrū's son) 51
 Pathyā (a deity) 322
 Paulastya (=Rāvaṇa) 1090
 Paulomas (Mārīca's progeny) 50
 Paulomī (Indra's wife) 1019
 Pauṇḍarikāśrama 3311
 Pauṇḍra (a holy place) 2832
 Pauṇḍra (a people) 634

- Paurāṇika 2258
 Pauruṣī 2644
 Pauṣa 322, 365, 877, 1527, 1794, 2008, 2648, 2771, 3063, 3114, 3451
 Pauṣka (a holy place) 2832
 Pauṣkara 6
 Pauṣkara Parvan 895
 Pauṣtika (a holy place) 2832
 Pauṣtika sūkta 357
 Pavamāna 83, 356, 2007
 Pavana (=Wind) 2594
 Pavana (a sage) 2629
 Pavana (a holy place) 1433
 Pavitra 187, 3139
 Pavitra (a brāhmaṇa) 3539f
 Pavitrā (a river) 1364
 Payoṣṇī (a river) 98, 100, 211, 1363, 1421, 1486, 1699, 1711, 2110, 2398, 2451, 2570, 2620, 2789
 Penance 956
 Phalakivana (a holy place) 1432
 Phalasaptamī 307, 310
 Phalgu 2317
 Phālguna 322, 325, 358, 366, 877, 1795, 2060, 2489, 2492, 2494, 2648, 3354, 3431
 Phalī (a river) 1364
 Phallus 1470, 2142f, 2161, 2192, 2203, 2227f, 2229, 2232, 2234, 2245, 2247, 2249f, 2297, 2644, 2729, 2841, 2864ff, 2874, 2876f, 2880f, 2885, 2892, 2950, 2969
 Phaṇīśvara (=Śeṣa) 2960
 Pherṁkāra (a demon) 2382
 Pheruṇḍa (a demon) 2382
 Picchalā (a river) 1364
 Pichilā (a Mother) 643
 Picumandārka (a holy place) 2883
 Piety 1120
 Pināka (=Śiva's bow) 1357
 Pināka-holder 638
 Pinākin (Rudra) 48, 221, 2242, 2331
 Piṇḍa 80, 86, 89, 101, 406, 440, 442, 1630, 1717, 2832, 3086
 Piṇḍāra (a city) 2848
 Piṇḍāraka (Ānakadundubhi's son) 120
 Piṇḍārka (a holy place) 100, 211, 438
 Piṅgala (a Rudra) 523
 Piṅgala (a brāhmaṇa) 2921
 Piṅgalā 1107, 1364
 Piṅgalā (an artery) 1988, 2124
 Piṅgaleśvara (a holy place) 1395
 Piṅgaleśvarī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Piṅgalī 1107, 2124
 Piṅgatīrtha 1422
 Pippala (a brāhmaṇa) 1125, 1127ff, 1130f, 1133f, 1137, 1185, 1187, 1199, 1202, 1214f
 Pippala 1107
 Pippalāda (a child of Suvarcā and Dadhīci) 2880
 Pippaleśvara 1392
 Piśācā (mother of Yakṣas and demons) 524
 Piśācamocana (a holy place) 1473
 Pīṭaka 1999
 Pitāmaha (=Brahmā) 436, 437
 Pitarā (a river) 98
 Pītavāsas 2451, 3472
 Pitavastra (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 339
 Piṭhara (a demon) 628
 Pitr 4, 11, 23, 24, 40, 61, 156
 Pitr̥tīrtha 2831, 2837
 Pitr̥varman 90
 Pīvarī (mind-born daughter of Barhiṣads) 73
 Plakṣa (an island) 1219f, 2791, 2836, 3341, 3365
 Plakṣādevī (a river) 1441
 Planets 685, 2201, 2276, 2408, 2440f, 2586, 2611, 2615, 2617, 2798, 2807, 3460, 3473
 Plants 27, 224
 Poison 672
 Potr (a priest) 425, 511
 Prabhā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 212
 Prabhā (a divine mother) 224
 Prabhā (Vivasvān's daughter) 62
 Prabhā (Tripura's wife) 845
 Prabhākara (=the Sun) 289, 447, 642, 2086, 2883
 Prabhākara (a country) 1371
 Prabhañjana (a king) 249
 Prabhāsa (a holy place) 158, 205, 211, 234, 436, 458, 804, 1239, 1422, 1468, 2620, 2789, 2831, 3127
 Prabhāsa (Viśvakarmā Prajāpati's son) 48
 Prabhāta 62
 Prabhava (a Sādhya) 522
 Prabhāvatī (Bala's wife) 2335
 Prabhāvatī (a prostitute) 3111
 Prabhāvrata 284
 Prabhu (=Kṛṣṇa=Viṣṇu) 3471f
 Prabodhini Ekādaśī 1611, 2427, 2538f, 2718, 2746, 3109
 Pracanda (a deity) 2089
 Pracanda (a demon) 2682
 Pracanda (a cowherd) 1963
 Pracandā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Praceṣṭa (Mādhava's minister) 3367, 3372, 3381, 3383f
 Pracetas 40, 41, 47, 104, 278, 289, 2610
 Prācī (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 228, 234, 403, 405, 407f, 417, 2443, 2573, 3063

Prācī (Dakṣa's daughter) 522
 Prācī (mother of celestial damsels) 524
 Prācī Devī (Brahmā's daughter) 2444
 Pracinabarhis 3028
 Prācīneśvara 2886
 Prācyā (a country) 1365
 Pradhāna 7, 19, 169, 362, 1352, 1475, 1526, 1547, 1993, 2037, 3154, 3164, 3175
 Pradyumna (Rukmiṇī's son) 122, 1288, 1952, 1992, 1999, 2733, 3054, 3165, 3296, 3300, 3304
 Pradyumna (=Viṣṇu) 1228, 2582
 Praghāsa (a demon) 140
 Prahasta (a demon) 495, 1794, 2589,
 Prahāda/Prahāda 56, 61, 108, 125, 132, 224, 628f, 859, 897, 914f, 1000, 1953, 2230, 2233, 2280f, 2317, 2450, 2594, 2625, 2637, 2701, 2709, 2900, 2945, 2976, 3006, 3199, 3201, 3204, 3208, 3428
 Prahvī (a Śakti) 3159
 Prajā 3439, 3445
 Prajādhyakṣa 438
 Prajāpāla (Aja's son) 70
 Prajāpati 28, 179, 288, 432, 635, 651, 931, 1000, 1002, 1281, 1338, 1486, 1488, 1495, 1507f, 1510, 1527, 1541, 1553, 2033
 Prajāpati (a king) 2408
 Prajāpati (a star) 2438
 Prājāpatya 658, 1554, 1620
 Prājāpatya (an insect) 2124
 Prajñā (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 232
 Prajñā 1265
 Prajñā (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Prajñāṅga (=Viṣṇu) 976
 Prakāśa (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Prakāśaka (Manu's son) 58
 Prākṛtāghna 3139
 Prakṛti 433, 650, 931, 1332f, 1527, 1553, 1669, 1734, 1838, 1971, 1992f, 1996, 2019, 2031, 2605, 2688, 2794, 2796, 2824f, 3138, 3146, 3154, 3161f, 3340
 Prākṛtika creation 10
 Pralamba (a demon) 225, 853, 2591, 3256, 3259, 3386
 Pralambaghna 3472
 Pralaya 10
 Pramada (a demon) 25
 Pramardana (a hell) 3531
 Pramathas 2377, 2679
 Pramlocā (a celestial nymph) 627
 Pramodinī (daughter of Sukasaṅgīti, a gandharva) 1413, 1419, 2781, 2787
 Pramokṣa (a holy place) 1464
 Prāṇa 507, 534, 695, 1107, 1146, 2162, 2331

Prāṇa (a sage) 58
 Prāṇāhuti 2553
 Praṇaṣṭa (a demon) 2180
 Praṇatārtivināśana (=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Praṇava (=Om) 1269, 1589
 Prāṇayāma 650, 1454, 2196
 Praṇidhi (a vaiśya) 3355, 3356f, 3359
 Prapannārtihara 501
 Prapāta 438
 Prāptivrata 284
 Prasena (Nighna's son) 117, 118
 Prasena (Satrājīt's brother) 3287
 Prastāva (Devabhāga's son) 121
 Prastha 284, 339
 Prasūti 29
 Pratāpāgrya (a king) 1684, 1741, 1778, 1787, 1854, 1856, 1912, 1918, 1934
 Pratāpin (Suratha's son) 1850, 1856
 Pratardana (a sage) 264
 Prāti 2232
 Pratihartr (a priest) 511
 Pratikṣatra (Śamī's son) 117
 Pratiṣṭha (a form of Phallus) 1471
 Pratiṣṭhāna (a holy place) 1488, 1495, 1499, 2912, 2923
 Pratiṣṭhātr (a priest) 426, 511
 Pratilā (Pratāpāgrya's wife) 1934
 Prāttalikā (a city) 2171
 Pratyudaka (a city) 2960
 Pravaha (a Marut) 631
 Pravāhita (a sage) 58
 Pravarā (a river) 1364
 Pravaraka (a country) 1371
 Pravaraka 1371
 Pravargya 190
 Prāvṛṣeya (a tribe) 1365
 Prayāga 1, 11, 158, 205, 210, 450, 458, 492, 811, 1057, 1239f, 1241, 1243ff, 1401, 1468, 1477, 1487f, 1492, 1496f, 1498f, 1501f, 1506ff, 1509f, 1511, 2005, 2314, 2407f, 2443, 2450, 2461, 2544, 2578, 2620, 2656, 2661, 2697, 2762, 2770, 2772, 2774, 2775ff, 2789, 2802f, 2813, 2815f, 2818, 2828, 2830, 2836f, 2856, 2973, 2984, 3014, 3017f, 3040, 3059, 3063, 3116, 3119, 3121, 3125, 3311, 3348, 3407
 Preceptor 1339f, 1343
 Pretasaṁcārā 2740f
 Pretaśīla 2317
 Pretāsanagatā (a deity) 394
 Pṛiti 30, 118f
 Pṛiti 1118
 Pṛitimān (an epithet of Cupid) 339
 Priyā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1950
 Priyamudā (a damsel) 1980
 Priyamvadā 1983f

- Priyavrata 29
 Priyavratā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Prokṣaṇī 188
 Proṣṭha (a country) 1365
 Pṛṣadhra (Vaivasvata Manu's son) 65, (became a śūdra) 68
 Pṛṣṇigarbha (an epithet of Rāma) 2604
 Pṛthā (=Kuntī—Surā's daughter, adopted by Kuntibhoja) 119, 145, 1492
 Pṛthu 3, 56, 60, 61f, 909, 1001f, 1005f, 1007f, 1008f, 1011, 1013, 1345f, 1363, 2656, 2658
 Pṛthu (Suyodhana's son) 68
 Pṛthu (Akrūra's son) 119
 Pṛthubhava (a king from Śaśabindu's family) 113
 Pṛthūdaka (a holy place) 99, 1436, 1443
 Pṛthukīrti (A king from Śaśabindu's family) 113
 Pṛthumala (a king from Śaśabindu's family) 113
 Pṛthuśravas (a king from Śaśabindu's family) 113
 Pṛthutejas (a king from Śaśabindu's family) 113
 Pṛthutīrtha 1436
 Pṛthuyaśas (a king from Śaśabindu's family) 113
 Pṛthvī 3168
 Pṛthvī (an epithet of Gaṅgā) 288, 2084
 Pṛthvipati (=Kṛṣṇa=Viṣṇu) 3472
 Pulaha 29, 40, 74, 221, 223, 264, 522, 2085, 2610, 2629, 2837, 3127, 3174
 Pulastya 11, 12, 29, 40, 106, 141, 185, 208, 213, 221, 264, 287, 384, 438, 522, 1077, 1079, 1664, 1668, 2152, 2481, 2610, 2616, 2629, 3127, 3176
 Pulinda (an attendant of Śiva) 1281
 Pulinda/Pulindaka (a country) 1364f
 Pulindas (a tribe) 1004, 2012
 Pulindikā (a river) 1238
 Pulkasa 734, 788
 Puloman (Paulomī's father) 3401
 Pulomā (Vaiśvānara's daughter) 50
 Pulomajā 2968
 Punaḥpunā (a river) 100, 101
 Punarvasu (Abhijit's son) 116
 Punarvasu (a constellation) 338, 347, 348, 2462, 2837
 Puṇḍāraka (a holy place) 1423
 Puṇḍarīka (=Viṣṇu) 2545, 2619f, 2625f, 2627, 2629, 3157
 Puṇḍarīka (Nabha's son) 70
 Puṇḍarīka (Brahmadatta's minister's son) 91
 Puṇḍarīka (=the Sun) 878
 Puṇḍarīka (a brāhmaṇa) 2620
 Puṇḍarīka (Mālava's sister's son) 3109, 3112f, 3115f
 Puṇḍarīka sacrifice 1040, 1428, 1432, 1479ff
 Puṇḍarīka (a serpent) 782, 2501
 Puṇḍarīka (a country) 1371
 Puṇḍarīka (a holy place) 1432
 Puṇḍarīkākṣa (an epithet of Brahmā) 437, 2082
 Puṇḍarīkanibhekṣaṇa (=Kṛṣṇa) 3471
 Puṇḍra (a country) 634, 1364, 1365
 Puṇḍravardhana 2831
 Puṇjikāsthātā (a celestial nymph) 628
 Punnāga forest 2938
 Puṇya 1112
 Puṇya (a sacred place) 98, 99
 Puṇyasaras (a sacred place) 97
 Puṇyavardhana (a holy place) 211
 Pūraka 650
 Puramālinī (a river) 1364
 Purāṇa 2, 3, 11, 77, 113, 299, 310, 335, 350, 354, 356, 358, 434, 443, 515, 648, 735, 791, 798, 851, 864, 872, 895, 897, 1001, 1101, 1162, 1348, 1351, 1380f, 1447, 1469, 1557, 1578, 1580, 1641, 2069, 2095, 2106, 2141f, 2143f, 2145, 2148f, 2150, 2152, 2193, 2221ff, 2224, 2240, 2252f, 2256f, 2258ff, 2261f, 2263f, 2266, 2277, 2295, 2312, 2314, 2316, 2318, 2417, 2419, 2424, 2442, 2446, 2455, 2510, 2542, 2545, 2549, 2555, 2566, 2570, 2577, 2620, 2660, 2662, 2708, 2746, 2971f, 2983, 2999, 3002, 3005, 3009, 3040, 3056, 3129, 3140, 3186, 3188, 3191, 3194f, 3252, 3335, 3425, 3465, 3517, 3522, 3549
 Pūrāṇā (a river) 2108
 Purandara 206
 Puranic doctrines 2578
 Puranic hymns 2409, 2422, 2903
 Puranic texts 2751
 Purañjaya 423
 Puraścandra (a sacred place) 99
 Purificatory rites 636
 Purity 957
 Pūrṇā (a river) 2398, 2570
 Pūrṇāla (a tribe) 1365
 Pūrṇarasā (a goddess) 1981
 Pūrṇimā 1050
 Pūru (Śarmiṣṭhā's son) 110, 1208, 1214, 1308
 Purukutsa (Yuvanāśva's son) 69
 Purūravas (Budha's son) 107, 108, 1140, 1491, 2760
 Puruṣa 362, 503, 511, 933, 1354, 1526, 1553, 1734, 1835, 1996, 2023, 2037, 2612f, 2623, 2796, 2825, 3136, 3147, 3149, 3162, 3175, 3326

Puruṣa-sūkta 355, 2007, 2269, 2984, 3133, 3378
 Puruṣottama 211, 333, 341, 346, 553, 982, 1713, 1718, 1721, 1730, 1999, 2471, 2478, 2581, 2603, 2605, 2627, 2924, 2984, 3048, 3151, 3332, 3465, 3477, 3482, 3486
 Puruṣottama month 2543
 Pūrvā (a constellation) 348
 Pūrvā-Bhādrapadā (a constellation) 3004
 Pūrvābhirāmā (a river) 1364
 Pūrva Sarasvatī (a river) 633
 Pūṣan (an Āditya) 220, 420, 524, 606, 651, 2330, 2883
 Puṣkala (Bharata's son) 1683, 1686f, 1737, 1743ff, 1747, 1753f, 1756f, 1758, 1764, 1778, 1781, 1782f, 1787, 1813ff, 1817f, 1819f, 1822ff, 1825, 1832f, 1837, 1855f, 1898ff, 1912, 1914, 1919, 1934, 1999
 Puṣkalagātra (= Śani) 2440
 Puṣkara/Puṣkaraka 1, 51, 63, 68, 96, 97, 100, 101, 153, 162, 166f, 170, 172f, 175, 189, 198, 201, 205, 216f, 219, 221, 226, 228, 232, 234f, 251f, 265, 276, 287, 381, 387, 391, 395, 400f, 404f, 411f, 416f, 431, 440, 444f, 458ff, 523, 525, 635, 758, 796, 1057, 1239ff, 1243ff, 1350, 1376, 1401, 1426, 1428, 1443, 1468, 1488f, 1506, 1508, 2012, 2102, 2427f, 2429, 2450, 2461, 2533, 2550, 2620, 2719, 2762, 2766, 2818, 2831, 2836, 2856, 2967, 2973, 3014, 3018, 3040, 3062f, 3109, 3111, 3354
 Puṣkara (a demon) 224
 Puṣkara (dvīpa) 1370f
 Puṣkara mountain 1371
 Puṣkara (Varuṇa Prajāpati's son) 1000
 Puṣkarānetra 2613
 Puṣkaravatī (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Puṣpabāṇa (an epithet of Cupid) 339, 2639
 Puṣpabhadra (a holy place) 1707
 Puṣpadaṁṣṭra (Kadrū's son) 51
 Puṣpadanta (Śiva's attendant) 2356f, 2359, 2362
 Puṣpadanta/Puṣpadantaka (a gandharva) 2486
 Puṣpadantī (Mālinī's daughter) 2486
 Puṣpaka 464, 470, 505, 1168, 1398, 1647, 1650, 1796, 1803, 1865, 2157, 2290, 3242
 Puṣpavāhana (a king) 277
 Puṣpavān (a mountain) 1370
 Puṣpavatī (a holy place) 1484
 Puṣṭi (a divine mother) 224, 329, 332, 339

Puṣṭi (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Puṣṭi (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211
 Puṣṭi (=nourishment) 349
 Puṣyā (a river) 2398
 Puṣya (a constellation) 338, 873, 2463
 Pūtānā (Kāṁsa's sister) 1665, 1945, 2591, 3260
 Pūtimatsya (a tribe) 1365
 Pūtimṛttika 2800
 Pūtiṣṭṛjaya (a country) 1365
 Putradā Ekādaśī 2478, 2480, 2522, 2524
 Pūyoda (a hell) 1843
 Rādhā 1569, 1584f, 1624ff, 1627, 1632, 1950, 1972, 1977, 1994ff, 2014, 2023, 2661, 3001
 Rādhikā 1586, 1950, 1984, 1986, 1990f, 1994, 2013f, 2018, 2020, 2025, 2027
 Rādhāṣṭamī 1567, 1575, 1583ff
 Rāghava 413, 416, 419, 437, 463, 467ff, 469, 472, 478, 484, 489, 491f, 494, 500f, 1866, 1885, 2150, 2155f, 2312, 2490, 2604, 2605, 2645, 2998, 3241, 3246, 3248, 3282, 3326, 3335
 Raghu (Yadu's son) 110
 Raghu 412, 415f, 461, 469, 471, 477f, 487, 494, 497, 501, 1647, 1659, 1664, 1669, 1671, 1673, 1680f, 1685, 1690, 1692, 1710, 1788, 1796, 1799, 1802, 1803, 1805, 1810, 1842, 1850, 1865, 1875, 1921f, 1928, 1940, 2142, 2148, 2156, 2438, 2491, 2588, 3037, 3193, 3235, 3241f, 3243, 3245f, 3248, 3250f, 3253, 3332
 Raghunandana 1660
 Raghunātha 1647, 1650ff, 1656, 1660, 1699f, 1714, 1722, 1743f, 1773f, 1779, 1786, 1801f, 1805, 1828, 1836, 1864, 1887, 1918, 3230, 3327
 Raghupati 1798, 1881
 Raghūttama (Nighna's son) 70
 Rahasyā (a river) 1363
 Rāhu 224, 452, 632, 893, 1401, 1439, 1476, 1502, 1591, 2320, 2333, 2347, 2350, 2356f, 2378, 2382, 2587, 2676f, 2725, 2964, 3054, 3057
 Raibhya (a sage) 264, 1272, 2629, 2837
 Raibhyantara kalpa 2408
 Raikya 2924, 2927f
 Raivata 62, 3284
 Raivata (a Rudra) 48
 Raivata (Reva's son; also known as Kakudmin) 68
 Raivataka (a mountain) 832, 1369, 2831
 Raja (Vasiṣṭha's son) 3127
 Rāja (Sāvitrī's son) 523

- Rājagrha (a forest) 100, 1441
 Rajakanātha (a demon) 1012
 Rājakhadga (a holy place) 2841
 Rajas 24, 134, 527, 1354, 1527, 2004, 2109, 2187, 2191, 2600, 2689, 3164
 Rājasa 2162, 2192, 2825
 Rājaśarmā (Śopāśva's son) 116
 Rājasī Bhakti 2038
 Rājasūya 251, 358, 376, 478, 489, 797, 1040, 1325, 1425f, 1428, 1432, 1440, 1480, 1488, 1560, 2477, 2533, 2984, 3128
 Rājati 442
 Rājeyas (Raji's sons) 108
 Raji (Āyu's son) 108
 Rājñi (Kaśyapa's daughter) 62
 Rākṣasa 526, 624
 Rākṣasī 205f
 Rakṣoghna 357
 Raktā (a Mother) 643
 Raktapūya 2711
 Raktasirṃha 2854
 Ramā (=Lakṣmī) 2657, 2673, 3159, 3170
 Rāma 264, 406, 412f, 415f, 418, 422, 461, 471, 476, 482f, 485, 487ff, 494, 496, 498, 501, 504f, 853, 988, 1178, 1180f, 1354, 1491, 1646ff, 1649, 1653ff, 1656, 1658ff, 1661, 1663f, 1667f, 1670f, 1673, 1676f, 1679ff, 1683, 1685, 1687, 1690, 1696f, 1700f, 1710ff, 1714, 1720, 1727f, 1736, 1738f, 1755, 1760f, 1763, 1768ff, 1773f, 1776, 1779, 1781, 1787f, 1789ff, 1793, 1796, 1798, 1799f, 1803, 1806, 1808f, 1811, 1819, 1821, 1823, 1825f, 1828, 1830, 1831f, 1833ff, 1836f, 1840f, 1843, 1846, 1847f, 1849ff, 1860, 1862f, 1865f, 1868, 1871f, 1873ff, 1881ff, 1884, 1847, 1890ff, 1895, 1902, 1904, 1906, 1916f, 1918, 1922ff, 1926, 1928f, 1931ff, 1934, 1935ff, 1939ff, 1961, 1964, 2006, 2124, 2140f, 2143, 2146f, 2150ff, 2154, 2157f, 2163f, 2186, 2225f, 2257, 2261ff, 2272, 2274, 2282ff, 2286ff, 2292, 2294, 2300, 2303, 2306f, 2311, 2318, 2343, 2421, 2422, 2489f, 2495, 2534, 2573, 2580, 2588, 2589, 2597, 2599, 2601, 2604, 2612f, 2633f, 2641f, 2854, 2862, 2925, 2945, 2982, 3013, 3050, 3062, 3068, 3081, 3136, 3152, 3159, 3162, 3166, 3219, 3222, 3226ff, 3230f, 3232f, 3235ff, 3238f, 3242ff, 3245f, 3247f, 3249ff, 3252ff, 3261, 3263, 3268, 3270f, 3275, 3279, 3283f, 3286, 3288, 3310, 3324, 3327, 3332, 3386, 3395, 3422, 3426, 3453, 3457, 3459
 Rāma (a missile) 1862
 Rāmā (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Rāmabhadra 1656, 1737, 1885, 2599, 3327
 Rāmacandra 1342, 1648, 1654, 1658, 1677, 1685, 1761, 1799f, 1804, 1806, 1825f, 1853, 1867, 1870, 1894, 1916, 1934, 1939, 2153, 2156, 2271, 2599, 3247, 3325f, 3327
 Rāmadāsa 1856
 Rāmahrada (a holy place) 1428
 Rāmajanma (a holy place) 1432
 Ramaṇā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Ramaṇa (a holy place) 2831
 Ramaṇaka (a country) 1361
 Rāmarakṣā 2599
 Rāmatīrtha (a holy place) 211, 1466, 1484, 1486
 Ramā vow 2536
 Rāmāyaṇa 1893, 1920, 1930, 1932, 2148, 2265, 2268, 2317, 3522
 Rambhā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Rambhā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324, 326
 Rambhā (a deity) 316, 323
 Rambhā (a river) 1238
 Rambhā (a celestial nymph) 628, 995, 1033, 1085, 1313, 1314ff, 1321, 1324, 1693, 2320, 2322, 2343, 2365, 2636, 2771, 2968, 3414
 Rāmeśvara 2143
 Raṇa (a mountain) 847
 Raṇāśva (Samhatāśva's son) 69
 Raṇga (a cowherd) 1962
 Raṅgavenī (Raṅga's daughter) 1962
 Raṅgavidyādhara (a gandharva, Gītaṇḍyādhara) 1077
 Ranti (Nandana's son) 121
 Rantipāla (Nandana's son) 121
 Rasakallolinī (a goddess) 1981
 Rasakalyāṇinī (a deity) 323
 Rasālayā (a goddess) 1981
 Rasamantharā (a goddess) 1981
 Rasapiyūṣadhārā (a goddess) 1981
 Rasapriya (a holy place) 438
 Rasātala 3340
 Rasataranginī (a goddess) 1981
 Rasavallarī (a goddess) 1981
 Rasavāpikā (a goddess) 1981
 Rasikā 1994
 Rāsollāsā 1982
 Rāṣṭrapāla (Ugrasena's son) 116
 Rāṣṭrapālī (Ugrasena's daughter) 116
 Rāṣṭravardhana (an epithet of Brah-mā) 438
 Rāṣṭravardhana (Rāma's minister) 484, 3245

- Rathacitrā (a river) 1364
 Rathāgraṇī 1684
 Rathantara kalpa 277, 330
 Rathantara sāman 357
 Rathāvartta (a holy place) 1442
 Rati 339, 581, 584, 586, 629, 1088, 1103, 1115ff, 1118f, 1184, 1189, 1203, 1247, 1414, 2195, 2593, 2638f, 2781, 3152, 3160
 Ratikalā 1981
 Ratilālasā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 325
 Ratilokā 1981
 Ratisarvasva 1981
 Ratisukhapradāyini 1982
 Ratividagdā (a prostitute) 3495
 Ratna (top of Kailāsa) 1279
 Ratnagrīva (a king) 1713, 1718, 1729
 Ratnākara (a vaiśya) 3389
 Ratnākhyā (a city) 388
 Ratnamālikā 1981
 Ratnarekhā 1981
 Ratneśvara (=Śiva) 1279
 Ratotsukā 1981
 Rātri 354
 Raucya (a future Manu) 59
 Raudra (a missile) 1684, 2440
 Raudri (a goddess) 389
 Rauhineya 3259
 Raumaharṣaṇa 2713
 Raurava (a sāman) 356
 Raurava (a hell) 10, 28, 166, 670, 672, 684, 694, 712, 733, 826, 1221, 1448, 1560, 1726, 1769, 2363, 2436, 2445, 2458, 2533, 3044, 3085, 3312, 3318, 3514
 Rāvaṇa 461, 468, 492, 494f, 498, 643, 1647, 1657, 1662f, 1664, 1667, 1669f, 1690, 1696, 1739, 1781, 1792, 1794f, 1873, 1918, 2268, 2282f, 2291f, 2589, 2591, 2854, 2862, 3222, 3236, 3239ff, 3248, 3324f, 3338, 3386
 Rāvaṇāri 3473
 Ravi 311, 448, 523f, 877, 893, 2885
 Ravisāgara (=Ādityasāgara) 349
 Rayahṣaṅku (a demon) 224
 Rbhu (future Manu's son) 59
 Rcīca 2837
 Rcīka 2629
 Rddhi (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Rddhi (Kubera's wife) 194, 205
 Regents of Quarters 685, 2771
 Reṇukā (a holy place) 1424, 1437, 2318, 2587, 2961, 3216
 Reṇumaṇḍala (a country) 1370
 Reva (father of Revatī) 68
 Revā (a river) 978, 1007, 1015f, 1051, 1245, 1412, 1421, 1458, 1702, 1786, 1802, 1805, 2043, 2058, 2069f, 2076, 2080, 2108, 2758, 2766, 2836
 Revāpura (a holy place) 2969
 Revata 1288
 Revatī (a Mother) 643, 2614
 Revatī (a constellation) 367
 Revatī (Revata's daughter and Balarama's wife) 68, 1288, 1952, 2591, 2807, 3284, 3286, 3386
 Rgveda 360, 448, 878, 1296, 1790, 1939, 2037, 2604f, 2613, 3152, 3157
 Rgvedī (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Rhinoceros 83
 Ripuñjaya (Suratha's son) 1850, 1856
 Riputāpa 1684f, 1750, 1854, 1934
 Ripuvara (Vīramāṇi's general) 1813
 Riṣtanemi (Akrūra's son) 119
 Ritual 8
 Rk 25, 38, 146
 Rkṣarāja (Phallus) 2862
 Rkṣa/Rkṣavān (a mountain) 413
 Rṇatraya 901
 Rocamāna (Devakī's son) 120
 Rocamāna (Ānarta's son and king of Ānarta) 68
 Rodhaka 2077
 Rohaka (an evil spirit) 397
 Rohi (a river) 1364
 Rohiṇī 352, 522, 1278, 3257, 3286, 3483
 Rohiṇī (a constellation) 80, 632, 1576, 1606, 2432, 2438, 2463, 2951, 3246
 Rohiṇī (Ānakadundubhi's wife) 120, 219
 Rohiṇī (a river) 1364
 Rohiṇīcandraśayanavrata 350
 Rohita (Hariścandra's son) 69
 Rohita (Rohiṇī's son) 122
 Rohita (a mountain) 237
 Rohitāraṇī (a river) 1363
 Romaharṣaṇa 3, 1350, 2029
 Romakaṇṭaka (a demon) 2356f, 2379
 Romanta (Devakī's son) 120
 Rṣabha (a monkey) 493
 Rṣabha (a mountain) 634, 1363, 1484
 Rṣabha (dvīpa) 1483
 Rṣabhatīrtha 1484
 Rṣika (a country) 1365
 Rṣipaṇcamī 2606, 2609f
 Rṣitīrtha 1394, 1403
 Rṣitulyā (a river) 1364
 Rṣiveda (a holy place) 438
 Rṣyamūka mountain 800, 2282, 3238
 Rṣyaśṛṅga (a sage) 1667, 1880
 Rṭambhara (Satyavān's father) 1765ff, 1772
 Rṭudhāman (a future Manu) 59
 Rṭuparna (Ayutāyu's son) 69, 1773
 Ruci 29
 Rudra 14, 19, 29, 40, 44, 83, 89, 105, 106, 134, 143, 147, 149, 151, 153ff,

- 156, 167, 171f, 190, 199, 206, 209, 215f, 229, 280, 284, 288, 326, 328, 334, 356, 388, 430, 435, 500, 523, 556, 623, 625, 637, 639, 640f, 643, 651, 779, 781, 782, 815, 827, 849, 878, 883, 894, 919, 1008, 1013, 1171, 1209, 1354, 1376, 1380, 1384f, 1388ff, 1391ff, 1395f, 1399, 1403, 1405, 1407, 1425, 1438, 1441, 1470, 1472, 1474, 1477, 1481, 1498, 1957, 2019f, 2039, 2109, 2189, 2247, 2331, 2333f, 2356, 2362, 2374f, 2383, 2388f, 2406, 2579, 2582, 2589f, 2592, 2602, 2605, 2624, 2644, 2667, 2682, 2771, 2788f, 2831, 2845, 2858f, 2875, 2880, 2886, 3103, 3136, 3150, 3155, 3161, 3173, 3178f, 3189ff, 3195, 3201, 3205f, 3223, 3234, 3246, 3266, 3283, 3296, 3300f, 3323, 3331, 3453, 3501
- Rudradevī (a holy place) 1438
 Rudrakarmahrada (a holy place) 1478
 Rudrakota/Rudrakoti (a holy place) 205, 211, 1379, 1388, 1426, 1432, 2831
 Rudrākṣa 780, 781, 782, 783ff, 2195
 Rudrāṇī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Rudrāṇī (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324, 3246
 Rudrāṇī (a deity) 321
 Rudrapada (a holy place) 1433
 Rudra-sūkta 356
 Rudrāvarta (a holy place) 1463
 Rudreśvara 364
 Rukmabhūṣaṇa (Rtadhvaja son) 985
 Rukmakavaca (Śineyu's son) 113
 Rukmaṅgada/Rukmabhūṣaṇa 987, 1812ff, 1815, 1822, 1825, 2316
 Rukmi 2592, 3285
 Rukmiṇī 122, 1902, 1995, 2592, 3054, 3283, 3290, 3304f, 3309
 Rukmiṇī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Rukmiṇī (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152, 3170
 Rukmiṇipratijñākhaṇḍana 3472
 Rukmiṇīramaṇa 3472
 Rulika (a country) 1365
 Rūmā (Sugrīva's wife) 2285
 Rūmādevī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Rūpadeśa (a country) 1219
 Rūpasena 1220
 Rūpasundarī (Sudharman's wife) 2427
 Rūpavatī 2093
 Ruru (a Paurava king) 1137, 1138
 Ruru (a demon) 388f
 Rṣabha (Anamitra's son) 118
 Rtavīrya (a king) 1140
- Śabala (a sage) 264
 Śabara 1725
 Śabari 3237f
 Śabari tirtha 3238
 Sabhāparvan 2265
 Sābhramatī (river) 2834f, 2836f, 2838, 2842, 2844, 2846, 2849, 2853, 2855, 2857f, 2860, 2868f, 2872f, 2879ff, 2883, 2885, 2889, 2891, 2896
 Sacandra (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Śaci 32, 50, 629, 705, 746, 1704, 2775, 2968, 3090, 3216, 3284
 Sacred Ash 2153
 Sacred Scriptures 2623
 Sacrifice 519, 1003, 1040, 1345, 1375f, 1451, 1521, 2656, 3160
 Śadānana (=Kārttikeya) 2347
 Śadālamba (Akrūra's son) 119
 Śadaśīti 870
 Śadāśiva 1818, 2167, 2186, 2296, 2307
 Sadaśva (Rukmiṇī's son) 123
 Sadasya (a priest) 427
 Sadāvīrā (a river) 1364
 Sadāyakṣa (Akrūra's son) 119
 Sadehyā 47
 Sādhaka (a demon) 847
 Sādhyā 58, 74, 105, 190, 221, 322, 523, 564, 623, 625, 827, 1212, 1376, 2269, 2584, 2604, 3134, 3160, 3172, 3293
 Sādhyā (king of Sumānasa country) 2268
 Sādhyā (mother of Sādhyas) 523
 Sadiva (a sage) 181
 Sadma (a country) 1365
 Śaḍrasa (the six flavours) 774, 3025
 Śaḍvaktra 617
 Śaḍvirṇśika 2581
 Sadyojātas (an epithet of Śiva) 500
 Saffron 365
 Sagara (Gara's son) 2040, 2394f, 2396, 2434, 2463, 2590, 2990, 3350
 Sāgara (Divine Ocean) 2898
 Sāgareśvaratīrtha 1411
 Sages 181, 688, 799, 1003, 1004, 1027, 1043, 1058, 1187, 1275, 1300, 2635, 2783, 3134, 3160, 3241
 Sahadeva (Mādravatī's son, a Pāṇḍava) 120, 2511, 3305
 Sahadeva (Suratha's son) 1850, 1856
 Sahadevī 41
 Sahajanyā (a celestial nymph) 627
 Sahasrabāhu 2446
 Sahasrajihva (=the Sun) 878
 Sahasrajit (Yadu's son) 110
 Sahasraka (a holy place) 1437
 Sahasrākṣa (=Indra) 746, 2831
 Sahasrākṣa 45, 2883
 Sahasrākṣa (a holy place) 211
 Sahasrāra 446, 3139

- Sahasrāśva (Ahinagu's son) 70
 Sahya (a mountain) 1363, 2703, 2763, 2831
 Sahyā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Sahyādri (a region) 2691
 Śaibyā (Jyāmagha's wife) 114
 Śaibyā (Akrūra's wife) 119
 Śaibyā (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 122, 1950
 Śaila (a holy place) 2831
 Śailaroman (a demon) 2337, 2355f
 Śailodara (a demon) 2378f
 Sairindra (a tribe) 1365
 Śaiśava-sūkta 356
 Śaiva 571, 3191, 3194
 Śaiva lore 2248
 Śaiva Purāṇa 1562, 2266
 Sajiva (a Marut) 2331
 Sajjanādrohaka (name of a righteous man) 707
 Śaka (a country, a tribe) 1365, 2395f
 Śākadvīpa 1367f
 Śākala 2982
 Sakalākṣa (a sage) 264
 Sakāmā (a river) 1364
 Śākambhari (a holy place) 438
 Śākambhari (a deity) 1441
 Śakaṭa (a demon) 1606, 2591
 Śāketa (a city) 3244, 3249
 Śākinī 1206
 Śakra 40, 56, 146, 194, 311, 317, 356, 378ff, 430, 483, 514, 525, 541, 1140, 1357, 1397, 2438, 2775, 3064, 3079, 3387
 Śakraprastha 3106
 Śakratīrtha (a holy place) 98, 1394, 1398, 1442, 3015, 3065
 Śakṛghṛhas (a tribe) 1365
 Sakṛt (a river) 1483
 Sakṛtyāsa (son of Miḍhuṣa and Bhojā) 119
 Śakti (Vasiṣṭha's son) 10, 2202, 3191
 Śakti (a deity) 785
 Śakti (strength) (a deity) 212, 2651
 Śakti (a missile) 269, 826, 834, 836, 847f, 850, 1321, 1781, 1861, 2333, 2351, 2357, 2389, 2671, 3240, 3280, 3296f, 3532
 Śakti (Power) 374, 3023, 3157, 3167, 3171, 3246, 3315
 Śaktibīja (a part of Māyā) 809
 Śaktisena (Nighna's son) 117
 Śakuna (Science of omens) 272
 Śakuni (a divine mother created by Śiva) 643
 Śakuni (a sage) 1461
 Śakuni (Daśaratha's son) 114
 Sāla (a tree) 61, 159, 627, 634, 1013, 1021, 1087, 1281
 Śalabha 224
 Śālagrāma 656, 1229, 1457f, 1468, 1636, 1724, 1729, 2001, 2406, 2449f, 2459, 2461, 2531, 2602, 2620, 2633, 2641, 2728, 2731ff, 2819, 2831, 3311f, 3502
 Śālagrāma (a mountain) 3216
 Śālaṅkāyana 2217
 Śāligrāma (a tīrtha) 211, 914, 1481
 Śālihotra (a holy place) 1433
 Śālisūrya (a deity) 1433
 Śālmali (a tree) 627, 1367
 Śālmali (a river) 2800
 Śālmalika (dvīpa) 1370
 Sālokya (mukti) 2822
 Salt 365
 Śālva (a country) 1364
 Salvation 908, 1431, 1457, 1469, 1555, 1565, 1591, 2016, 2101, 2387, 2396, 2399, 2442, 2474, 2493, 2514, 2530, 2580, 2600, 2746, 2773, 2786, 2822, 2832, 2859, 2889, 2898, 2914, 2924, 2972, 2977, 3010, 3039, 3109, 3138, 3323, 3387
 Sālvikini (a holy place) 1428
 Śālya parvan 2265
 Samā (a country) 1372
 Samādhi (profound meditation) 2196
 Sāmaga 878
 Śamakā (Dhanañjaya's wife) 2164
 Sāman 38, 146, 224, 640, 2584, 2604, 3157, 3160
 Samāna (=Yama) 848, 3534
 Samāna (a vital air) 693, 1107
 Samaṅga (a country) 1365
 Samauja (Devārha's son) 117
 Samantaka 1432
 Sāma singers 255, 356
 Sāmānyā (a river) 1364
 Samastadevārtihara (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Samastādhvarapūjita (Viṣṇu) 351
 Samastapātakadhvarīsin (=Viṣṇu) 2472
 Samastasūryānilatigmatejasa (Brahmā's epithet) 433
 Samastaviśvārtihara (Brahmā's epithet) 433
 Samasthala (a holy place) 438
 Sāmaveda 134, 147, 150, 301, 360, 438, 2037, 2594, 3139, 3197
 Samaya (Manu's son) 58
 Sāmba (Jāmbavati's son, author of solar science) 123, 336
 Sāmba Upapurāṇa 2266
 Śambara (a demon) 316, 1288, 2586, 2593
 Śambhala (a town) 3222
 Sambheda (a sacred place) 97

- Śambhu (= Śiva) 133, 142ff, 326, 348, 433, 521, 643, 685, 2192, 2220, 2226, 2238f, 2243, 2252, 2279, 2294, 2304, 2307f, 2331, 2353, 2371, 2383, 2591, 2668, 2866, 2913, 3025, 3034, 3080, 3246
 Śambhu (a sage) 2141f, 2150f, 2153f, 2156f, 2161, 2166f, 2168f, 2178, 2267f, 2295f, 2299
 Sambhūti (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Śambūka (a demon) 3173
 Śambūka (a śūdra) 466
 Saṁghāta (a hell) 3531
 Saṁhata (Kuntī's son) 110
 Saṁhatāśva (Nikumba's son) 69
 Saṁhrāda (a demon) 316, 847, 2333
 Śami (Śoṇāśva's son) 117
 Saṁicī (a celestial nymph) 628
 Śamika (son of Mīḍhuṣa and Bhojā) 119
 Śamika (a sāma-singer) 427
 Saṁjñā (Vivasvān's daughter) 62, 3246
 Saṁkarṣaṇi 2586
 Saṁketa 1943
 Śaṁkha 50, 3160, 3290
 Śaṁkhapāda (Kardama Prajāpati's son) 1000
 Śaṁkhiṇī (a divine mother created by Śiva) 642
 Śaṁkhoddhāra (a holy place) 211, 438
 Sāṁkhya (an ascetic) 514
 Sāṁkhya 169, 362, 520, 1494, 2037, 2442f, 2741, 3102, 3146, 3195
 Sāṁkhya-yoga 2444
 Saṁkrama 1453
 Saṁkrānti 346, 444, 787, 803, 869, 876, 1050, 1384, 1402, 2008, 2805, 3335
 Smmīti (a sage) 58
 Sammoda (a demon) 847
 Sāmnām Adhiśa 347
 Saṁnyāsa 181f
 Sampāta 2800
 Sampāti 1931
 Sampratāpana (a hell) 2800
 Samrāda 224
 Śaṁśapāyana (a priest) 427
 Saṁsāra (worldly existence) 986
 Saṁsāramocanātīrtha 100
 Saṁskṛta (a holy place) 1428
 Samudra (a country) 1365
 Samudraka (a holy place) 1461
 Samujjvala 1237
 Saṁvaha (a Marut) 631
 Saṁvarta (a sage) 264, 1401, 1674
 Saṁvarta (a cloud) 224, 1779, 2332
 Sāṁvartaka (= Śani) 2440
 Sāṁvarta Smṛti 3195
 Saṁvatsara 2422
 Saṁyaminī (Yama's city) 2709, 3071
 Śanaīścara 224, 452, 892
 Sanaka 42, 289, 1281, 1948, 1993, 2085, 2140, 2793, 2816, 2856, 2951, 2967, 2972, 2979, 3006, 3130, 3170, 3196, 3241, 3272f
 Sananda 289, 3170
 Sanandana 2085
 Sanātana 289, 2085, 3170, 3471f
 Sanatkumāra 193, 629, 1487, 1639, 1974, 2266, 2417, 2430, 3170
 Sandal (a tree) 627, 1021, 1281
 Sandhya (a Rudra) 523
 Sandhyā 18, 158, 253, 439, 522, 867, 992, 1380, 1528, 2575, 2906, 2915
 Sandhyāvati (wife of Rukmabhūṣaṇa) 985
 Sāṁdipani 2591, 3279
 Saṁgameśvaratīrtha 1396, 2858
 Saṁgava 2838
 Saṁgavegadadhara (a country) 1365
 Śani 65, 24, 38, 2441
 Saṁjaya (a sage, disciple of Vyāsa) 812
 Saṁjivana (a hell) 2800
 Saṁkalpa 47
 Śaṁkara 34, 44, 133, 144, 149, 185, 193, 318, 326, 328, 330, 346, 364, 392, 414, 418, 420, 433, 436, 437, 441, 569, 585, 593f, 607, 613, 685, 710, 1232, 1285, 1287, 1390, 1405f, 1408, 1410, 1467, 1974, 1999, 2011, 2098, 2141f, 2153, 2155, 2160f, 2166, 2174, 2181, 2184, 2188, 2203, 2210, 2221, 2227, 2229, 2232, 2236f, 2243, 2246, 2250, 2287, 2295, 2350, 2388, 2406, 2579, 2586, 2592, 2597, 2831, 2892, 2901, 2924, 3161, 3200, 3295f, 3297, 3299f, 3301, 3324, 3327, 3340, 3345, 3446f
 Śaṁkara (a śūdra) 1634
 Śaṁkara (a mountain) 2831
 Śaṁkarā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Śaṁkarātman 2235
 Śaṁkari 211
 Saṁkarṣaṇa (= Balarāma) 1952, 1992, 2581, 2612, 2733, 3160f, 3165, 3257, 3259, 3304, 3315
 Śaṁkha (a Nāga) 384
 Śaṁkha 50, 51, 57, 58
 Śaṁkha (a demon) 1734, 2654, 2656, 2671
 Śaṁkhabhṛt 3472
 Śaṁkhacakradhara (Viṣṇu) 339
 Śaṁkhacūḍa (a serpent) 782, 1944
 Śaṁkhapāla (Kadrū's son) 51

Śaṅkhin 332
 Śaṅkhinī (a mother created by Śiva) 642
 Śaṅkhoddhāra (a deity) 2832
 Śaṅkhoddhāra (a sacred place) 100
 Śaṅku (Urgrasena's son) 116
 Śaṅku 224
 Śaṅkukarṇa (an ascetic) 224, 1473, 1475, 2928, 3157
 Sanmati 95
 Śaṁmukha (=Kārttikeya) 617, 2000, 3296
 Sannati (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Sannihita (a holy place) 1439
 Sannyāsin 1550, 1552
 Sanskrit 1076, 1081, 2144, 2748, 2958
 Śānta (Cupid's epithet) 339
 Śānta (=Vāsudeva) 3283, 3426
 Śāntā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Śāntā (an epithet of Gaṅgā) 288, 2084
 Śāntā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1994
 Śāntāna (a divine tree) 211, 306, 1021, 1073
 Śāntana (a missile) 630
 Śāntanu (a king) 1140, 1442
 Santapana (a missile) 630
 Śāntapana (a penance) 168, 2806
 Santardana (son of Kaikaya and Śrutakīrti) 120
 Śānti (a form of Phallus) 1470
 Śānti (Dakṣa's daughter) 30, 224
 Śānti (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 293, 3152
 Śānti (=tranquility) 332, 339, 935, 952
 Śānti (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Śāntipradāyini (a name of Gaṅgā) 288, 2084
 Śānti-sūkta 355
 Śānti-vrata 283
 Śāntika hymns 357
 Śāntiloka 3160
 Santosha (Tuṣṭi's son) 30
 Śāntyātita (a form of Phallus) 1470
 Saphalā-Ekādaśī-vow 2475, 2476f
 Śaphara 1015
 Sapiṇḍa 86, 89
 Sapiṇḍakarṇa 86
 Saptā (another name of Śamika) 119
 Saptadhārātīrtha 2857f
 Saptagaṅgā (a holy place) 1442
 Śaptagodāvarī (a holy place) 1486
 Saptagodāvarī (a river) 2214
 Saptamī 1606
 Saptamī, vow of 875
 Saptāṅga 3031
 Saptāṅgāni 2473
 Saptaparṇa (a tree) 1186, 1281

Saptapuri 3020
 Saptasapti (=the Sun) 871
 Saptasārasvata (a holy place) 1434f
 Saptāśva (Manu's son) 58
 Saptāśvadhurandhara 347
 Saptasrotā (a river) 2849
 Saptāśvavāhana (=the Sun) 878
 Saptavidhā Vāṇi 218
 Śarabha 224, 1022, 2387, 3037f, 3243
 Śarabha (a merchant) 3026, 3041ff, 3045
 Śarabhabheruṇḍa (a soldier) 2960
 Śarabhaṅga (a sage) 3235
 Śarada (a demon) 25
 Śāradā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1984, 1986
 Śaradvān 59
 Śāradvī (a river) 98
 Śaradvipa 721, 1370
 Saraka (a holy place) 1432
 Sarala (a tree) 159, 21281
 Saramā (Bibhīṣaṇa's wife) 497
 Sārameyādāna (a hell) 1843
 Śāraṇa (Ānakadundubhi's son) 120
 Śāraṇa 1931
 Śāraṇa (a demon) 1794
 Śāraṇī (a holy place) 439
 Sārasvata tīrtha 1478, 2831
 Sarasvatī 51, 155, 158, 167, 194, 211, 229, 249, 329, 403ff, 522, 524, 685, 711, 754, 1051, 1238, 1358, 1363f, 1423, 1426, 1434, 1436, 1440f, 1734, 1957, 2000, 2108, 2110, 2145f, 2224, 2262, 2315, 2399, 2401, 2407, 2426, 2440, 2444, 2506, 2570, 2604, 2620, 2631, 2770, 2789, 2791, 2819, 2831, 2835, 2926, 2957, 3014, 3017, 3062, 3122, 3160, 3385
 Sarasvatī (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Sarasvatītīrtha 100, 225
 Śārāvata (a tree) 627
 Sarayū (a river) 633, 1051, 1363, 1421, 1673, 1715, 1932, 2108, 2141, 2299, 2398, 2451, 2789, 2836, 3251f
 Śārdūla lake 2969
 Śarkarā dhenu 295
 Śarkarācala 297
 Śarkarā-saptamī 307, 311
 Śarmiṣṭhā (Vṛṣaparvan's daughter) 50, 109f, 1198, 1201
 Śārṅga bow 1955, 2320, 2579, 2583, 2603, 2924, 3156f, 3161, 3172, 3192, 3221, 3238, 3253, 3274, 3280f, 3288, 3291, 3296, 3426
 Śārṅgadhara (=Viṣṇu) 2533, 2561, 2968
 Śārṅgapāṇi 2943
 Śārṅgin 331, 2667, 2944, 3282, 3472
 Sarpa 24, 45

- Sarpanīvi (a holy place) 1428
 Sarpāroman (a demon) 2356f
 Sarpi (an ocean) 3341
 Sarupā (Maṅki's wife) 2855
 Śarva (a Rudra) 31, 221
 Śarva (an epithet of Śiva) 365, 500, 570, 606, 755, 2288, 2344, 2644, 2668, 2864, 2997
 Sarvā (a river) 1364
 Sarvabhakṣa (= Śani) 2440
 Sarvabhūtabhayaṅkarī (a deity) 394
 Sarvabhūtakṣaya (an epithet of Yama) 2085, 2561, 2737
 Sarvadevahrada (a holy place) 1486
 Sarvadeveśa 435
 Sarvaga (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Sarvagā (a divine power) 3172
 Sarvagatā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Sarvaka (a holy place) 1431
 Sarvakāra 1387
 Sarvakarman (Kalmāṣapāda's son) 70
 Sarvalokākṣa 2629
 Sarvamūrti 2452
 Sarvanetra 3157
 Sarvapati (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Sarvarūpin 2454
 Sarvasiddhipradasthala 1944
 Sarvaśreṣṭhottamottama 1944
 Sarvaṣṭi (Sāvitri's son) 523
 Sarvasukhapradā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Sarvātman 53, 293, 503, 2495
 Sarvatomukha 2644
 Sarvavedas (a brāhmaṇa) 3449
 Sarvavedavatī (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Śaryāti 1708
 Śaryāti (Vaivasvata Manu's son) 65
 Śaryāti (Nahuṣa's son) 109
 Śāsaka (a country) 1365
 Śāśāṅka 350
 Śāśāṅkasūryācyuta-vīra-viśvamūrti (an epithet of Brahmā) 433
 Śāsayāna (a holy place) 1426
 Śāśirekhā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1995
 Śāsinī (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951
 Śaṣkula 263
 Śaṣṭhāṁśa 1714
 Śaṣṭhī-vrata 287
 Śastravid (a king) 1684
 Śatabali 493
 Śatadhanvan 2604
 Śatadharman (Hṛdika's son) 117
 Śatadru (a river) 1363, 2619, 2837
 Śatagāmin (Jaṭāyu's son) 50
 Śataghni (a missile) 531, 631
 Śatāhvā (a river) 98
 Śatajit (Sahasrajit's son) 110
 Śatakratu 460, 471, 2433, 3248
 Śatakumbhā (a river) 1363
 Śatakumbha (a holy place) 1441
 Śatamālā (a river) 1363
 Śatanāma (a hymn in honour of Viṣṇu) 1227
 Śatānanda (a sage) 69, 264, 798, 2629
 Śatānandā (a divine mother created by Śiva) 643
 Śatānīka 2601
 Śatapatra (a flower) 366
 Śatarudrā (a river) 98
 Śatarūpā (Svāyambhuva Manu's wife) 29
 Śatasahasraka (a holy place) 1437
 Śatavali (a monkey) 1683
 Śatavaṭā (a river) 98
 Śatāyu (Purūravas's son) 108
 Śatāyudha 2443
 Satī (Dakṣa's daughter) 30, 570, 2955
 Satī (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Satī (a goddess) 32f, 363
 Satīrtha (a country) 1365
 Satīśiras (a gandharva) 221
 Śaṭkarma 1714, 2607
 Satkīrti (Sumada's wife) 1934
 Satrājī 118, 2653, 3287
 Śatrughna (Daśaratha's son) 413, 504, 1676, 1680f, 1682f, 1686, 1688, 1690, 1696f, 1698f, 1700, 1710, 1736, 1742f, 1746, 1748, 1750, 1757ff, 1762ff, 1765, 1775, 1777, 1780, 1784, 1786f, 1799, 1803, 1805, 1808, 1810ff, 1813f, 1846, 1850, 1852, 1854, 1858, 1862, 1866ff, 1869, 1875, 1883, 1893ff, 1896, 1898, 1903f, 1910, 1914, 1916f, 1919, 1924, 1934, 2307, 2590, 3227, 3230, 3253
 Śatrughna (Akrūra's son) 119
 Śatrughna (son of Yasaśvinī) 121
 Śaṭtilā Ekādaśī 2481, 2483f
 Sattrā 147
 Sattva (constituent of Prakṛti) 24, 526, 1527, 2014, 2109, 2187f, 2689, 3021, 3164
 Sattva (Raivata's son) 58
 Sattvatara (a country) 1365
 Sāttvika 1352, 2162, 2192, 2600, 2825, 3195
 Sāttvika bhāva 419
 Sāttviki Bhakti 2038
 Saturn 632, 2438f
 Sātvata 985, 2591
 Sātvata (Lord of Pañcāla) 73
 Sātvata (another name of Arṁśu) 114
 Sātvatas (Arṁśu's sons) 114
 Satya (a world) 316, 745, 1350, 1849
 Satya (truth) 935, 951, 1112, 2105, 2196, 2977

- Satyā (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 118, 122, 2648, 2650, 2654, 2717, 3287, 3292f
 Satyā 3159
 Satyabhāmā (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 122, 1952, 2648, 2712, 3292
 Satyadeva (=the Sun) 2086
 Satyadharma (a king) 3412, 3414
 Satyaghoṣa 3350
 Satyaketu (a king of Vidarbha) 1985
 Sātyaki (a sage) 123
 Satyaloka 1694, 2669, 3108, 3122, 3160, 3168, 3340
 Satyaratha (Satyavrata's son) 69
 Satyavādāna (a deity) 2832
 Satyavādinī 211
 Satyavān (king of Tejahpura) 1765, 1774ff, 1798, 1856
 Satyavān (Aśvapati's son) 1111
 Satyavān (a mountain) 2849
 Satyavat 1934
 Satyavati (Vyāsa's mother) 1934, 3339
 Satyavati (Subāhu's wife) 1934
 Satya-yuga 2578, 3545, 3547
 Saubhadra (a demon) 843
 Saubhāgya 365
 Saubhāgyakūpa (a well) 412
 Saubhāgyanātha 332
 Saubhāgyaśayana (a vow) 362, 366f
 Saubhāgyaṣaṭka 366
 Saubhari 3051, 3055, 3098
 Śauca (purity) 951
 Saudāminī (Vinata's daughter) 50
 Saudamini (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Saudāsa (=Mitrāsaha) 2843
 Saugandhikā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1982
 Sauhṛda (a country) 1365
 Saukalinī (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Saukhyasamudra (Cupid's epithet) 339
 Saumitra (=Lakṣmaṇa) 1934, 2490
 Saumya (a division of Bhārata) 3311
 Saumya (a mane) 2085
 Saumyā 322, 891
 Saumyā (a divine mother created by Śiva) 642
 Saumyā Madanavāsini 321
 Śaunaka 2, 44, 1296, 1350, 1491, 1573, 1639, 2718, 2742, 3007, 3009, 3128f, 3131
 Sauparṇa sūkta 356
 Sauparṇī (a divine mother created by Śiva) 642
 Saupura (a city) 2911
 Saura Purāṇa 2265
 Saura Upapurāṇa 2266
 Saurabha (a demon) 847
 Saurabheyī (a celestial nymph) 627
 Saurāṣṭra 1097, 1592, 2256, 2692, 2963
 Saura-sūkta 312
 Saurava (a holy place) 2831
 Śauri 117, 120, 121, 428, 2591, 2916, 3471
 Śauri (=Śani) 2439, 2441
 Śauri (=Aniruddha) 3300
 Śauri (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Śauri (a brāhmaṇa) 3524
 Śaurī (a divine mother created by Śiva) 642
 Saurila (a country) 1365
 Sauryavarman (a king) 2958
 Sautrāmaṇi (a sacrifice) 1040
 Sauvira (a country) 1365
 Sauvīrā (a river) 1238
 Savana 58
 Sāvarṇi Manu 59, 63
 Sāvarṇya Manu 59, 64
 Śāvasta (Yuvanāśva's son) 68
 Śāvasti 68
 Savitr 311, 503, 3274
 Sāvitra (a Rudra) 48
 Sāvitrī 33, 184, 185, 205, 206ff, 211, 212, 219, 428f, 435, 457, 1373, 1479, 1485, 2014, 2705, 2957, 3160, 3246, 3252
 Sāvitrī (a divine power) 3172
 Sāvitrī (a hymn) 652, 653
 Sāvitrī (Mother of Vedas) 685
 Sāvitrī (daughter of Dyumatsena) 1111
 Savyā (a river) 1364
 Savyasācin (=Arjuna) 2591
 Śāyaka (a deity) 2831
 Śayana festival 2641
 Śayanī 2517, 2519
 Seas, seven, 6, 160, 992
 Senānī (a Rudra) 523, 2379
 Śephālikā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1982
 Śeṣa 50, 221, 633, 1132, 1646ff, 1662f, 1734, 1869ff, 1879, 2111, 2243, 2364f, 2518, 2574, 2582, 2591, 2604, 2673f, 2917, 2923, 2939, 2960, 2981, 3117, 3197, 3252, 3256f, 3298
 Sesamum, black 366
 Śeṣaśāyika (a grove) 1943
 Setikā (a river) 2844
 Setubandha (a holy place) 2973, 3062
 Śibi 224, 1140, 2630, 3011, 3015f, 3051f, 3055, 3075f, 3082, 3094f
 Siddha 160, 235, 393, 454, 502, 517, 568, 623, 668, 749, 799, 815, 835, 848f, 866, 979, 994, 1013, 1068, 1212, 1223, 1243, 1244, 1275, 1280, 1340f, 1365, 1367, 1369, 1371, 1388, 1401, 1426, 1434, 1440, 1509, 1953, 2332, 2367, 2590, 2630, 2759, 2782, 2792, 2989, 2992, 3102, 3134, 3241
 Siddha (a holy place) 2832

- Siddhakṣetra (a holy place) 2315, 2883
 Siddhanātha (Śiva) 1217
 Siddhapura 2393
 Siddhasamādhi 2950, 2952
 Siddhāśrama 2426
 Siddhatīrtha 2884
 Siddhavana (a holy place) 211
 Siddhavaṭa 99
 Siddheśvara (=Śiva) 2288
 Siddheśvara (Viṣṇu's symbol) 984f
 Siddheśvaratīrtha 1399f
 Siddhi 329
 Siddhidāyini 211
 Siddhimantrādhika 2586
 Siddhismara (a holy place) 438
 Siddhiyoga 2903
 Sidhmaka (a disease) 671
 Śighraga (an evil spirit) 397, 2077
 Śikharinī 441
 Śikhiṇ (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Śikhiṇ (a sage) 2837
 Śikhipattrikā (a divine mother created by Śiva) 643
 Śikṣā 223
 Śīla (Śakuni's son) 1461
 Śīlādaja (a demon) 2378
 Śimha mountain 3311
 Śimhala/Simhaladvīpa (a country) 2256, 2958, 2965
 Śimhavatī (a cave) 2468
 Śimhikā (Vipracitti's wife) 50
 Śimhikā (Dakṣa's daughter) 522, 938
 Śimhikā (Mother of plants) 524, 813, 1591, 2676
 Śimhikā (a river) 2831
 Śimśapā (a tree) 361
 Śimśumāra 9
 Sin 698, 1030, 1159, 1162, 1163ff, 1244, 1640, 2063, 2174, 2193, 2435, 2711, 3020
 Sindhu (a country) 1364f, 2256, 2961
 Sindhu (a river) 433, 1238, 1358, 1363, 1421, 1423, 1501, 2570, 2789, 2831
 Sindhudvīpa (Ambariṣa's son) 69
 Sindhulākṣmi (a river) 1363
 Sindhusāgara (a holy place) 450, 1508
 Sinduvāra (a tree) 159, 1281
 flower 366
 Sineyu (Uśanas' son) 113
 Sinful behaviour 1160
 Sini (Mādrī's son) 117
 Sini (Anamitra's son) 119
 Śinivāka (a sage) 181
 Śinivāla (Satyā's son) 118
 Śipiviṣṭa (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 2583
 Śiprā (a river) 1364
 Śiradhvaja (=Janaka) 1879
 Śiraketu (=Janaka) 1879
 Śiśu-Cāndrāyaṇa 1623
 Śiśupāla 1991, 2592, 3128, 3303f, 3463, 3474
 Śiśupālaripu 3471
 Sitā 288, 415ff, 498, 799, 1358, 1648, 1650, 1655, 1661, 1667, 1670, 1673, 1736, 1792f, 1865, 1870f, 1882, 1887f, 1902, 1908, 1915, 1923, 1925, 1927f, 1931f, 1934, 1939ff, 1995, 2279, 2281, 2290, 2300, 2304, 2306f, 2489, 2505, 2605, 2925, 3170, 3234, 3236, 3238, 3241f, 3243, 3246f, 3249, 3227, 3336
 Sitā (a river) 1369, 2102, 3214
 Sitā (a form of Sāvitrī) 211
 Sitā (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 3152
 Sitāsita (=Prayāga) 2814
 Śitavana (a holy place) 1430
 Śitikaṇṭhanibha (=Śani) 2440
 Śitodakā (a river) 1369
 Śiva 7, 16, 44, 130, 142, 149, 201, 210, 281, 288, 290ff, 298ff, 311, 315, 323, 325, 327, 343, 345, 348, 355, 364, 366, 367, 394, 430, 441, 500, 556, 582, 584f, 608ff, 613ff, 631, 637ff, 652, 685, 771, 778ff, 781, 783, 785, 810, 817ff, 821, 838, 839ff, 849f, 853ff, 869, 875, 887, 1000, 1097, 1110, 1113, 1117, 1124, 1151ff, 1162, 1169, 1171ff, 1189, 1211f, 1271, 1281f, 1286ff, 1292, 1302, 1304f, 1313, 1317, 1326ff, 1334ff, 1351, 1369, 1378, 1386f, 1388, 1392f, 1399, 1403f, 1406, 1410, 1426f, 1428, 1432ff, 1438, 1442, 1446, 1475f, 1478f, 1485f, 1495, 1521, 1526, 1544, 1558, 1636, 1659, 1665, 1666f, 1682, 1778, 1784, 1808, 1811, 1814, 1816, 1818, 1907, 1919, 1939, 1944, 1949, 1955, 1970, 1973, 1993, 2004, 2106, 2144ff, 2150, 2157, 2161ff, 2164ff, 2168ff, 2174, 2178ff, 2183, 2186, 2188, 2191, 2196f, 2200, 2203f, 2205, 2212, 2215, 2217, 2220f, 2224f, 2226, 2233f, 2235f, 2237ff, 2240ff, 2243, 2245, 2249, 2251f, 2255, 2259, 2268f, 2271f, 2279, 2294, 2298, 2304, 2310, 2311f, 2320ff, 2334, 2342, 2344f, 2351, 2353, 2358, 2359f, 2361ff, 2364, 2374ff, 2377, 2380f, 2385ff, 2387, 2388ff, 2391, 2393, 2406, 2416, 2421, 2449, 2456f, 2466, 2515f, 2517, 2560, 2572, 2576, 2580, 2584, 2587f, 2591f, 2592, 2594, 2596, 2636, 2651, 2659f, 2668, 2675f, 2678f, 2682ff, 2686f, 2693, 2704, 2713f, 2718ff, 2729, 2738, 2758ff, 2771f, 2779f, 2810, 2815, 2824, 2831,

- 2840f, 2843ff, 2846, 2850, 2855, 2861f, 2864f, 2868, 2872, 2876ff, 2880f, 2887, 2890, 2901, 2913, 2924, 2926, 2929, 2931, 2944, 2950, 2957, 2965, 2967, 2968f, 2997, 3001, 3005, 3012, 3016, 3026, 3034, 3037, 3048, 3054, 3058, 3063, 3079, 3099, 3112, 3125ff, 3152, 3179, 3183, 3190f, 3200, 3225, 3240, 3245f, 3246f, 3300, 3325, 3327, 3329f, 3347, 3354, 3381, 3387, 3395, 3409, 3447, 3462, 3503, 3534, 3540
- Śiva (a sage) 123
 Śiva (Cupid's epithet) 339
 Śivā (name of a power) 388
 Śivā (deity) 394
 Śivā (=Pārvatī) 2215, 2587
 Śivā (=a form of Lakṣmī) 3170
 Śivadhārā (a river) 99
 Śivadharmā 1169
 Śivadūti (a divine mother) 383, 388, 390, 394f, 642
 Śivakāñcī 3014, 3017, 3063, 3123, 3125
 Śivakuṇḍa (a holy place) 211, 1995
 Śivaliṅga (a holy place) 211
 Śivaloka 327
 Śivanandā (a form of Sāvitrī) 211
 Śivānandā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1995
 Śiva Pinākin 326
 Śivapriya (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Śivapriyā (=Gaṅgā) 2084
 Śivarātri 2258, 2875, 3112
 Śivaśarman (a brāhmaṇa) 898f, 903, 906, 909ff, 1084, 1097f, 2356, 3015, 3018f, 3021f, 3024, 3026, 3038, 3040f, 3045, 3048
 Śivāṭa (a country) 1365
 Śivayānapriyā 394
 Sivodbheda 1426
 Skanda (=Kumāra) 392, 617, 685, 787f, 792, 795, 797, 812, 813, 831, 878, 1281, 1400, 1753, 2325, 2359, 2587, 2740, 3027, 3194
 Skanda Purāṇa 798, 2144, 2149f, 2266
 Skandatirtha (a holy place) 1396
 Skin 928
 Sky 651, 2331
 Smara (=Cupid) 1117, 2123, 2639
 Smaradā 321
 Smaradūti (Vṛndā's friend) 2367, 2370, 2372
 Smaraṇiyā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 326
 Smārta text 3311
 Smṛti 134, 224, 415, 649, 656, 2195, 2595, 3124, 3138, 3195, 3312
 Smṛti (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Smṛti (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Smṛti (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 233
 Smṛtipada (an epithet of Brahmā) 502
 Snakes 105, 629, 633, 634, 835, 1011, 1658, 2084, 2331
 Snātaka 740
 Snātalokatirtha 1430
 Śobhana (Candrasena's son) 2535, 2536ff
 Śoḍaśopacāra 2634
 Soma 187f, 192f, 318, 350, 451, 515, 523, 525, 891, 1708, 2033, 2288, 2720, 3160
 Soma (=the Moon) 533, 541f, 641, 649, 886, 999, 1216, 1293, 1363, 1397f, 1479, 1502, 2434, 2799, 3201, 3348
 Soma (Atri's son) 3127
 Soma 2311
 Soma doctrine 151
 Somanātha 2924, 2969
 Somapā (manes living in Sumanas world) 74, 2741
 Somaśānta 350
 Somaśarman (Sivaśarman's son) 898, 909ff
 Somaśarman (a brāhmaṇa of the Kauśika family) 943ff, 958f, 965ff, 973, 978ff, 985
 Somaśarman (a brāhmaṇa in the city of Mucukunda) 2536
 Somatirtha 1398, 1408, 1428, 1434, 1477, 2885
 Soma Varada 350
 Somavarcas (a gandharva) 221
 Soma-vrata 286
 Someśatirtha 1477
 Someśvara (a holy place) 211, 2831, 2885
 Son 2201
 Śoṇa (a river) 98, 1238, 1484, 2451, 2620
 Śoṇa (Dhanāñjaya's son) 2211, 2215f, 2221
 Śoṇapāta (a sacred place) 100
 Śoṇāśva (Rājādhiveva's son) 116
 Son-in-law 738
 Śoṣaṇa (a missile) 630
 Soul 1145ff, 1225, 1334
 Sparsana (a Marut) 2331
 Spring 317, 503, 1673
 Śraddhā 194, 205, 211, 1265, 1439
 Śraddhā (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Śraddha 71ff, 88, 97ff, 102, 103, 134, 135, 714ff, 722, 887f, 952, 965, 1444, 1468, 2041, 2096, 2108, 2157, 2159, 2253, 2300f, 2363, 2400, 2411, 2531, 2568f, 2690, 2742, 2836, 2838f, 2844, 2849, 2855, 2898f, 2956, 2082, 3087, 3090, 3141, 3334

- Śrāddha (things to be avoided) 15
 ,three kinds of 76
 Sraṣṭā (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Śrauta text 3311
 Śravaṇa (a brāhmaṇa) 3124
 Śravaṇa (a nakṣatra) 873, 3133
 Śrāvapa 322, 325, 340, 347, 387f, 877, 1404, 1527, 1614, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2406, 2462, 2519f, 2522, 2524, 2529, 2565, 2567, 2569, 2643, 2740, 2836, 3002, 3257, 3320
 Śravaṇā (daughter of Akrūra and Aśvinī) 119
 Śravas (= Śravaṇa) 873
 Śraviṣṭhā (daughter of Akrūra and Aśvinī) 119
 Śrgālavādāna (a demon) 225
 Śrī 31, 293, 321, 332, 339, 349, 484, 1228, 1713, 1846, 1942, 1950, 1996, 2006, 2582, 2604, 2897, 3136, 3146, 3148, 3152f, 3155f, 3161, 3164, 3201, 3209, 3213, 3225, 3232, 3268
 Śrī (a tree) 361
 Śrīda 3422
 Śrīdāman 1944, 2592
 Śridevā (Devakā's daughter) 116
 Śrī Devī (= Pārvatī) 1285, 1336
 Śrīdhara (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 292, 340, 1181, 1228, 1579, 1999, 2000, 2454, 2560, 2582, 2593, 2612, 2732, 3143, 3259, 3332, 3425, 3472
 Śrī Gadādhara 1999
 Śrī Gaṇeśa 2846, 3337
 Śrī Gokula 1983
 Śrī Hari (= Viṣṇu) 3109
 Śrī Hari (= Kṛṣṇa) 1632, 2008, 3015, 3020
 Śrīharipriya 1950
 Śrī Jagannātha 3484
 Śrīkānta (= Viṣṇu) 340
 Śrīkaṇṭha (= Viṣṇu) 2580, 2637
 Śrīkaṇṭha (a holy place) 1245
 Śrīkara 2612, 3422
 Śrīkeśava 1179
 Śrīkola (Viṣṇu's form) 3082
 Śrīkṛṣṇa 986, 1566f, 1627, 1644, 1941, 1966, 1986, 1992, 1997, 2010, 2029, 2452, 2459, 2979, 2986, 3142, 3305, 3307f, 3426, 3440, 3451, 3463
 Śrīkuṇḍala (Hemakuṇḍala's son) 1447
 Śrīkuṇḍja (a holy place) 1433
 Śrī Lakṣmī 2952
 Śrīmad Bhāgavata 2972, 2980
 Śrī Mādhava (= Viṣṇu) 2119
 Śrī Mahādeva 2394, 2580
 Śrī Maheśa 2863, 2871, 2873, 3080
 Śrī Mālārka 2861
 Śrīmān 224, 311
 Śrīmat (= Kṛṣṇa = Viṣṇu) 3259, 3425, 3472
 Śrīnidhi 3473
 Śrīnivāsa (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 1228, 2580, 2640, 2645, 2969, 3473
 Śrī Nṛsiṃha (= incarnation of Viṣṇu) 2585
 Śrī Paramārtha (= Viṣṇu) 2613
 Śrīpati (= Viṣṇu) 440, 1181
 Śrīparṇā (a river) 99
 Śrī Parvata 1484
 Śrīpati 2612, 3422f, 3472
 Śrīpriyā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1994
 Śrīpura (a city in Kalinga) 1081
 Śrī Puruṣottama 3484
 Śrī Raghunātha 1770f, 1784
 Śrī Rāma 1784, 1873, 2308, 3226
 Śrī Rāmacandra 1715
 Śrī Rāmeśvara 2316
 Śrīraṅga (Viṣṇu) 983, 2969
 Śrīraṅga (a holy place) 2973, 3143, 3311
 Śrī Ravi (= the Sun) 2737
 Śrī Ravi-vow 2861
 Śrīśa (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 292, 3332
 Śrī Śaila 211, 1350, 1388, 1468, 2255, 2263, 2288, 2392f, 2925
 Śrī Sūrya (= the Sun) 878
 Śrītīrtha 1430, 1477
 Śrī Trivikrama 3383
 Śrī Vaikuṇṭha 3123
 Śrīvallabha (= Viṣṇu) 2613
 Śrīvāna 1944
 Śrīvarāha 367
 Śrī Vāsudeva 1045, 1179, 1970, 3388
 Śrīvatsa (the mark on Viṣṇu's chest) 121, 1226, 1790, 2035, 2089f, 2626, 2943, 3205, 3207, 3224, 3257
 Śrīvatsadhārin 332, 2495
 Śrī Viśāla (a country) 1690
 Śrī Viṣṇu 3106, 3166
 Śrī Vyāsa 3388
 Śrīṅgalā (an insect) 2124
 Śrīṅgāṭaka (a plant, its fruit) 206, 365
 Śrīṅgātīrtha 1410
 Śrīṅgavat (a mountain) 1356, 1359
 Śrīṅgaverapura (a holy place) 438, 1487
 Śrījaya (Śamika's son) 121
 Śrījayī (Bhājamāna's wife and Bhāja's mother) 115
 Śrīkhala (a holy place) 158
 Śrīkhalin 2362
 Śrotramaya (= Brahman) 3262
 Srṣṭi (Rāma's minister) 3248
 Srṣṭi (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 293

- Śrṣṭikartā (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
 Śrṣṭikhaṇḍa 895, 1347, 2318
 Śrṣṭikṛt (an epithet of Brahmā) 436
 Śrṣṭimauli (Akrūra's son) 119
 Śruc 187
 Śrucāhasta (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Śrughna (a country) 634
 Śruta (Medhā's son) 30
 Śrutadevā (Devaka's daughter) 115
 Śrutadhārā (a queen of Vasudeva) 120
 Śrutakīrti (Kaikaya's wife) 120
 Śrutakīrti (Śatrughna's wife) 1934, 3230
 Śrutāyu (Candra's son) 70
 Śrutavati (Viramaṇi's wife) 1934
 Śruti 224, 649, 2331, 2741, 3124, 3312f
 Śruti (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Śrutidātā (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Śrutikanyā 1951
 Śrutiśravā (Devaka's daughter) 116
 Śrutivibhramā (a celestial nymph) 628
 Sruva 187
 Sruvahaṣṭa (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Stambha (a sage) 58
 Stambhatīrtha (a holy place) 1398
 Stanapoṣaka (a tribe) 1366
 Sthāneśvara 2831
 Sthāṇu (a sage) 181
 Sthāṇu (a Rudra) 221, 2331
 Śiva 364, 1358
 Sthāṇuvaṭa (a holy place) 1438
 Sthavirākāra (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Sthūla (an epithet of Śiva) 2344
 Sthūlākṣa (a sage) 264, 2629
 Sthūlaroman (=Śani) 2440
 Sthūlaśiras (a sage) 264
 Sthūlaśiras (chief of Pramathas) 2629
 Stoma 25
 Stotr (a priest) 511
 Subāhu (a sage) 58
 Subāhu (a king) 1250, 1252, 1253, 1259f, 1264f, 1267, 1276, 1748f, 1778, 1787, 1854, 1856, 1934
 Subāhu (Vṛka's son) 2394
 Subala (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Subālaka (Brahmadatta's minister's son) 91
 Subandhu (a sage) 2837
 Śubha 2356, 3152
 Śubhā (name of a woman) 702
 Subhadra /Bhadra (a cowherd) 1961
 Subhadrā (a form of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Subhadrā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Subhadrā (a river) 1238, 2831, 2897
 Subhadrā (daughter of Devakī) 120, 1951, 3484f
 Subhadra (a doorkeeper in Vaiṣṇava) 3157
 Subhaga (a monkey) 3243
 Śubhāṅgada (younger brother of Rukmāṅgada) 1813, 1818
 Śubhākāra (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Śubhanāma (Kadrū's son) 51
 Śubha Prajñā (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 233
 Śubha-saptamī 307, 311
 Śubhāsyā 45
 Subhīmā (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 122
 Śubhra 2613
 Śubhras (name of a people) 634
 Subhū (Ugrasena's son) 116
 Subrahmaṇya 2452, 2482
 Subrahmaṇya (singer of Sāmans) 511
 Subtle Elements 1353
 Sūcaka (a ghost) 2077
 Sucāru (Rukmiṇi's son) 123
 Śuci (Autami Manu's son) 58
 Śuci (Tāmrā's daughter) 50
 Śuci (Śoṇāśva's son) 117
 Sūcimukha (an evil spirit) 397
 Śucipad (=Brahman) 3262
 Śucismitā 2171, 2179, 2186
 Śuciśravas (a sage) 1964, 2583
 Sudakṣiṇā (daughter of king of Magadha) 3029
 Sudāman (a country) 1365
 Sudarṇa (Samauja's son) 117
 Sudāṇḍa (Daṇḍapāṇi's brother) 3448
 Sudarśana (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Sudarśana (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 2615, 2732, 3301f
 Sudarśana (disc) 1730, 2089, 2594, 2687, 3133, 3139
 Sudarśana (a brāhmaṇa) 1618
 Sudarśana island 1355
 Sudarśin (an ascetic) 91
 Sudāsa 2843
 Sudāsa (Kalmāṣapāda's father) 11
 Sudatī (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Sudatta 1082
 Śuddhāṅga (a snake) 633
 Śuddhavaṭa (a holy place) 405
 Śuddhodana 2593
 Sudeṣṇa (a country) 1365
 Sudeva 2294
 Sudeva (Devaka's son) 116
 Sudevā (Vedarāja's daughter and Ikṣvāku's wife) 1062, 1082, 1098, 1100f
 Sudhāma (a sage) 59
 Sudhanvan (Vairāja's son) 1000
 Sudhanvan 2629
 Sudharman (son of Akrūra and Aśvinī) 119

- Sudharman (a king, same as Kapila) 2427
 Sudhira (Akrūra's son) 119
 Sudina (a holy place) 1433
 Śūdra 26, 85, 96, 274, 289, 291, 344f, 350, 464ff, 571, 634, 740, 743ff, 781, 894, 1274, 1411, 1619, 2012, 2254, 2391, 2444, 2464, 2551, 2635, 2646, 2661, 2719, 2818, 2848, 2883, 2927, 3009, 3138, 3312, 3492, 3505, 3546, 3547
 Sudyumna (another name of Ila) 68
 Suffering 1145, 1155
 Sugandha (a demon) 847
 Sugandhamānasa (a grove) 1943
 Sugandhā (a holy place) 1441, 2831
 Sugandhā (a deity) 211
 Sugar 307
 Sugarcane 365
 Sugatas (Buddhists) 2796
 Sughargharā (a river) 1238
 Sughora (a demon) 847
 Sugitā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Sugrdhrī (Tāmrā's daughter) 50
 Sugriva 493ff, 499, 501, 801, 1683, 1793, 1854, 1864, 1911, 1918, 2182, 2185, 2282ff, 2284, 2286, 2289, 3238, 3247, 3253, 3326
 Sugriva (a divine chariot) 3308
 Suhamṣī (a river) 1238
 Śuka (Nariṣyanta's son) 68
 Śuka (a sage) 73, 1674, 1931, 1953, 1965, 1970, 2982, 2983, 3005, 3007, 3009, 3428,
 Śuka (a demon) 1794
 Sukalā (Kṛkālā's wife) 1056, 1057, 1059, 1067, 1076, 1090, 1101f, 1104, 1108, 1114ff, 1117f, 1123ff
 Sukalā (a river) 1238
 Sukālins 287
 Sukanyā (Śaryāti's daughter) 68, 1702, 1704
 Śūkara (a holy place) 2718f, 2724
 Sukarman (Kuṇḍala's son) 1128ff, 1137, 1201, 1207f
 Sukarṣa (Sāvitṛī's son) 523
 Śukasaṅgīti (a gandharva) 1413
 Sukauśikī (a river) 1238
 Sukeśī (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Suketu (Subāhu's brother) 1747f, 1750, 1759, 1762
 Suketu (Sagara's son) 2396
 Suketumat (a king) 2478
 Sukha (Dharma's son) 30
 Sukhadā (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Sukhadā (a river) 2570
 Sukhaprada (= Viṣṇu) 3472
 Sukhaprasādhāna (a grove) 1943
 Sukhasaṅgīti (a gandharva) 2781
 Sukhasmitā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Śukla (a disease) 671
 Śuklatīrtha 1400ff
 Śukra (= Venus) 892
 Śukra (a sage) 479f, 1328, 1336, 2183, 2325f, 2333, 2336, 2339, 2380, 2518, 2594, 2669, 2967, 2972
 Śukra (Sāvarṇi Manu's son) 59
 Śukra (Autṭami Manu's son) 58
 Śukra, (also known as Kāvya) 126, 127, 128, 133, 134, 224, 379, 845, 1328
 Śukreśvara (a holy place) 1478
 Sukṛta (Vasiṣṭha's son) 58
 Sukṛta (Dhanapāla's son) 2506
 Sūkṣma (an epithet of Śiva) 2344
 Śukti (a disease) 671
 Sūktimatī (a river) 1364
 Sukumāra (a country) 1369
 Sukumārī (a river) 1369
 Sulakṣaṇā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1952, 1981
 Sulakṣmaṇā (Syamantaka's daughter) 3290
 Sulalita 1943
 Śūlaprota (a hell) 1843
 Śūlatāpī (a river) 98
 Śūlin (an epithet of Śiva) 326, 500
 Sulobha/Lobha 1014ff
 Sulocanā (wife of king Vikrama of Tāladhvaja) 3368ff, 3373, 3375, 3384
 Sulocanā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Suloman 225
 Sumada (a king) 1691, 1692ff, 1695, 1698, 1778, 1787, 1818, 1854, 1919, 1934
 Sumālin 3494
 Sumālin (a demon) 1012, 3222
 Sumallikā (a country) 1365
 Sumanā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Sumanā (wife of Somaśarman, a Brāhmaṇa of the Kauśika family) 943ff, 959, 962, 965, 973ff, 978ff, 985
 Sumanā (Devaśarman's wife) 2047f, 2050f, 2054, 2060
 Sumanas (Dhanapāla's son) 2506
 Sumanas (an ascetic) 91
 Sumanas (Diti's son) 628
 Sumanas (a name of worlds) 74
 Sumanohārī (Suratha's wife) 1934
 Sumantra (Rāma's minister) 484, 1683f, 1875
 Sumarī (a river) 1238
 Sumati (a sage) 264, 2629
 Sumati (Diti's son) 628
 Sumati (Sāvarṇi Manu's son) 59
 Sumati (Sāvitṛī's son) 523
 Sumati (Rāma's minister) 1700, 1748,

- 1765, 1778, 1787, 1813, 1851, 1855, 1915
 Śumbha (a demon) 561, 614, 2333, 2343, 2355f, 2361, 2375, 2377f, 2382, 2384ff, 2671f, 2687, 2952
 Sumedhā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Sumedhas (a gandharva) 2773
 Sumeru mountain 3116
 Sumitra (Mitravindā's son) 123
 Sumitra (Harimitra's son) 1450
 Sumitra (son of Caitraratha, a brāhmaṇa) 2792
 Sumitrā (Kṛṣṇa's wife) 122
 Sumitrā (Daśaratha's wife) 417, 464, 1656, 1799, 1924, 2270, 2590, 3223, 3227
 Sumukha (a sage) 264, 1652f, 1655
 Sumukha (a bird) 1356
 Sumukha 3157
 Sumukhī (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Sun 64, 145, 224, 291, 317, 346, 357, 389, 402, 483, 532, 549, 555, 624, 641, 651, 655, 714, 783, 785, 847, 866, 867ff, 871, 873, 875f, 878, 879ff, 891, 1030, 1183, 1221, 1350, 1397, 1401, 1421, 1433, 1451, 1459, 1476, 1496, 1505, 1630, 2003, 2026, 2041, 2061, 2068, 2071, 2076, 2083, 2086, 2088, 2092, 2099, 2110, 2112f, 2133, 2135, 2276, 2320, 2324, 2399, 2407f, 2416, 2431, 2439, 2465, 2511, 2514, 2521, 2523, 2531, 2546f, 2558, 2584, 2594, 2601, 2604, 2642, 2651, 2657, 2660f, 2690, 2702, 2756, 2761, 2762, 2765, 2767, 2768ff, 2789, 2792, 2803, 2828, 2883, 2887, 2903, 2905, 2923, 2984, 2998, 3002, 3072, 3079, 3110, 3148, 3152, 3157, 3246, 3355, 3376, 3380, 3409, 3444, 3452, 3457, 3497, 3515, 3517
 Śunaḥsakha 276
 Sunāman (Ugrasena's son) 116
 Sunāman 3281
 Sunanda (Viṣṇu's attendant) 2089
 Sunanda (a brāhmaṇa) 2944
 Sunanda 2905
 Sunandā (a divine mother created by Śiva) 643, 2943
 Sunandā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1952
 Sunāsā (a river) 1364
 Sunda (a demon) 820, 2766
 Sundara (Kāṇḍa) (a division of Rāmāyaṇa) 1930, 1931
 Sundarī (a goddess) 1975
 Sundarī (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Sundarī (Maya's daughter) 50
 Sundarikā (a holy place) 1464
 Sunday 308, 340, 787, 876
 Sunitha (son of Caidyā and Śrutaśra-vas) 120
 Sunitha (Nagnajiti's son) 123
 Sunithā (Mṛtyu's daughter) 1003, 1014, 1017, 1018, 1026, 1028, 1030f, 1033f, 1036, 1047
 Sunitra (Gāndhārī's son) 117
 Śūnyapāka (a sage) 181
 Supadminī (a river) 1238
 Suparṇa 40, 386
 Suparṇa (=Garuḍa) 666, 2364
 Suparṇā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Suparṇas 288
 Supārśva (son of Akrūra and Aśvinī) 119
 Supārśva (a holy place) 211, 300, 2831
 Suparvā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Suparvan (a Sādhya) 523
 Suprabha 1413
 Suprabhā (Svarbhānu's daughter) 50, 2781
 Suprabhā (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 228, 403, 417
 Suprabhā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1982
 Suprajñā (wife of king Kocaraśa) 3523, 3530
 Suprakāśa (Viṣṇu's messenger) 3456
 Suprasannā (a name of Gaṅgā) 288
 Supratika (a quarter-elephant) 1372
 Śupratikṣa (Viṣṇu's messenger) 3456
 Supratiṣṭhita 3157
 Suprayogā (a river) 1364
 Supreme Being 1875, 1952, 2584, 2594, 3262, 3270, 3292, 3297, 3326
 Supreme Brahman 2591
 Supreme Soul 1332, 1529, 2344, 2530, 2615, 2942, 2987, 3148
 Supreme Spirit 812, 1553, 2576, 2582, 2902, 2937, 2968, 2972, 3009
 Supuṇyā (a river) 1364
 Suputraśata (a hymn) 1227
 Śūra 112, 145, 1366
 Surā (an ocean) 3341
 Surā (Pṛthā's mother) 120
 Surabhānu (a demon) 546
 Surabhi (the divine cow) 244, 1774, 2562, 2984, 3037
 Surabhi (wife of Kaśyapa who gave birth to snakes, jackals, crows etc.) 51, 523, 524
 Suramardana (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Surapriya (an epithet of Brahmā) 436, 438
 Surasā (Dakṣa's daughter) 522
 Surasā (Kaśyapa's wife) 48, 50
 Śūrasena (a country) 112, 1364f
 Śūrasenā (Akrūra's wife) 119
 Suraśreṣṭha (an epithet of Brahmā) 436

- Surāṣṭra (a country) 634, 1365
 Surāsuraguru 435
 Suratacandrikā (wife of Bhadrāśva) 1592, 1595, 1597
 Suratapriya (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Suratavāsini (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Suratha (a king) 1847ff, 1850f, 1856f, 1859f, 1861, 1862ff, 1865, 1910, 1934
 Suratha (a country) 1370
 Surekhā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981f
 Sureśa 2452
 Sureśā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1994
 Śūrpanakhā (a demoness) 1686, 1931, 3222
 Suruci (a gandharva) 1012
 Surūpā (Devaka's daughter) 116
 Surūpā (Daśaratha's wife) 2270
 Suruthā (a river) 1238
 Sūrya 311, 346, 877, 2577, 2590, 2883
 Sūryārkatīrtha 1486
 Sūryatejasā 2398
 Sūryatīrtha 1430, 1477
 Sūryavarcas (a gandharva) 221
 Suśamā (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Suśaṅkha (a gandharva) 1017f, 1029, 1032, 1042, 1047f
 Suśarman (a wicked man) 2906, 2908f
 Suṣeṇa (a demon) 140
 Suṣeṇa (chief of monkeys) 493, 3243, 3248, 3251
 Suśīla 1413, 2781
 Suśīlā (a form of Lakṣmī) 3170
 Suśīlā (daughter of Suśīla) 1413, 1419, 2781, 2787
 Suśīla (Syamantaka's daughter) 3290
 Suśīlā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1952, 1982
 Śuṣka (= Śani) 2440
 Suśobhanā (Ākatha's wife) 2296, 2297
 Śuśrūṣā (service) 952, 957
 Suṣumnā (an artery) 1107, 1988, 2124
 Susvadhā (sonless manes) 74
 Susvarā (a daughter of Svaravedin) 1413, 1419, 2781, 2787
 Sūta (Sūti's son) 1005
 Sutala (a lower region) 386, 3340
 Sūtapa (a country) 1365
 Sūtāpana (Suratha's son) 1850
 Sutapasya (Tāmasa Manu's son) 58
 Sūtārā (daughter of Candrakānta) 1413, 2771, 2787
 Sutarakṣyā (Subāhu's wife) 1267
 Sūti (Sūta's father) 3
 Sutikṣṇa (a sage) 3235
 Sutīrthaka 1430
 Suvaha (a Sādhya) 523
 Suvarṁśa (Samauja's son) 117
 Suvarcā (Dadhici's wife) 2879
 Suvarcas (son of Akrūra and Aśvinī) 119
 Suvarman (consecrated as the lord of eastern quarter by Brahmā) 57
 Suvarṇa (a king) 3418
 Suvarṇa (Sāvarṇi Manu's son) 59
 Suvarṇa (a sage) 1964
 Suvarṇākhyā (a holy place) 1441, 1443
 Suvarṇapuṭaka (a region) 633
 Suvarṇaretas (the Sun) 878
 Suvarṇatilaka (a holy place) 1396
 Suvela (a mountain) 1793
 Suveśā (Daśaratha's wife) 2270, 2281
 Suvīra (a vaiśya) 1221, 2066
 Suvrat~ (an epithet of Brahmā) 503
 Suvrata (a devotee of Viṣṇu—same as Somaśarman) 943, 977, 981ff, 985, 1019, 1020
 Suvratā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1981
 Svadhā (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Svadhā (an exclamation) 150, 205, 295, 364, 647, 809, 2527
 Svadhā (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951, 3152
 Svadhā (a river) 1238
 Suyodhana (Kakutstha's son) 68
 Svadharman (Dṛṣṭa's son) 68
 Svagandhi (a sage) 264
 Svaḥ (a world) 316, 362, 2518, 3340
 Svāhā (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951, 3152
 Svāhā (an exclamation) 449, 647, 809, 2527, 2749, 3246
 Svāhā (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Svāhā (a form of Sāvitṛī) 211
 (a deity) 1270
 Svāhā (wife of Agni) 194, 205, 327, 364
 Svāhā (a river) 1238
 Svāhā (a holy place) 2831
 Svāmitīrtha 2854
 Swapnā (Satrājīt's wife) 118
 Svarā 2703ff
 Svarā (a form of the deity Bhārati) 2689
 Svaravedin 2781
 Svarbhānu (Indumati's father) 1297
 Svarga (the sun) 878
 Svargabindutīrtha 1409
 Svargadvāra (a holy place) 1457
 Svargakhaṇḍa 1349, 1563, 1645, 2318
 Svargārohaṇa parvan 2265
 Svarlakṣmī (a part of Māyā) 808
 Svarṇā (a celestial nymph) 2326
 Svarṇabhānu 50
 Svarṇadantikā 2359

Svarṇalomāpanayana (a holy place) 1431
 Svarṇarekhā (a lady dear to Kṛṣṇa) 1982
 Svārociṣa Manu 51, 58
 Svarudra (an epithet of Brahmā) 439
 Svaruṇā (a river) 1238
 Svarūpa (Diti's son) 628
 Svasṛpa (Kauśika's son) 90
 Svarvedin 1413
 Śvasana (a Marut) 2331
 Svasti (an exclamation) 809
 Svastika 194, 2246, 2718
 Svāti (Vṛjinivān's son) 113
 Svayambhū (=the Sun) 878
 Svāyambhuva Manu 9, 57, 58, 59, 186, 444, 1010f, 3029, 3190, 3221, 3328, 3335
 Svedita (Śiva's attendant) 2310
 Śveta (son of Vipracitti) 530, 546
 Śveta (a king) 453
 Śveta (a mountain) 1356, 1358, 3311
 Śvetā (a river) 2845
 Śveta dvīpa 383, 460, 501, 2458, 2590, 3170, 3195
 Śvetagaṅgā 3483
 Śvetaketu (a sage) 2837
 Śveta mountain 2391
 Śvetapati 2612
 Śvetāraṇya 475
 Śvetavāhana (Rājādhīva's son) 117
 Śvetavalkalinī (a river) 2838
 Śvetodbhava (a holy place) 2844
 Śyāma (son of Mīdhuṣa and Bhojā) 119
 Śyāma (a sacred fig tree) 2401
 Śyāma (a mountain) 1368f
 Śyāmā 1595
 Śyāmabālā 1596f
 Syamantaka (a gem) 117, 118, 3287
 Syamantaka (king of Madra) 3290
 Syamantapañcaka (a holy place) 2183
 Śyāmapūrvodadhi (a village) 1943
 Śyāmavata 2444
 Śyenī (Tāmrā's daughter) 50
 Tāḍakā 3228
 Taittiri (a mother created by Śiva) 642
 Taijasa (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 1046
 Taijasa (aharṅkāra) 1353
 Taijasa (a holy place) 1437
 Taisi 2589
 Taittira 3195
 Takṣaka 50, 57, 221, 439, 633, 782, 848, 1000, 1009, 1425
 Tāla (a grove) 1942

Tālahaya (Satrājit's son) 110
 Tālajaṅgha (Jayadhvaja's son) 112
 Tālajaṅgha (a demon) 2467
 Tālajaṅgha (a tribe) 2395
 Talātala (a lower region) 386, 3340
 Tālatīrtha 1477
 Tama (one of the Viśvedevas) 523
 Tamas 24, 509, 527, 1527, 2014, 2109, 2187
 Tāmasa 2162, 2316, 2825, 3021
 Tamasā (a river) 633, 1364
 Tamasā 2192
 Tāmasa creation 14, 58
 Tāmasī devotion 2038
 Tāmbūla 699, 870
 Tāmisra (a hell) 28, 266, 1842, 2129
 Tamobhedī (=the Sun) 878
 Tamohantā (=the Sun) 2997
 Tamonadī 437
 Tamonuda 437
 Tāmrā (Marīci's wife) 48, 50
 Tāmrā (a river) 1364
 Tāmrabandhu (Rohiṇī's son) 123
 Tāmrālipta (a tribe) 1365
 Tāmrāparṇī 2698
 Tāmrāliptakas (a people) 634
 Tanavāla (a country) 1365
 Taṅgana (a country) 1365
 Tanks, construction of 759, 2413
 Tantra 2088f
 Tāntrika worship 2087
 Tanuja (Manu's son) 58
 Tanūja (a Sādhya) 523
 Tapa (Manu's son) 58
 Tapamūla (Tapodhana Manu's son) 58
 Tapana (=the Sun) 877f
 Tāpana (=the Sun) 878
 Tapana (a hell) 672, 2800, 3531
 Tapas (a world) 316, 368, 629, 2105, 2518, 3340
 Tapas 951
 Tāpaseśvaratīrtha 1399
 Tapasya (Manu's son) 58
 Tapatī 63, 65
 Tāpatraya 248, 2581
 Tāpī (a river) 1051, 1421, 1715, 2108, 2110, 2398, 2567, 2570, 2789, 2836
 Tapodarśī (Tāmasa Manu's son) 58
 Taporāśī (Manu's son) 58
 Taptakṛcchra (a vow) 1623, 2806
 Taptavāluka (a hell) 2710
 Tāpya 500
 Tāpyamāna 500
 Tāra (son of Śakuni, a sage) 1461
 Tāra (a demon) 530, 546, 552
 Tārā (a holy place) 2831, 2944
 Tārā (Bṛhaspati's wife) 104, 105, 489, 3096

- Tārā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Tārā (Vāli's wife) 493, 800
 Tāraka (a deity) 2831
 Tāraka 124, 221, 560f, 569f, 618, 622, 1753, 1815, 2325, 2362
 Tārakāmaya (war) 124, 125, 489, 526, 546, 554f, 3096
 Tārāmālinī 1982
 Tāraṇḍa (a holy place) 1440
 Tārāpīḍa (Candrāvaloka's son) 70
 Tarasvin (son of Sāmba and Kāmyā) 123
 Tāreya (a demon) 831ff
 Tārighraha (a tribe) 1365
 Tārīkika 2741
 Tārksya 221, 515
 Taste 223, 1353
 Tātaka (a demon) 1791
 Tejahpura (a city) 1765
 Tejas 927
 Thought 953
 Tikṣṇāṁśu (=the Sun) 347, 2883
 Tilabhāga (a tribe) 1365
 Tiladagdhā/Tiladugdhā Ekādaśī 1227, 2101
 Tilaprabhā (a celestial nymph) 2343
 Tilottamā (a celestial nymph) 212, 1694, 2320, 2343, 2766f, 2771
 Timi 1422
 Timirāśa (=the Sun) 878
 Tīrthaparvan 6
 Tīrthaprastha 3123
 Tīrtharāja (Prayāga) 2657
 Tīrthasaptaka 3126
 Tīrthodbhava (a sacred place) 97
 Tiryaksrotas (a kind of creation) 21
 Trayyeruṇa (Tridhanvan's son) 69
 Tīrthakoṭī (a holy place) 1481
 Tiryakyonya 22, (same as Tiryaksrotas)
 Tongue 928
 Tortoise (Viṣṇu's incarnation) 3174, 3185, 3197
 Torture 1189
 Torture caused by Yama 1172
 Toṭaka (a metre) 1387f
 Touch 223, 1353
 Tranquility 935, 950, 1120
 Trayodaśī 2545, 2665
 Trees 159f, 227, 246, 349, 359, 361f, 626f, 634, 762, 766, 1021, 1087, 1186, 1281, 1384f, 1838, 2393, 2413, 2479, 2791
 Tretāgni 223
 Tretāyuga 17, 247, 444, 472, 508, 894, 917, 1043, 1274, 1367, 1488, 1572, 1579, 1618, 1624, 1633, 2092, 2095, 2152, 2573, 2749, 2762, 2836, 2855, 3389, 3434, 3486, 3547
 Tribhuvaneśvara (a Linga) 1387
 Trident-holder 364, 432, 611, 2877
 Tridhanvan (Sambhūti's son) 69
 Tridharma 503
 Tridivā (a river) 1363
 Trigāṅgā (a holy place) 1442
 Trijaṭin 503
 Trikūṭa (a mountain) 211, 438, 1854, 2831, 3340
 Trilocana 151, 438, 1478
 Trilocanā 394
 Trimadhu 164
 Trinetra 500, 503
 Trimūrtipati 2613
 Tripād 3154, 3161
 Tripada (=heaven) 2587
 Tripathagā 805, 3214
 Tripiṇḍasrāddha 88
 Tripura 439, 598, 609, 643, 778, 843f, 1280, 1311, 1384f, 1387ff, 1975, 2288, 2591, 2708, 2815, 2901, 3135, 3266, 3296, 3328, 3446
 Tripurabhairava (=Śiva) 2968
 Tripurādhiśa 438
 Tripuraghna 2668
 Tripuruṣa 141
 Trisandhyā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Trisandhyā 2831
 Trisenā (a river) 1363
 Triśikhara (=Triakūṭa) 517
 Triśiras (a demon) 2589, 3236
 Trisprśā (a kind of Ekādaśī) 1227, 2101, 2442ff, 2445ff
 Triśṛṅga (=Triakūṭa) 635
 Trisuparṇa 164
 Triṣṭubh (metre) 25
 Triśūlapatra (a holy place) 1441
 Trivarga (a country) 1365
 Trivenī 2401, 2543
 Trivikrama 368, 383, 534, 545, 2002, 2587, 2627, 2943, 2998, 3143, 3473
 Triviṣṭapa (a holy place) 2845
 Trivṛtsoma 25
 Trṇabindu (a sage) 1403
 Trṇāmbu (a sage) 264
 Trṇāvarta (a demon) 1606
 Trṇāyu (a gandharva) 221
 Trṣṇā 30
 Trṭiyā 324
 Truth 550, 1112, 1120, 2413
 Tryambaka 285, 364, 438, 500, 1400, 2245, 2316, 2668, 2969
 Tulāpuruṣa 2725, 3502
 Tulasī 785, 795ff, 798f, 801, 1210, 1329, 1567, 1611, 1629ff, 1632, 1727, 1847, 1849, 1969, 2004, 2111, 2155, 2371, 2392, 2404ff, 2408, 2409, 2421, 2446, 2450f, 2521, 2542, 2617, 2647, 2652, 2661f, 2665, 2667, 2689ff,

- 2696, 2709, 2712ff, 2734, 2856,
 2984, 3063, 3136, 3139, 3143, 3264,
 3534, 3537, 3544
 Tulasi-vallabha 3472
 Tumburu 454, 847, 1357
 Tuṇḍakarna 112
 Tuṅga (a holy place) 158
 Tuṅgabhadra (a river) 633, 1051,
 1421, 2108, 2110, 2789, 2836, 2925,
 2954, 2989, 2998f
 Tuṅgavegā (a river) 1364
 Turiya (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 1046
 Turu (a demon) 847
 Turu (Yayāti's son) 1194, 1261, 1308
 Tuṣāra (a tribe) 1366
 Tuṣita (gods) 88
 Tuṣṭi 321, 329, 332, 339
 Tuṣṭi (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Tuṣṭi (an epithet of Lakṣmī) 293
 Tuṣṭi (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Tuṣṭi (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Tavṣṭr 62ff, 221, 255, 311, 331, 347,
 524, 530, 617, 651, 878, 2330
 Uccaiḥśravas 34, 57, 835, 1590, 2594,
 2961, 3292
 Udadhipriya (= Viṣṇu) 351
 Udāna (a vital air) 695, 1333
 Udāsina (a brāhmaṇa) 204
 Udaya (a mountain) 634
 Uddālaka (a sage, disciple of Bharad-
 vāja) 1491, 1591, 2837
 Uddhava 1974, 2592, 2986, 3428
 Udgātṛ 40, 189, 193, 425, 1981
 Udvaha (a Marut) 631
 Ugra 31, 365, 487
 Ugradanṣṭra (a warrior) 1785
 Ugrahaya (a king) 1684
 Ugrajanman (a brāhmaṇa) 2609
 Ugrasena (son of Avanti king) 116
 Ugrasena (king of Magadha) 1085f,
 1089, 2591, 3283, 3286, 3304, 3308
 Ugrasena 1992
 Ugraśravas (a king) 1684
 Ugraśravas (a sage) 2837
 Ugrāśva (a warrior in Śatrughna's
 army) 1750, 1934
 Ugratapas (a sage) 1961, 1981
 Ugravāha (a king) 1737
 Ujjainī/Ujjayinī 1428, 1835, 1906
 Ujjvala (Kufjāla's son) 1222ff, 1237,
 2279
 Uktha 25
 Umā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Umā 36, 71, 220, 321, 330, 366, 570f,
 608, 610, 612f, 615, 617, 756, 807,
 818, 888, 1399, 1401, 1413, 1485,
 2040, 2195, 2228, 2297, 2322, 3063
 Umā (a part of Māyā) 809
 Unmanifest 2622
 Unnetṛ 426
 Upacāra 2249
 Upadānavī 30
 Upadeva (Devaka's son) 116
 Upadevā (Devaka's daughter) 116
 Upākarma 190
 Upalambha (Akrūra's son) 119
 Upamanyu (a sage) 3191
 Upananda 1965
 Upāṅgas 1136, 3197, 3205
 Upaniṣad 640, 1457, 1529, 1549, 1913,
 1921, 2195, 2237, 2581, 2796, 2801,
 2810, 2824, 2980, 2983, 2986, 3136,
 3139, 3149, 3156, 3160, 3176, 3199,
 3201, 3205, 3262
 Upapurāṇa 2267
 Upaśānta (a holy place) 1478
 Upendra 3472
 Uragas 526
 Ūrdhvaga (= Viṣṇu) 2452
 Ūrdhvapundra 1627, 3139ff, 3171,
 3539
 Ūrdhvasrotas 22
 Ūrdhvasthāna (a holy place) 1466
 Ūrja (Manu's son) 58
 Ūrjā (Dakṣa's daughter) 30
 Ūrmilā 3230
 Ūrṇāyu (a gandharva) 221
 Uru (Yayāti's son) 1308
 Urunetra (a demon) 2378, 2380
 Urva 537, 539, 541
 Urvaśī (a celestial nymph) 317, 628,
 1500, 2365, 2761, 2771, 2815, 2850,
 3414
 Urvaśīpulina (a holy place) 100
 Urvaśītīrtha 1482
 Urviśu (a brāhmaṇa) 3486
 Uṣā 2593, 2834, 2924
 Uśanas (a sage) 261, 379, 535, 1357,
 2629, 3212, 3517
 Uśantastavā (a hymn) 83
 Uśinara 3052
 Uṣīrabīja (a mountain) 635
 Uṣmapas 289, 2085
 Utkala (Akrūra's son) 119
 Utkala (a country) 1364
 Utkanṭhinī (an epithet of Pārvatī)
 324, 326
 Utkāsini (Śakti embodied) 3159
 Utpala (a holy place) 2831
 Utpaladhāriṇī 326
 Utpalākṣī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Utpalavartaka (a holy place) 211
 Utpalāvata 438
 Utpatti Ekādaśī 2472
 Utsuka (a grove) 1943
 Uttama (a country) 1364
 Uttānapāda 29

- Uttara (a holy place) 1478
 Uttara (Nahuṣa's son) 109
 Uttarā-bhādrapadā 3004
 Uttarakura 300, 1356, 1360, 1498, 1690
 Uttaramānasa 2683
 Uttarāphālgunī 348, 1793
 Uttarāyaṇa 804, 873, 2748

 Vāda 969
 Vadanīyā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 212
 Vadantī (a river) 2832
 Vāḍavā (a city) 2838
 Vāḍavāgni 230
 Vadha (a part of Argala Hell) 2711
 Vāgduṣṭa (a ghost) 2078
 Vāhini (a holy place) 439
 Vahnimukha (Śiva's messenger) 2199
 Vahnineta 3446
 Vaibhrāja forest 300
 Vaiḍāla vrata 309
 Vaiḍālavr̥tra (a demon) 2592
 Vaidarbhī 123
 Vaideha (a country) 1365
 Vaidehī (=Sītā) 685, 2277, 3249
 Vaidhasa (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Vaidhṛta 2317
 Vaidhṛtī Ekādaśī 1050
 Vaidika knowledge 134, 135
 Vaidika worship 2087
 Vaidiśā (a city) 2418
 Vaidūrya mountain 984f
 Vaidūrya (a city on the peak of Meru) 1290
 Vaidyanātha (a holy place) 211, 2889f
 Vaigaleya (a deity) 2831
 Vaijanātha (a holy place) 2838
 Vaikārika sarga 22
 Vaikartana (a king) 2841
 Vaikhānasa (a king) 2472ff
 Vaikhānasa (a deity) 2832
 Vaikhānasa (a sage) 3314
 Vaikhari (a kind of speech) 2951
 Vaikuṇṭha 36, 362, 367, 381, 1055, 1171, 1181, 1213, 1228, 1273, 1570, 1576, 1580, 1583, 1670, 1681, 1717, 1942, 1972, 1980, 2001f, 2330, 2352, 2398, 2407f, 2458, 2488, 2550f, 2553, 2583, 2631, 2643, 2653, 2660f, 2678, 2689, 2695, 2702, 2734, 2820, 2823, 2826, 2856, 2971, 2979f, 2999, 3059, 3081, 3090, 3094, 3109, 3114, 3120, 3122, 3124, 3126, 3157, 3166, 3168, 3243, 3265, 3299, 3309, 3359, 3392, 3414, 3503, 3519
 Vaikuṇṭha (=Viṣṇu) 292, 332, 553, 2495, 2612f, 3472
 Vaikuṇṭhamūrti 2452
 Vaikuṇṭhagāmin 2447
 Vaimohakārin (an epithet of Cupid) 339
 Vainadī (a river) 1364
 Vainateya 634, 659, 3157
 Vaināyaka (a sacred place) 98
 Vairāgya 2974, 2978ff, 2981f
 Vairāja 25, 71, 157, 387, 624
 Vairāja Pauruṣa Sūkta 356
 Vairāṭa (a country) 722
 Vairāṭī (=Yaśodā) 1604
 Vairocana 1272
 Vairūpa 25
 Vaiśākha 325, 365, 1050, 1399, 1543, 1672, 1796, 2039ff, 2044, 2046f, 2060ff, 2064, 2068ff, 2071, 2076, 2079f, 2083, 2086ff, 2089, 2091f, 2096f, 2110f, 2112f, 2114f, 2117, 2125, 2127, 2132f, 2134f, 2505, 2507, 2641f, 2646, 2781, 2792, 2806, 2859, 2886, 3049, 3320, 3433
 Vaiśampāyana 875
 Vaiśeṣika Text 3194
 Vaiṣṇava 711, 757, 918, 1177, 1684, 1970, 2517, 2564, 2635, 2719, 2831, 3144f, 3194f, 3312, 3321, 3346
 Vaiṣṇava mountain 2831
 Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa 2149, 2265f, 2448, 3007
 Vaiṣṇava Religion 2815
 Vaiṣṇavī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 212
 Vaiṣṇavī (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951
 Vaiṣṇavī (a Mother created by Śiva) 643
 Vaiṣṇavī (a goddess) 1133, 2389
 Vaiṣṇavite 2016
 Vaiśrambhaka (a holy place) 1707
 Vaiśravaṇa 56, 590, 999, 1012, 1358
 Vaiśvadeva 85, 2805, 3067
 Vaiśvānara 50, 287, 516, 1399, 2333
 Vaiśya 26, 74, 173, 445, 676, 961, 1057, 1103, 1221, 1467, 1489, 1516, 2819, 3541, 3547
 Vaitaja (a tribe) 1365
 Vaitaraṇa 3531
 Vaitaraṇī (a river) 1364, 1432, 1484, 2129, 2561
 Vaitaraṇīvrata 2559f
 Vaivasvata 70, 244, 245, 386, 1036, 2561, 2737
 Vaivasvata (Manu) 57, 59, 1001, 1010, 3028
 Vājapeya sacrifice 357, 411, 1137, 1139, 1424f, 1427, 1432, 1465, 1481, 1483, 1487, 1560, 2472, 2503, 2517, 2522, 2530, 2555, 2596, 2713, 2772, 3186, 3248
 Vājimedha (=horse sacrifice) 1800
 Vājini (a river) 1364
 Vajra (a missile) 1745, 1834, 2026

- Vajranābha (a demon) 165
 Vajrāṅga (Diti's son) 556, 564
 Vajrāṅgī (Vajrāṅga's wife) 557f
 Vajrapāṇin 407
 Vajraroman (a demon) 2333
 Vajrin 407
 Vāk (Speech) 808
 Vāk (=Sarasvatī) 1734
 Vākpati 2612
 Vakrapatha 224
 Vālakhilya 226, 1474, 2837, 2850
 Valayā (Devadāsa's daughter) 3100
 Valimukha (=Śani) 2440
 Vālin 493, 498, 628, 2182, 2185, 2284ff, 2291, 3062, 3238, 3245
 Valkinī (a river) 2844
 Vallabha (citizen of Kañcana city) 1613
 Vallika (demon) 847
 Vālmiki 70, 1272, 1490, 1679, 1866, 1880, 1890ff, 1893, 1895, 1898, 1914, 1919, 1920, 1922f, 1925, 1927f, 1933, 3247f
 Vāmācara (devotees of Śiva) 2587
 Vāmacūḍa (a people) 634
 Vāmadeva (an epithet of Śiva) 105, 781
 Vāmadeva 1260, 1263f, 2846, 3230, 3244, 3323
 Vāmadeva Sūkta 357
 Vāmadevī (a deity) 321
 Vāmana 124, 293, 339, 372, 382f, 490, 499, 504, 977, 1024, 1181, 1185, 1228, 1272, 1562, 2000, 2144, 2495, 2517, 2560, 2573, 2587, 2612f, 2830, 2846, 2877, 2885, 3110, 3157, 3166, 3194f, 3211, 3332, 3386, 3422, 3426, 3471
 Vāmana/Vāmanaka (a holy place on the bank of Revā) 943, 1433, 1481
 Vāmanaka (a quarter-elephant) 1372
 Vāmanaka (a tribe) 1371
 Vāmana Purāṇa 2265f, 3007
 Vāmanamūrti 2447
 Vāmanāśrama 3311
 Vāmaneśvara 1394
 Varṣagulma (a holy place) 1484
 Varṣamūla/Varṣamūlaka 1429
 Vanamālin 2000, 3472
 Vānaprastha 503
 Vānarī (a holy place) 436
 Vanasthalī (a holy place) 2850
 Vanagu (a country) 1365
 Vandhaka (a demon) 503
 Vaṅga 634, 1365
 Vāṇmaya 3262
 Vaṇija (a division of day) 2903
 Vañjulā-Dvādaśī 2101
 Vañjulaka/Vañjula (a vaiśya) 1241, 1244
 Vapu 30
 Varada (=Viṣṇu) 292, 342, 2560
 Varadā (a deity) 231
 Varada (=Śiva) 500
 Varadā (a holy place) 439, 1485
 Varadāna (a holy place) 1423
 Varāha (Viṣṇu's incarnation) 19, 97, 124, 974, 1181, 1228, 1562, 1999, 2423, 2560, 2573, 2612f, 2731, 2733, 2831, 2897, 2998, 3143, 3166, 3194, 3472
 Varāha (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Varāha mountain 3311
 Varāhakalpa 19, 331, 2113
 Vārāha Purāṇa 2144, 2266, 2317, 3007
 Vārāhaśailaka (a holy place) 211
 Vārāhatīrtha 1407, 1477
 Vārāhī (a form of Mahālakṣmī) 2951
 Vārāhī (a mother created by Śiva) 641, 2389
 Varāhu (a demon) 225
 Varanā (a river) 1364
 Vārāṇasī 61, 156ff, 205, 437, 450, 717, 876, 1056, 1061, 1221, 1239f, 1241, 1243ff, 1466ff, 1469f, 1472, 1477f, 1493, 1995, 2066, 2202, 2221, 2393, 2406, 2441, 2448, 2578, 2719, 2830, 2834, 2837, 2915, 2918, 3302
 Varāṇeśvara 1394
 Vararuci 61
 Varatantu 1579
 Vara-vrata 285
 Vardhamāna (Devakī's son) 120
 Variṣṇu 59
 Variṣṭha 225
 Variyān 59
 Varṇavatī 1982
 Varṇikā (a part of Māyā) 809
 Vārtā 369
 Vārtraghnī (a river) 2891f, 2896
 Varuṇa 41, 56, 82, 192f, 316, 318, 355, 360, 485, 518, 523f, 532, 537, 547, 549, 563, 567, 597, 624, 641, 651, 682, 695, 848, 877f, 999, 1311, 1329, 1437, 1486, 1637, 1745, 1921f, 1939, 1982, 2033, 2321, 2329, 2489, 2534, 2570, 2594, 2655, 2896, 2897, 2998, 3150, 3201, 3231, 3534
 Varuṇa (a place sacred to Agni) 98
 Vāruṇa (a kind of bath) 655, 2719
 Varuṇa Prajāpati 1000
 Varuṇāstra (a missile) 630, 1745, 1833, 1863, 3239
 Vāruṇa Upapurāṇa 2266f
 Varuṇa-vrata 286
 Varuṇeśvara (a holy place) 1393
 Vāruṇī 3182

- Vāruṇi (Vinatā's son) 221
 Vāruṇi (a deity) 34, 876
 Vāruṇi (a Mother created by Śiva) 642
 Varūtha 826
 Varūthini 2503
 Vasanābhiga 523
 Vāsanti 1982
 Vaṣaṭkāra 150, 1003, 2527, 2604, 3252
 Vāsava 376, 842, 2333
 Vāsava (a mountain) 3311
 Vasiṣṭha 7, 9, 10, 29, 40, 42, 51, 58, 59, 257, 264, 291, 317f, 349, 432, 453f, 522, 647, 720, 749, 877, 965f, 967, 969, 972, 1272, 1299f, 1303f, 1306, 1310, 1315, 1321f, 1378, 1422, 1438, 1490, 1603, 1650, 1673, 1676f, 1679, 1685, 1687, 1875, 1934, 1937, 1939, 2039, 2054, 2085, 2141, 2150f, 2157, 2202, 2215, 2222, 2264, 2268, 2272, 2282, 2293, 2295, 2299, 2395, 2438, 2455, 2492, 2503, 2505, 2510, 2562, 2608, 2610, 2747, 2755, 2801, 2814, 2850, 2877, 2982, 3029, 3032, 3035, 3037, 3127, 3129, 3190, 3195, 3223, 3225, 3227, 3230, 3245, 3272, 3314, 3322f, 3335f
 Visiṣṭha (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Vasiṣṭha-tīrtha 100
 Vasiṣṭha Upapurāṇa 2267
 Vastreśvara (a sacred place) 98
 Vasu 42, 47, 56, 58, 59, 72, 89, 104, 156, 167, 190, 221, 532, 848f, 1212, 1374, 1424, 2300, 2333, 2604, 2748, 3292, 3535
 Vasu (an ascetic) 91
 Vasudā (a river) 754
 Vasudāmā 1951
 Vasudatta 921, 987, 1081, 1083, 1098
 Vasudeva 122, 519, 708, 1096, 2580, 2594, 3222, 3256f, 3258f, 3269f, 3277ff, 3286, 3304, 3315, 3462
 Vāsudeva 20, 35, 123, 213, 293, 474, 520, 654, 786, 799, 917, 1024, 1046, 1181, 1228, 1259, 1266f, 1269ff, 1273ff, 1276, 1444, 1459, 1493, 1605, 1992, 1999, 2032, 2034, 2082, 2180, 2183, 2489, 2495, 2503, 2524, 2560, 2580, 2611, 2613, 2615, 2621, 2732, 2769, 2794, 2820, 2900, 3136, 3138, 3143f, 3174, 3200, 3210, 3232, 3254f, 3259, 3274f, 3282f, 3293, 3299ff, 3307ff, 3310, 3332, 3422, 3461, 3472
 Vāsudeva (king of kāśī) 3300
 Vāsudevī (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324, 365, 366
 Vasudhā 323
 Vasudhārā (a holy place) 100, 1424
 Vāsuki 33, 43, 50, 221, 384, 633, 1000, 1385, 1405, 2243, 2361, 2594, 2636
 Vasundharābha (a demon) 531
 Vasuprada 3472
 Vasuśarman (Vidyādhara's son) 1338f
 Vāsyā (a divine power) 3172
 Vāśyāyu (son of Purūravas) 108
 Vaṭa 349, 1495, 1498, 1500, 1509, 2713
 Vātaghnī (a river) 2838
 Vaṭaka (a holy place) 439
 Vātāpi 50, 225
 Vātāsura 2591
 Vaṭeśvara/Vaṭeśvarapura (a holy place) 1381, 1394, 1481, 2837
 Vatodakā (a river) 1358
 Vatsa (a brāhmaṇa) 2959
 Vatsaharaṇa (a grove) 1943
 Vatsara (a Sādhyā) 523
 Vatsavrāteśvara (a sacred place) 99
 Vātsyāyana 1646, 1668, 1786, 1800f, 1848, 1869
 Vāyavya (a kind of bath) 655, 2719
 Vāyavyā (a Mother created by Śiva) 642
 Vāyavyāstra (a missile) 630, 1685, 1833, 2033
 Vāyu 15, 28, 41, 163, 224, 316, 319, 447, 525, 555, 563, 567, 573, 590, 611, 624, 641, 651, 806, 868, 927, 1353, 1385, 1856, 2031, 2234, 2296, 2321, 2331, 2333, 2594, 3160, 3162, 3267, 3283, 3534
 Vāyutīrtha 1477
 Vāyuvega (=Garuḍa) 332
 Veda 4, 20, 71, 73, 92, 104, 109, 137, 138, 140, 163f, 166, 169, 177f, 183f, 187ff, 191f, 200, 206f, 213, 216, 224, 227, 244, 251, 272, 299, 306, 329, 333, 345, 349, 357, 375, 434, 440, 459, 461, 502ff, 512, 518, 520, 529, 550, 555, 565, 646, 673, 675, 679, 683, 721, 723, 730, 760, 781, 795, 804, 806, 809, 816, 859, 950, 965, 970, 976, 983, 987, 989f, 994, 996, 998, 1002f, 1013, 1025, 1038ff, 1042f, 1051, 1053f, 1060, 1065, 1078, 1081ff, 1092, 1097, 1125, 1128, 1136, 1139, 1165, 1208f, 1228, 1229f, 1252, 1269, 1273, 1288, 1294, 1300, 1307f, 1323, 1348, 1350f, 1375, 1383, 1385, 1411, 1414, 1421, 1450ff, 1463, 1467, 1497, 1519, 1526ff, 1529, 1533, 1535, 1589, 1592, 1653, 1663, 1669, 1674f, 1700, 1789, 1848, 1905, 1916, 1935, 1937, 1949, 1959, 1962, 1971f, 1973, 1993, 2003, 2019, 2026, 2029ff, 2032ff, 2035ff, 2075, 2087, 2095,

- 2103, 2109, 2142, 2144, 2148, 2155, 2161, 2168, 2170, 2193, 2195, 2199, 2219, 2240, 2244, 2251ff, 2260, 2265, 2272, 2275, 2278, 2314, 2319, 2395, 2400, 2426, 2437, 2461, 2472, 2562, 2564, 2566, 2574, 2576, 2578, 2581, 2584f, 2593, 2595, 2604, 2606f, 2619ff, 2625, 2651, 2654, 2656, 2664, 2715, 2755, 2757, 2769, 2776, 2778, 2788, 2791f, 2794, 2801ff, 2818, 2823, 2826, 2833, 2844, 2848, 2852, 2883, 2888, 2902, 2906, 2924, 2926, 2931, 2933, 2944, 2954, 2956, 2959, 2977, 2979, 2980, 2983f, 2986, 3002, 3004, 3008, 3013, 3015, 3018, 3039, 3056, 3062, 3073, 3085, 3105, 3130f, 3138f, 3154ff, 3157, 3160, 3172, 3174f, 3189f, 3194, 3197, 3205, 3209, 3211f, 3215, 3227, 3244, 3252, 3262, 3274, 3315, 3317, 3325, 3331, 3333, 3335, 3371, 3389, 3419, 3425, 3465, 3470, 3492, 3506, 3545
- Vedadhāman 314
 Vedagarbha (=Brahmā) 502
 Vedakartā (=Brahmā) 502
 Vedanā 30
 Vedanadī (a river) 1238
 Vedāṅga 6, 147, 375, 721, 795, 927, 950, 996, 1006, 1083, 1161, 1228, 1308, 1348, 1375, 1527, 1529, 2142, 2161, 2193, 2566, 2595, 2615, 2619f, 2635, 2651, 2792, 2794, 2931, 2933, 2935, 2980, 3015, 3018, 3073, 3130, 3154, 3176, 3197, 3210, 3215, 3252, 3389, 3419, 3545
 Vedanidhi (a brāhmaṇa) 2787, 2816
 Vedānta 641, 674, 983, 1457, 2979, 3136, 3149, 3199, 3268, 3315
 Vedapāṇi 53
 Vedarāja (king of Kaśī) 1062
 Vedasāṅkramā (a river) 1238
 Veda-sannyāsi 1550
 Vedaśarīradhārin 348
 Vedaśarman (Śivaśarman's son) 898, 902f
 Vedaśarman (Sumana's father, born in the family of Kauśika) 958f
 Vedaśarman (a brāhmaṇa) 1241f, 1244, 2074
 Vedasmṛti (a river) 1363
 Vedaśirā (a river) 1363
 Vedaśvā (a river) 1364
 Vedātman (=Śiva) 364
 Vedavatī 335
 Veda-Vyāsa 1, 5, 76, 1351, 1565, 1970, 1974, 3471
 Vedayāna (Mukunda's preceptor) 3068, 3070, 3072
 Vedhas (=Śiva) 500
 Vedic faith 1042
 Vedic fold 3192
 Vedic hymns 640, 686, 980, 1006, 1055, 1262, 2227, 2409, 2422, 2594, 2634, 2654, 2661
 Vedic knowledge 1525
 Vedic love 223, 1229, 2582, 2934
 Vedic Path 136, 3014
 Vedic practices 1043, 1053, 1267
 Vedic precept 2860
 Vedic recital 2275
 Vedic recitation 2943
 Vedic religion 1037
 Vedic rites 440, 2609, 2799, 3066, 3286, 3459
 Vedic sounds 2715
 Vedic studies 1006, 2785, 2818, 3016, 3170
 Vedic Texts 674, 1226, 1591, 1673, 1943, 2089, 2115, 2751, 2799
 Vedic words 794, 2917, 3013
 Vedikā (a river) 2450, 2836
 Vegā (a river) 100
 Vegala (a holy place) 211
 Vegavān (a demon) 224
 Vena (son of Aṅga and Sunithā, Mrtyu's daughter) 60, 1002, 1003, 1004f, 1008ff, 1011, 1013f, 1037ff, 1042f, 1045, 1125, 1216, 1276, 1346
 Veṇā (a river) 212, 1051, 1238
 Veṇāpura (a sacred place) 99
 Veṇī (a river) 2108, 2602, 2813, 2815f, 3036
 Veṅkaṭa (a holy place) 437
 Veṅkaṭādri/Veṅkaṭagiri 2969, 3142, 3311
 Venus 632
 Vetasi (a river) 2418
 Vetasikā (a holy place) 1464
 Vetrakī (Amśu's wife) 114
 Vetravati (a river) 98, 633, 1363, 2398, 2418, 2833f, 2844
 Vibhāṇḍaka (a sage) 647
 Vibhāvarī (a goddess) 569
 Vibhāvarī (a Mother created by Śiva) 643
 Vibhāvasu 311, 2883
 Vibhāvasu (a vaiśya) 2311
 Vibhrāj (a kind of world) 73
 Vibhrāja (another name of Aṇuḥa) 93
 Vibhu 58, 224
 Vibhūti 3150
 Vicarcikā (a disease) 671
 Vicikitsā (=error) 887
 Vicious devotion 2818
 Vicitra (Subāhu's son) 1747, 1757, 1759, 1762

- Vicitra (= Yama) 2561
 Vicitrāṅgi 394
 Vidaivata (a goblin) 2115
 Vidānvara 502
 Vidarbha 1086, 1088, 1364, 1365, 3109, 3284
 Vidāruṇa (a king) 2833
 Videha (a king) 1657, 2276, 2279
 Videha (a country) 1365, 1883, 1889, 1925, 2074, 2274
 Vidhāna (a Sādhyā) 523
 Vidhātā 31, 308
 Vidhṛta (a king) 2207f
 Vidhura (a vaiśya) 2074
 Vidīpā (a river) 2398
 Vidiśā 278, 413, 985, 1364
 Vidrumaraktāṅga 435
 Vidura 864, 955
 Vidura (a kṣatriya) 1241, 1243f
 Vidūratha (another name of Daśaratha) 114
 Vidvara (a kinnara) 1306
 Vidyā (a divine mother) 224, 394
 Vidyā 1470, 2062, 2188, 3152, 3340
 Vidyādhara 35, 37, 249, 288, 304, 313, 315, 496, 534, 815, 1013, 1068, 1077, 1127f, 1131, 1133, 1212, 1338, 1375, 1474, 2084, 2758f, 2761, 3369, 3371ff, 3443
 Vidyādhara (Vikramadeva's son) 3379, 3383
 Vidyādhareśvara (a holy place) 1478
 Vidyādhari 31, 32, 140, 206, 2084, 3377
 Vidyādhari (an epithet of Gaṅgā) 288
 Vidyāḥ, caturdaśa 1078
 Vidyunmālī 1664, 1776, 1781f, 1785, 1919, 2290
 Vidyutvān (a mountain) 634
 Vihagā (Gaṅgā) 2084
 Vighasa 678
 Vighasāśī 178
 Vighnarāja (= Gaṇeśa) 814
 Vighneśa 2362
 Vihaṅganātha (= Garuḍa) 332
 Vihūṇḍa (Hūṇḍa's son) 1326f, 1330, 1336
 Vijāta (Hṛdīka's son) 117
 Vijaya (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 1226, 1227
 Vijaya (an epithet of Brahmā) 437
 Vijaya (Devakī's son) 120
 Vijaya (Rāma's minister) 484
 Vijaya (a country) 1365
 Vijaya (a sacred place) 100, 438, 2831
 Vijaya (doorkeeper of Viṣṇu) 2330, 2665, 2700, 2702, 2890, 3157, 3195, 3248, 3304
 Vijayā (an auspicious time) 1793
 Vijayā (= Durgā) 219, 363, 366, 2335
 Vijayā (Pārvatī's friend) 602, 3027
 Vijayā (a deity) 2644
 Vijaya (a sacrificing priest) 2701
 Vijayā Dvādaśī 2101
 Vijayā Ekādaśī 1227, 2490
 Vijayā (wife of king Satyadharma) 3412, 3414
 Vijayā (the seventh day of Māgha) 872
 Vijayeshāna 1468
 Vijjala (Kuñjala's son) 1218, 1246, 1266, 1267f, 1273f, 1275f
 Vijñāna 931
 Vijñānadeva (a deity) 2393
 Vijvara 224
 Vikandha (a country) 1365
 Vikarālī 394
 Vikartana 347
 Vikāṭa (a demon) 3046
 Vikāṭāśya (a demon) 2378
 Vikhyāta (a city in Plakṣa island) 3365
 Vikīrṇa forest 2844
 Vikīrṇatīrtha 2844
 Vikrama (a king at Pratiṣṭhāna) 2912
 Vikrama (a king) 3363f, 3368
 Vikramavetāla (a king in Sindhala-dvīpa) 2958
 Vikṛti (Jīmūta's son) 114
 Vikukṣi (Ikṣvāku's son) 68
 Vikuṇḍala (son of Hemakuṇḍala) 1447ff, 1453
 Vilapana (a missile) 630
 Vilāsini (an epithet of Pārvatī) 326
 Vilobhanā (wife of Keśava, a brāhmaṇa) 2960
 Vilohila (= Śiva) 500
 Vilola (an epithet of Cupid) 339
 Vimala (a brāhmaṇa) 1854, 1856, 1934, 3056, 3058f, 3061, 3064f
 Vimala (a holy place) 1424, 1715
 Vimalā (a śakti) 3315
 Vimalā (an epithet of Sāvitrī) 211, 322, 1995
 Vimalā (a śakti embodied) 3159, 3168
 Vimalaśvara (a holy place) 1411, 2837
 Vināśana (a holy place) 1426, 1480
 Vinata (Sugrīva's soldier) 493
 Vinatā 48, 221, 522, 659, 664, 1000, 1224, 2035, 2364, 3174
 Vinaya 30
 Vināyaka 355, 598, 698, 782, 814, 817, 2089, 2356, 2358
 Vināyaka (Sugrīva's soldier) 493
 Vināyaka (a holy place) 211
 Vināyaka (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Vināyaka (a mountain) 2831
 Vindānuvinda 3287
 Vindhya (a country) 1365, 2831

- Vindhya forest 1015
 Vindhya mountain 211, 245, 260f, 517, 589, 612, 1185, 1234, 1350, 1363, 1995, 2110, 2620, 2656, 2766, 2812, 2831, 3091
 Vindhyaṅgali 2739
 Vindhyaśāsinī (an epithet of Sāvitri) 211, 1995
 Vinītāśva (a king) 455
 Vipāpa (a deity) 2831
 Vipāpā (a river) 1363
 Vipāśā (a river) 97, 211, 2398, 2451, 2831
 Vipracitti (a demon) 224, 530, 628, 1140
 Viprovāsapura 2115
 Vipr̥thu (Akrūra's son) 119
 Vipula (=Viṣṇu) 292, 2831
 Vipulā 1298
 Vipulācala (a mountain) 304, 2831
 Vira 149, 2251
 Vira (same as Suvira) 1221
 Virā (a river) 1364
 Virā (a deity) 2644
 Virabāhu (Sugriva's soldier) 493
 Virabāhuka (Śiva's attendant) 1281
 Virabhadra (Śiva's attendant) 1281, 1400, 1823, 1832f, 1853, 2179f, 2182, 2184f, 2204, 2207, 2209f, 2215, 2234, 2250, 2251, 2297, 2310f, 2331, 2360, 2377f, 2382, 2681f, 2876, 3349
 Virabhūṣā (Satyavat's wife) 1934
 Virādha (a demon) 3235, 3325
 Viradhanvan (a gandharva) 2502
 Virāja (Śamika's son) 121, 2944
 Viraja (a sage) 59
 Virāja (Sāvitri's son) 523
 Virajā (Nahusa's wife and Yayāti's mother) 74
 Virajā (a holy place) 439, 1484, 2968, 3154
 Viraka 582, 594f, 602, 604, 608, 609f, 611
 Virakti (=detachment) 2196
 Viramaṇi (a king) 1806, 1808f, 1811f, 1814, 1816f, 1821f, 1831, 1833f, 1836, 1854, 1856, 1912, 1934
 Viramardana (a warrior in Śatru-ghna's army) 1750
 Virāñjana (a holy place) 1505
 Virāsana (a posture) 594
 Virasena (Sugriva's soldier) 493
 Virasena (Chief of Pāṇḍya country) 2071, 2790
 Virāt 6, 2584, 2588, 2845, 3148, 3305
 Virāṭa Parvan 2265
 Viravahā (a river) 1238
 Viravāhana (a kṣatriya) 2073
 Viravara 3375, 3377f, 3380, 3382
 Viravarman (king of Draviḍa country) 3119f, 3122
 Viravati 1857
 Viravikrama (a śūdra) 1643
 Virgo 714, 1397
 Viriñca 52, 53
 Viriñci/Virañci 213, 435f, 502, 755
 Viriñi 47, 163
 Virocana (Prahlaḍa's son) 125, 140, 316, 530, 554, 1012, 2739
 Virtues 812, 2816
 Virūpa (=Śiva) 2668
 Virūpa 10, 45
 Virūpākṣa 1382
 Virūpākṣa (a Rudra) 48, 205
 Virūpākṣa (an epithet of Brahmā) 438, 503, 2943
 Virūpākṣi 394
 Virya 59
 Viśākha (=Kārttikeya) 620
 Viśākha (Āyu's son) 108
 Viśākhā 346, 401, 1950
 Viśāla (a holy place) 1421
 Viśālā (a river) 1480, 2789, 2972
 Viśālā (Varuṇa's daughter) 1188, 1190ff, 1193, 1197
 Viśālākā (an epithet of Sarasvatī) 228
 Viśālākṣi (an epithet of Sāvitri) 210, 1995
 Viśālākṣi (Hemamālin's wife) 2515
 Viśālākṣi (wife of Viśravas) 3222
 Viśālanetra (=Śani) 2440
 Viśalyā (a river) 1380, 2108
 Viṣayārādhana (a sacred place) 100
 Viṣṇu 4f, 7, 14, 16, 19, 21, 33, 37f, 40, 56, 59, 64, 77, 96, 104, 108, 113, 118, 123, 125, 128f, 133, 134, 142, 143, 144, 146, 151, 160, 167, 170, 185, 190ff, 198f, 206, 208, 215, 223, 225, 245, 256f, 262, 278f, 280, 282ff, 287f, 292, 295, 299ff, 303, 317, 328, 330ff, 335, 338, 341f, 350, 355, 362, 367, 368, 370ff, 378, 380ff, 404, 407, 427f, 431f, 448, 486, 497f, 504, 513, 519, 524ff, 528f, 535, 544f, 550ff, 554f, 591, 625, 637, 639f, 645, 648f, 652, 654, 662, 673, 686f, 697, 700, 704, 708ff, 718, 730, 735, 744, 749, 757, 771, 775, 786ff, 791, 794ff, 797, 800f, 804, 806, 810, 817, 819, 821, 827, 830, 837ff, 840, 850ff, 853, 859, 863, 867, 869, 877, 887, 890, 894, 897f, 908f, 913f, 919ff, 922, 938, 940ff, 961, 967, 969, 970ff, 973ff, 976, 978, 981ff, 984f, 987, 990, 991, 999, 1003, 1008, 1011, 1020, 1024ff,

1030f, 1035, 1044ff, 1047, 1055,
 1064, 1066, 1070, 1088, 1092, 1096,
 1100, 1110, 1113, 1123ff, 1131f,
 1135, 1162, 1170, 1171f, 1173ff,
 1176ff, 1179ff, 1182, 1184, 1203,
 1208, 1210ff, 1213, 1215, 1218,
 1223f, 1225f, 1228f, 1230f, 1232f,
 1236, 1253ff, 1259, 1263ff, 1266,
 1271ff, 1274ff, 1293, 1295ff, 1302,
 1323, 1325ff, 1328ff, 1332, 1334ff,
 1345, 1347ff, 1350, 1351, 1354, 1362,
 1370, 1384f, 1394, 1396, 1399,
 1400, 1402, 1406, 1408, 1411,
 1421ff, 1423f, 1427, 1429, 1433,
 1444ff, 1447, 1456ff, 1458f, 1462,
 1470, 1477, 1481, 1488f, 1492f,
 1498, 1513, 1521, 1526, 1532,
 1543f, 1555, 1556ff, 1560ff, 1563,
 1565ff, 1569ff, 1572ff, 1575f, 1581f,
 1584f, 1587, 1589ff, 1594, 1599,
 1602f, 1605f, 1610f, 1612f, 1615ff,
 1618f, 1624ff, 1628f, 1632f, 1637ff,
 1641f, 1644, 1667, 1668, 1678, 1681,
 1696, 1700, 1702, 1716, 1719f,
 1721f, 1725ff, 1728f, 1731ff, 1734f,
 1749, 1765f, 1769, 1771, 1773f,
 1778, 1782, 1789, 1845, 1849f,
 1909, 1917, 1939f, 1942ff, 1945,
 1949f, 1953ff, 1957ff, 1960f, 1965,
 1967, 1989, 1993ff, 1997, 2001ff,
 2004ff, 2007ff, 2016f, 2030, 2032f,
 2036, 2038f, 2041, 2044ff, 2053,
 2055, 2057f, 2061f, 2063f, 2067f,
 2070ff, 2076f, 2078ff, 2081f, 2084,
 2086ff, 2089, 2091f, 2093, 2095,
 2098ff, 2102, 2106, 2108f, 2111,
 2114, 2115, 2120, 2124, 2126,
 2131, 2133, 2150, 2155f, 2161,
 2163, 2166f, 2168f, 2180, 2184,
 2186f, 2191, 2222, 2224, 2227f,
 2234ff, 2237ff, 2242, 2244ff, 2252,
 2254f, 2259f, 2262, 2268ff, 2278,
 2283, 2294, 2299, 2307f, 2317,
 2320, 2330, 2333, 2337f, 2339ff,
 2346f, 2351f, 2363ff, 2366, 2369,
 2373, 2375f, 2392, 2394, 2398f,
 2404ff, 2409, 2411, 2418, 2420f,
 2422ff, 2425ff, 2428f, 2431f, 2442f,
 2445f, 2449, 2451, 2453, 2455, 2456f,
 2458ff, 2461f, 2465f, 2468f, 2473,
 2475f, 2477, 2481ff, 2488, 2494,
 2496, 2513f, 2517f, 2520f, 2524f,
 2530f, 2532f, 2535, 2538ff, 2541ff,
 2545ff, 2548ff, 2552ff, 2556f, 2560,
 2563, 2565f, 2568, 2570, 2572f,
 2574ff, 2578, 2580, 2582, 2586f,
 2590, 2594ff, 2597ff, 2600f, 2603,
 2605f, 2610ff, 2613ff, 2618ff, 2621ff,
 2612ff, 2613ff, 2615ff, 2618, 2621ff,

2623ff, 2626ff, 2630ff, 2633f, 2636ff,
 2639ff, 2642, 2644, 2645ff, 2653ff,
 2656, 2659ff, 2662, 2664f, 2673,
 2674ff, 2678, 2684f, 2686, 2688,
 2690ff, 2693f, 2696f, 2698ff, 2701ff,
 2704f, 2708, 2710, 2713ff, 2715ff,
 2718ff, 2721ff, 2724f, 2726ff, 2729,
 2731ff, 2734ff, 2737, 2740, 2743ff,
 2746ff, 2749, 2751, 2756ff, 2760f,
 2764f, 2769, 2771, 2778, 2780,
 2783, 2785, 2791ff, 2794ff, 2797ff,
 2802f, 2806f, 2815, 2817f, 2819ff,
 2822ff, 2825f, 2829f, 2833, 2836,
 2838f, 2848, 2851ff, 2855, 2855f,
 2883, 2885, 2887, 2897, 2900, 2902,
 2904, 2906, 2916f, 2922, 2924,
 2928, 2932f, 2936, 2941, 2944,
 2947, 2949, 2951, 2966f, 2969,
 2972f, 2975f, 2979, 2982f, 2984,
 2986ff, 2993, 2997, 2999f, 3002f,
 3004ff, 3009f, 3011ff, 3014f, 3020ff,
 3030, 3037, 3039, 3044, 3046ff,
 3053ff, 3058ff, 3061, 3063f, 3068,
 3077, 3078ff, 3082, 3084f, 3086f,
 3089f, 3093f, 3099ff, 3109, 3110f,
 3113f, 3122f, 3124ff, 3128, 3130ff,
 3133f, 3135f, 3137f, 3139f, 3141ff,
 3146ff, 3149f, 3152ff, 3155ff, 3159,
 3161ff, 3164ff, 3167f, 3170ff, 3174ff,
 3181, 3184, 3187, 3193ff, 3196f,
 3199f, 3202f, 3203ff, 3209, 3211,
 3214f, 3218, 3220ff, 3223ff, 3226f,
 3228ff, 3231f, 3237f, 3242, 3245f,
 3248, 3251f, 3256ff, 3261, 3264,
 3265f, 3268f, 3272, 3274, 3277,
 3279, 3282, 3284f, 3287, 3291,
 3193, 3299, 3301f, 3305, 3307,
 3310ff, 3315, 3317, 3321f, 3323f,
 3326f, 3328f, 3331ff, 3334, 3336ff,
 3341ff, 3345ff, 3352f, 3355, 3359ff,
 3376, 3380, 3385, 3386ff, 3393f,
 3398f, 3409, 3412f, 3415f, 3418,
 3421f, 3423ff, 3428ff, 3431ff, 3435ff,
 3438ff, 3441f, 3443ff, 3449, 3450ff,
 3453, 3455ff, 3458ff, 3461ff, 3465ff,
 3468ff, 3472ff, 3477, 3479ff, 3482ff,
 3484, 3486ff, 3490, 3492f, 3496,
 3498ff, 3501, 3506f, 3512ff, 3515f,
 3518f, 3521ff, 3526f, 3533f, 3536f,
 3538f, 3540ff, 3543f, 3545f, 3547f,
 3549

Viṣṇucakra (a missile) 630

Viṣṇudāsa (a brāhmaṇa) 2696f, 2698f

Viṣṇugayā 2924

Viṣṇukāma (a holy place) 2832

Viṣṇukāñci 3063

Viṣṇumaya (a holy place) 2832

Viṣṇu mountain 2831

Viṣṇupāda (a holy place) 97

- Viṣṇupadī 382, 869f
 Viṣṇupādodakī (Gaṅga at Haridvāra) 2397
 Viṣṇupādodbhava 2831
 Viṣṇupañcaka 1632, 1634
 Viṣṇupatnī (=Lakṣmī) 3152
 Viṣṇupriyā (=Lakṣmī) 3152
 Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1162, 2266
 Viṣṇusahasranāma 2314, 2580, 2594f, 2598, 3183, 3195, 3334
 Viṣṇusaras (a lake) 1358
 Viṣṇuśarman (Śivaśarman's son) 898, 903f, 906, 911, 3016, 3021f, 3026, 3028, 3038, 3048
 Viṣṇusūkta 118
 Viṣṇutīrtha 1399
 Viśoka (=Viṣṇu) 292, 2425
 Viśokā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Viśokā (a river) 2110
 Viśokadvādaśī (vrata) 296
 Viśokanidhi (=Viṣṇu) 2495
 Viśoka-saptamī 307, 309f
 Viśolbaṇa (a serpent) 782
 Viśrānti (a holy place) 3063, 3082, 3090, 3093
 Viśravas 41, 1664, 3222
 Vistaraśravas 2584, 3473
 Viṣṭi (Rāma's minister) 484
 Viṣṭhi 65
 Viṣuva 444
 Viśva 46, 623, 3274
 Viśva (Pṛthu's son) 68
 Viśvā (mother of gods) 47
 Viśvā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Viśvācī (a celestial nymph) 627
 Viśvadhārin 313
 Viśvagāthā (Gaṅgā) 2084
 Viśvajit sacrifice 3248
 Viśvakarman 35, 224, 470, 628, 634, 869, 920, 2099, 2346, 2968, 3283, 3385, 3420, 3438
 Viśvakarman (a future Manu) 59
 Viśvakāya 628, 2830
 Viśvakāyā (an epithet of Pārvatī) 324
 Viśvakāyā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 210
 Viśvakāyā (an epithet of Gaṅgā) 288
 Viśvaksena 2089, 2586, 2604, 2612, 3000, 3160, 3472
 Viśvalocana 433
 Viśvamātā 1981
 Viśvāmitra 11, 59, 264, 523, 647, 905, 955, 1263, 1482, 1490, 1601, 1791f, 2045, 2062, 2216, 2281, 2299, 2562, 2598, 2629, 2837, 2846, 2853, 2877, 2982, 3099, 3228
 Viśvāmitrā (a river) 1364
 Viśvamohana (a king) 2851
 Viśvamukhā (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Viśvamūrti 2454, 2560, 3472
 Viśvanātha 1716, 2454, 2860
 Viśvāntakavasū (a god) 523
 Viśvaparakāśa 2883
 Viśvapramathana (=Garuḍa) 332
 Viśvarāj (=Śiva) 501
 Viśvaretas 2583
 Viśvarūpa/Viśvarūpaka 628, 1182, 2831
 Viśvarūpā (Maṅki's wife) 2855
 Viśvarūpadarśana 2943, 2948f
 Viśvarūpin 2495
 Viśvasṛk (=Brahmā) 436
 Viśvatomukha (=Brahmā) 434
 Viśvatāriṇī (a river) 1051, 2108
 Viśvātman (=Śiva) 500
 Viśvāvasu 523, 3116f
 Viśvayoni 2447, 2452
 Viśvedevas 81, 104, 221, 523, 629, 690, 2301, 2333, 2480, 3160, 3534
 Viśveśa (Viṣṇu) 1181
 Viśveśa (Śaṅkara) 46, 364
 Viśveśa (Kāmadeva) 2639
 Viśveśā (a goddess) 522
 Viśveśvara 348, 352, 2193, 2830, 2862, 2918, 2924
 Viśveśvara (=Rudra) 221, 433, 1474, 2397, 2872, 3063
 Viśveśvara (a holy place) 1471
 Viśveśvarī (an epithet of Sāvitṛī) 211
 Vītala (a lower world) 386, 3340
 Viṭaṅkā (a river) 1245
 Vitarāga 934ff, 937
 Viṭarūpa 628
 Vitastā (a river) 1363, 2102, 2110
 Vitastā (a holy place) 1425
 Vitasti 354, 767
 Vitihoṭra 112
 Vītimān (Manu's son) 58
 Viṭṭhala 2925
 Vivāhamanḍapa (a city) 2945
 Vivasvān 59, 62, 221, 1867, 1877, 2331
 Viveka (Vitarāga's brother) 934ff, 937
 Viyati (Nahuṣa's son) 109
 Viyonikaraṇa 236
 Vodhṛ (a sage) 289, 3170
 Vows 1635, 2422, 2424, 2426, 2430
 Vraja 1955, 1958, 1963, 1969, 2010, 2136, 3260, 3265f, 3270
 Vratadhara (=Brahmā) 503
 Vratavati (Satrājīt's wife) 118
 Vṛddharevati 2807
 Vṛddhaśarman (Āyu's son) 108
 Vṛddhi (Lakṣmī's maid) 3172
 Vṛddhikā (a Divine Mother) 2614
 Vṛddhirevati (Divine Mother) 2614
 Vṛjinivān (Kroṣṭṛ's son) 113
 Vṛka (Rohita's son) 69, 2394

- Vṛka (=Fire) 2511
 Vṛkasthala (a holy place) 439
 Vṛkodara (=Yama) 2085, 2561, 2737
 Vṛkodara (=Bhīma) 120, 331
 Vṛndā (Jālandhara's wife) 2326ff, 2347, 2363, 2366f, 2368, 2370, 2371f, 2375, 2386, 2670, 2684ff, 2687ff
 Vṛndā (a city) 1990
 Vṛndāraka/Vṛndārikā 2365, 2370ff, 2373, 2684
 Vṛndāvana/Vṛndāvanya 437, 799, 1942, 1944, 1945ff, 1949f, 1971f, 1981f, 1988f, 1991, 1993ff, 1996, 2009f, 2013, 2020ff, 2136, 2974ff, 2978, 2982, 3001, 3263, 3265, 3426
 Vṛndāvaneśvari 1994
 Vṛṣa 2857
 Vṛṣabha (a deity) 2857
 Vṛṣabhā (a river) 2364
 Vṛṣabhadhvaja (=Śiva) 149
 Vṛṣabhānu 1546
 Vṛṣadhvaja (=Śiva) 407, 421, 500
 Vṛṣākapi (=Śiva) 585, 2584
 Vṛṣālin 2359
 Vṛṣaparvan (Danu's son) 49, 50, 224, 1831, 2230, 2233
 Vṛṣasāhvayā (a river) 1364
 Vṛṣakātvayā (a river) 1364
 Vṛṣatīrtha 1406, 2856
 Vṛścika (a sign of the zodiac) 869
 Vṛṣṇi (Bhāja's son) 115, 2851, 3269
 Vṛṣṇi (Promoter of Yādavas) 123, 1309, 2591, 3222
 Vṛṣṇi family 113, 119
 Vṛṣṇyandhaka family 124
 Vṛtra 132, 225, 254ff, 256f, 378, 525, 840ff, 991ff, 994ff, 1491, 2328, 2644, 2741, 2833, 2844, 2863, 2872, 2892ff
 Vyādhi 30, 524
 Vyāghrabhakṣya (a hell) 3411
 Vyāghravān 635
 Vyāghreśvara (a holy place) 1478
 Vyāhṛti 308f, 450, 652, 1526, 2189
 Vyāla (an epithet of Viṣṇu) 1228
 Vyāma (a measure of length) 770
 Vyāna 695
 Vyāsa 1, 11, 45, 525, 647, 696, 875, 897, 977, 981, 1024, 1132, 1228, 1272, 1288, 1348, 1350f, 1432, 1491, 1493, 1515, 1555, 1566, 1571, 1579, 1591f, 1673, 1799, 1865, 1870, 2089, 2102, 2146, 2152, 2318, 2510f, 2593, 2629, 2836, 2871, 2892, 2967, 3006, 3008f, 3095, 3176, 3195, 3337, 3338ff, 3347, 3358, 3362, 3366, 3394, 3399f, 3428, 3436, 3438f, 3450, 3455, 3458, 3464, 3480, 3490, 3492, 3499, 3504, 3510, 3513, 3517, 3524, 3533, 3537, 3539f, 3544f, 3549
 Vyāsadeva 2981
 Vyāsasthali (a holy place) 1433
 Vyāsatīrtha 99, 1395, 1591
 Vyāsavana (a holy place) 1432
 Vyatipāta (new moon day when it falls on Sunday, and when the moon is in certain nakṣatras) 80, 296, 803, 1050, 1453, 2317
 Vyavasāya 30
 Vyoma (Śamika's son) 121
 Vyomādhipa (=the Sun) 878
 Vyomaghātana 1944
 Vyomamūrdhan 2454
 Vyomapāda 3472
 Vyomatīrtha 1478
 Vyūha 3168, 3170, 3172, 3174
 Vyūṣṭi 332
 Water 3163
 Wealth 1154
 Widow 737
 Wind 924f, 3243
 Wisdom 950
 Worldly existence 1156
 Worlds 18, 316, 362, 2105
 Yācanaka (a ghost) 2078
 Yādasāmpati (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Yādava 118, 123, 331, 337, 2653, 2851, 3258, 3274, 3296, 3302, 3307
 Yadu 145, 1085, 1137, 1192, 1194ff, 1201f, 1308, 1992, 2591, 3222, 3252, 3254, 3256, 3258f, 3261, 3263, 3265, 3269ff, 3272f, 3275, 3278, 3280, 3282, 3289ff, 3294f, 3297, 3299, 3462
 Yadukulaśreṣṭha 3472
 Yadunandana 2985, 3442
 Yajña 29, 511, 3161, 3262, 3352
 Yajñabhoktr (an epithet of Brahmā) 438
 Yajñabhoktr (=Viṣṇu) 3473
 Yajñadatta (a brāhmaṇa) 2096
 Yajñadhvaja (a king) 3474
 Yajñamālin (Yajñadhvaja's brother) 3474
 Yajñamukha (=Viṣṇu) 2495
 Yajñāṅga (=Viṣṇu) 975
 Yajñapati 299
 Yajñaparvata 413
 Yajñaseni 1373
 Yajñaśarman 898
 Yajñavalkya 1401, 1674, 3195
 Yajñavarāha 2897, 3197, 3332

- Yajñeśa 433
 Yajñeśvara (=Viṣṇu) 3473
 Yajurveda 150, 356, 448, 511, 2057, 2144, 3197
 Yajus 25, 146, 878, 2613, 3139, 3157, 3160
 Yajvan 45
 Yakṣllomana (a country) 1365
 Yakṣa 14, 40, 51, 57, 73, 196, 261, 289, 392, 526, 532f, 548, 564, 612, 617, 623, 682, 686, 690, 828, 856, 989, 999, 1001, 1012, 1313, 1390, 1658, 1660, 1953, 2084, 2320, 2322, 2390, 2662, 2771, 2807, 3316, 3443
 Yakṣi 205
 Yakṣiṇī 1480
 Yama 63, 105, 374, 447f, 463, 471, 515, 539, 559, 563, 567, 624, 629f, 641, 651, 667, 682, 733, 768ff, 800, 824, 828f, 833ff, 838, 845, 849, 861, 869, 877, 883, 907, 961, 963f, 969, 1017, 1070, 1153, 1171ff, 1182f, 1208, 1236, 1320, 1400, 1448, 1450ff, 1453ff, 1460, 1562, 1569f, 1572f, 1582f, 1585, 1593, 1601, 1609, 1611, 1614, 1616, 1618, 1626, 1630f, 1662, 1727, 1767, 1768, 1770f, 1829, 1832, 1842f, 1848, 1908, 2004, 2014, 2070, 2085, 2096f, 2100, 2103f, 2129, 2135, 2162f, 2171, 2174f, 2193, 2198, 2209ff, 2216, 2290, 2321, 2329, 2333, 2382, 2401, 2404, 2521, 2530f, 2534, 2557f, 2563, 2586, 2588, 2690, 2692, 2709f, 2711, 2729, 2734, 2737, 2742, 2780, 2796, 2799, 2801f, 2851, 2886, 2921, 2940, 2957, 2967, 2998, 3035, 3041, 3049, 3071, 3076, 3085, 3150, 3152, 3160, 3195, 3201, 3233, 3246, 3250, 3350f, 3376, 3390ff, 3393f, 3411f, 3419, 3458f, 3497f, 3500, 3506, 3508, 3514, 3518, 3524f, 3526f, 3530, 3531f, 3539
 Yama (=restraint) 271
 Yāmā 57
 Yamadaṇḍa (a demon) 847
 Yamadvitīyā 2742
 Yamalārjuna trees 2591
 Yamalārjunabhañjana 3472
 Yamunā 65, 211, 492, 633, 1051, 1378, 1421, 1444f, 1459, 1497f, 1502, 1505, 1520, 1570, 1582, 1604f, 1607, 1944, 1974, 1991, 1993, 2010, 2019, 2027f, 2044, 2076, 2096, 2102, 2108, 2110, 2117, 2315, 2399, 2403, 2407, 2591f, 2598, 2619, 2631, 2657, 2742, 2770, 2788, 2790, 2813, 2815f, 2819, 2836, 2843, 2873, 3010, 3018, 3043, 3058, 3064, 3087, 3127f, 3258, 3274, 3304, 3354f, 3357, 3386
 Yamunā-prabhava (a holy place) 1464
 Yamunātīrtha 3040
 Yāmya/Yāmyaka 2741, 2742
 Yamyakāmyatā 2740
 Yaśas 30
 Yaśasvinī (daughter of Devaśravas) 121
 Yaśastīrtha (a holy place) 1487
 Yaśobhadra 3349
 Yaśodā 116, 122, 1604, 2432, 2591, 3257, 3259f, 3270ff, 3286
 Yaśodā (Arjūmat's wife, Dilipa's mother, Bhagīratha's grandmother) 74, 1984
 Yati (Nahūṣa's son) 109
 Yavaka 283
 Yavakīrta (a sage) 264
 Yavakṛt (a sage) 2837
 Yavana 1365, 2012, 2395f, 2973, 3281, 3392
 Yavana (=Kālayavana) 3282
 Yavasū (future Sāvarṇi Manu's son) 59
 Yavaprotha (a sage) 181
 Yayāti (Nahūṣa's son) 109, 988, 1137ff, 1140ff, 1174ff, 1180ff, 1183ff, 1187, 1196, 1199ff, 1202, 1204, 1207, 1209ff, 1213f, 1287, 1308, 1491, 1671, 2815
 Yayātipatana (a holy place) 1377
 Yayātītīrtha 1477
 Yodhanipur 1399
 Yoga 7, 71, 74, 92, 95, 169, 170, 187, 506, 515, 1172, 1494, 1506f, 2037f, 2618, 2620, 2730, 2826, 3013, 3159, 3311, 3338, 3342, 3347f
 Yoganidrā 3154, 3342f
 Yogapīṭha 1950
 Yogarūpin 2447
 Yogasāra hymn 2779, 2798
 Yogavid 3472
 Yogeśvara 2732
 Yogin 71
 Yoginīs (Durgā's attendants) 1738, 2390
 Yoginī Ekādaśī 2514ff
 Yojana 517, 520
 Yonibhakṣa 224
 Yonidvāra (a holy place) 1479
 Yuddha (-Kāṇḍa) (a division of Rāmāyana) 1930
 Yudhājī (Mādrī's son) 117
 Yudhājī (Anamitra's son) 119
 Yudhiṣṭhira 119, 685, 955, 1030, 1263, 1373, 1380f, 1389f, 1391, 1422f, 1427, 1477f, 1479, 1487, 1490ff, 1493, 1496, 1504ff, 1509f,

2320, 2365, 2463, 2465, 2511, 2618,
2630, 2892, 3128, 3303, 3305
Yuga 5, 17, 124, 146, 171, 176, 509,
516, 519, 526, 528, 534, 540, 632,
989, 2095, 3411
Yugādyā Ekādaśī 688, 714

Yugandhara (Śini's son) 119
Yugandharā (a country) 1364
Yugandharā (a holy place) 753
Yūthi 1982
Yuvanāśva (Ārdra's son) 68, 1140
Yuvanāśva (Raṇāśva's son) 69